

Principle 3:

Planning should start early
and continue up to age 25

Principles of Good Transitions 3

Scottish Transitions Forum

Second Edition 2019



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The Seven Principles of Good Transitions

- 1 Planning and decision making should be carried out in a person-centred way
- 2 Support should be co-ordinated across all services
- 3 **Planning should start early and continue up to age 25**
- 4 All young people should get the support they need
- 5 Young people, parents and carers must have access to the information they need
- 6 Families and carers need support
- 7 A continued focus on transitions across Scotland

Principle 3

Planning should start early and continue up to age 25

This means:

- Planning should be available from age 14 and be proportionate to need
- Children's plans and assessments should be adopted by adult services
- Transitions planning and support should continue to age 25.

Planning should be available from age 14 and be proportionate to need

The Early Years framework¹ and its supporting evidence² demonstrate that early intervention has a profound effect on future life opportunities. Similarly, early intervention in transitions is also promoted in the NICE Transitions guidelines (NG.1.2)³. This approach also supports the United Nations Charter for the Rights of the Child articles 2,3,12 and 28.

Care planning into adulthood should provide reassurance to children and young people that plans and systems are in place to avoid rushed or abrupt transitions. The guidance and principles in Staying Put Scotland (2013) should be adopted. For example, if young people are eligible or expected to be eligible for continuing care (under Part 11 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014), this should be explicitly addressed as early as possible in care plans, with clarity about how this will be supported.

Evidence suggests that transitions planning in some local authority areas starts too late⁴. Many carers and professionals report this as being a significant contributing factor to unsatisfactory and ineffective transitions⁵.

Best practice

It is best practice to start transition planning early. This can include interventions such as:

- Identifying relevant partners for joined-up planning
- Managing the expectations of adult health and social care services
- Considering person-centred planning opportunities
- Explaining outcome-led assessments
- Focusing on specific health problems and self-management
- Exploring employment and training needs and opportunities
- Providing information about benefit changes
- Discussing what choices and resources are available as the transition process continues.

Young people, parents, carers, and professionals need to be made aware at an early stage of what supports are available. Social work should provide an indicative budget for young people who meet eligibility criteria no later than one year before they are due to leave school⁶.

The experience of many young people leaving care is that early planning leads to an expectation that their transition is imminent, which inadvertently causes anxiety. It should be made clear in the early stages that early planning does not mean an early leaving date. There should be clarity about what the early planning process involves for all professionals, parents, carers and young people. This is especially important in terms of how it relates to Through Care and After Care and the continuing care element of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014⁷.

It should be expected that the outcomes that young people wish to achieve will change over the transitions period. Plans begun at an early date should therefore be regularly reviewed and updated by those involved in the planning process, their carers and their support team. This is detailed in the Child Plan and outlined in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the transitions duties for all children and young people with additional support needs as found in sections 12 and 13 of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2014.

The establishment of local transitions forums or co-ordinators (see Principle 2) should improve the capacity of local authorities to begin planning in a timely manner.

Early planning for children with exceptional health care needs

Sheila’s son has complex health-care needs. She decided to take control and manage transition for her son herself.

We started transition when our son was in school aged 15. We had 3 meetings for different purposes. I found it daunting so I set up one large meeting so everything is interlinked. We met every 4 months at different places. I had help from a lovely community nurse at sick kids. We worked together as a team and she helped to co-ordinate things. She came to the house and spoke to us and she facilitated the meetings. We had 6 meetings in total over 2 years.

It is important to plan what you want to discuss, break it into doable short term and long term aims. The social worker asked us what we wanted for our son. I said go to college, university and a day service where he doesn’t sit around and watch TV. Services need to catch up. Don’t give up. Don’t be scared. You could have a good service. A good transition is doable but I might not see everything in my lifetime.

“Will anyone listen to us?”, p15, CEN; Talking Mats

Children’s plans and assessments should be adopted by adult services

Many Scottish Transitions Forum members believe that the Child’s Plan and assessments should be adopted by adult services. The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) framework, which should form the basis of the Child’s Plan, currently has no equivalent in adult services. Outcome-based assessment tools used by adult health and social care partnerships may be different from those used in children’s services, especially when moving from a family-based assessment in children’s services to a focus on the individual adult.

