

Transfer Protocol for Disabled Young People Moving from Children to Adult Social Care Services.

1. Introduction

The new legislation in the Children and Families Act and Care Act of 2014, share a number of central themes these are: good outcomes, personalisation and self-direction, the involvement of young people and their families in service development and education, health and care working closer together.

In Newcastle we strive to achieve the following outcomes for disabled young people:

- All disabled young people leave school with a clear plan of what they are doing next, this plan is informed by the young person and their parents;
- Adult services are well informed about a young person's needs and are well prepared to meet those needs when young people starts to use their services;
- Young people and their parents or carers are provided with information and understand the options open to them across all aspects of the young person's life and are supported to make informed choices that reflect the young person's aspirations;
- Everyone involved has high expectations of what young disabled people will achieve in adulthood and our partner organisations develop services to fulfil these aspirations;
- Young people transfer smoothly from children's to adult teams within all agencies without any young person 'falling through the net'.

Young people with complex needs have a wide range of opportunities and life experiences. We identify young people whose needs may be complex as early as possible and make plans to prevent these needs from being a barrier to them achieving their full potential.

2. The purpose of this protocol

The purpose of this protocol is to ensure an effective transfer of disabled young people from children to adult services. These young people will be in receipt of a support service as they approached their 18th birthday. This will include young people with the following impairments:

- Learning Disability;
- Autism
- Physical Disability;
- Sensory Impairment;
- Young people within the 16+ and Children with Disabilities Service who have an enduring mental health need.

And who:

- Are assessed as being eligible for a needs assessment under current access to services criteria;
- Are identified as receiving services through a process of assessment;
- Where the failure to provide support through the process of assessment and against the access to services criteria could lead to a breakdown in the current arrangements and present unacceptable risks to the young person and his/her family/carers.

It does not cover young people who might meet adult access criteria because of their presenting needs aged 18 and over.

3. How do we make this transfer work in Newcastle?

This protocol sets out the arrangements for the transfer of social work management responsibility for disabled young people from Children's to Adult Services.

It clarifies:

- When Adult Services take on social work responsibility for a young person;
- When Adult Services take on responsibility for funding a young person's ongoing or identified future services;
- The process for young people to have their needs assessed and a plan agreed to take them through to adulthood before they are 18.

The transitional arrangements in this section apply to all disabled young people moving from children's to adults' social care services. There are additional arrangements for young people leaving care and these are described in section 4. Where there are concerns about the safety and wellbeing these arrangements are outlined in the Newcastle Safeguarding Adult and Childrens Boards Safeguarding transition Protocol September 2014 which can be found at https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/sites/drupalncc.newcastle.gov.uk/files/wwwfileroot/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care/safeguarding_transition_protocol_final.pdf

3.1 Statutory duty and responsibilities

The two recent pieces of legislation reiterate our joint responsibilities to identify inform assess and plan with disabled young people as they approach 18 and make the move from children to adult services.

The Children and Families Act 2014 in section 50 states that it is our duty as a local authority to ensure that young people who are receiving additional support just before they are 18 should continue too until their adult needs assessment and support plan are in place.

The Care Act 2014 places a duty on local authorities to conduct transition assessments for children, children's carers and young carers where there is a likely need for care and support after the child in question turns 18 and a transition assessment would be of 'significant benefit'.

The way we are organised currently in Newcastle means that responsibility for disabled young people and their parents and carers transfers from Children to Adults services on the young person's 18th birthday.

3.2 Transfer planning in Newcastle- Organisational arrangements

We continue to hold monthly transfer planning meetings at an operational level across Children and Adults social care services to identify the young people who are approaching their 18th birthday. At this meeting there are Adult and Children with Disabilities Team manager, the supported living coordinators Connexions lead on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and the transitional worker. The 16 + team managers are members at two meetings each year.

The issues covered regularly at this meeting include the plans for individual young people, their Educational Health and Care Plans, Housing and support options, Continuing Health Care and new developments and opportunities for young people. This meeting also decides which assessment should be completed is it an updated children's need or Adult assessment that is the most appropriate and it decides which worker completes this - the Childrens worker or a new social worker from Adult services.

We identify the right response given the young person's needs but our primary focus is on the planning for

- young people preparing to leave care,
- living with high care needs and have multiple impairments.

They should be allocated an Adult worker by their 17th birthday. For the remaining young people this allocation should happen by the time they are aged 17 years and 6 months.

3.3 Preparation for transfer in Children Services

The following information should be made available by their Children's services social worker about a young person at their point of allocation,

- A completed appropriate assessment (Child single, Adult or Pathway plan);
- Child/support plan;
- Chronology;
- Protection/Safeguarding Plan or any relevant risk assessments;
- Where required mental capacity assessment;
- Eco map of other services and paid workers involved in the young person's life.

3.4 Transfer from Children to Adult Social work services.

The children's services social worker is responsible for social work support and planning until the young person is 18.

Young people receiving services and requiring them after they are 18 will transfer to adult social work services on their 18th birthday. This includes financial responsibility for the young person's support package and placement.

During the transfer period the Adult social worker will participate in discussions with Children's Services colleagues in respect of the impact of change for example changes for service and take part in any meetings that are relevant to the young person and will support their future planning.

3.5 Eligibility for Adult Continuing Health Care (CHC) assessment.

Young people who might meet continuing care eligibility will be identified from when they are aged 16. The children's social worker and transitional worker will speak with the young person and their family, and explain what the CHC assessment is for.

When the young person reaches their 17th birthday a CHC checklist will be completed and sent to the CHC Nursing team. It is our aim that these assessments will be completed with young people before they are 18.

4. Arrangements to support disabled young people leaving care.

4.1 Identification of disabled young people leaving care who will need an Adult needs assessment when they are 18.

In preparation for young people reaching young adulthood, we will work across Children's services, but primarily with the 16+ and Children with Disabilities Team to identify young people who will need an assessment of their adult needs as they approach 18, because of their learning disability or other impairment. Our target is to do this by the young person is 16, but there will be some who are identified as they approach 17.

These young people will be discussed with our adult colleagues at the monthly transfer planning group, that we described in 3.2 above, and a pathway for assessment and planning will be agreed for the young person.

4.2 Assessment and planning

From the age of 16 a young person leaving care will be supported by their social worker to develop their pathway plan which will consider the young person skills for life, their levels of independent function and their need for housing and support. To support this planning an adult assessment will be completed, and where a young person meets adult eligibility for support joint planning will make the specific arrangements to support the young person to make the move in to adult life.

Over recent years a number of specific routes have been identified to support young people with their housing and care.

- Where it has been in the best interests of the young person and the former foster carer, for the young person to stay where they are, we have agreed plans that have supported a 'staying put' arrangement;
- Again where it has been the right option we have worked with foster carers to request an assessment to be considered for registration as Adult Shared Lives carers;

- For some young people it has been right to move on and we have worked with them to move on to supported living and other shared housing options that have been developed for disabled people.

As for other young people the financial responsibility to