If GIRFEC principles were applied to adult services it would help to provide a basis for early indicative budgets⁸ and prevent duplication of assessments. In addition, parents, carers and young people may already be familiar with the assessment procedure from childhood. Work is underway to examine to what extent the adoption of the GIRFEC principles in adult services would help create a smoother transitions pathway⁹.



Transition planning and support should continue to age 25

Post-16 transitions are often treated as a leaving-school event rather than an on-going process lasting several years¹⁰. This means that subsequent transitions, for example, leaving further education are often unsupported¹¹. Many young people and their parents and carers tell us they find these later transitions particularly challenging and are often unsure where to turn to for support.

Children and young people have a right to education (UNCRC article 28 and Section 1 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000) and further education plays an important role in supporting many young people's personal and career development¹². However, research has found there is an impact when funding changes for people with additional support needs in schools and colleges¹³. The Extended Learner Support

funds, which the Scottish Funding Council consulted on widely, has now been renamed the Access and Inclusion funds. These are allocated to colleges for the purposes of enhancing their inclusive practices and meeting the needs of students. This fund should help to provide more personalised support for young people with additional support needs as they move into further and higher education¹⁴.

Some young people with additional support needs, particularly those with learning disabilities, may be referred to post school college courses in order to maintain the level of provision of the universal services they had when they were children. This could be as a result of a reduction in services across health and social care and social work services¹⁵ and perceived lack of other suitable options¹⁶.

Where young people choose to attend further education, it is important they receive the support they need while in college and to make the transition successfully once they complete their course, or choose to leave¹⁷. This transition falls outside the supportive legislation provided by GIRFEC and Additional Support for Learning, however for many young people and their families this is a more critical transition point than when they leave school. All the Principles of Good Transitions should continue to apply and transitions pathways should include support for post-further education transitions, even though the underpinning legislation may be different.

The continued support could range from low-level interventions such as providing details of a national helpline, to intensive one-to-one support. Local area co-ordinators and third-sector organisations can often provide this type of support¹⁸.



References

- ¹ Scottish Government (2008) Early Years Framework – Evidence Briefing Edinburgh
- ² Burns, H (2011) Kilbrandon’s Vision Healthier Loves: Better Futures. Scottish Government
- ³ There are no equivalent SIGN guidelines and per HIS they will not be developing one currently
- ⁴ Jaquet, S. (2015) Evaluation of the Scottish Transitions Forum
- ⁵ Autism Network Scotland and Scottish Transitions Forum (2015) Digging Deeper: Exploring Transitions Digging Deeper Road Show Report. Strathclyde University
- ⁶ Self-directed Support guidance and Additional Support for Learning codes of practice - Under the “best practice” heading, this is justified. The Act does not require an indicative budget, but it does require consideration of “any provision which [social work are] likely to make for the child or young person on ceasing to receive school education,” – indicative budget in terms of Self Directed Support would clearly help with that. The 12-month deadline applies to this consideration as well
- ⁷ Celcis. Through care and Aftercare whole systems process. www.celcis.org
- ⁸ As set out in the Self-directed Support (Scotland) Act 2013 Guidance.
- ⁹ Health and Social Care Transitions Alliance Project (to be published)
- ¹⁰ NOP (2003) A survey of the views and experiences of young disabled people in Great Britain, conducted by NOP on behalf of the Disability Rights Commission, DRC: London; and Morris (1999) Hurtling into a Void JRF: York; and Heslop, P et al. (2002) Bridging the Divide at Transition: What happens for young people with learning difficulties and their families? BILD: Glasgow
- ¹¹ 157 Group (2012) Effective Transitions from School to Work. A 157 Group Policy Paper
- ¹² Scottish Government (2011) Keys to life. HMSO. Edinburgh
- ¹³ EIS (2014) EIS highlights Scale of College ASN Cuts. EIS. Accessed
- ¹⁴ http://www.sfc.ac.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.aspx?filename=sss2016_extended_learning_support.pptx
- ¹⁵ Stalker, K, & Moscardini, L (2012) A critical review and analysis of current research and policy relating to disabled young people in Scotland. A report to Scotland’s Commissioner for Children and Young People
- ¹⁶ Chin, D. & Levitan, T. (2016) Equity in Social Care for People with Intellectual Disabilities? A Cross-Sectional Study Examining the Distribution of social care funding across local Authorities in England. Journal of Health and Social Care
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- ¹⁸ SCLD (2013) Local Area Coordination (LAC) use and availability in 2013



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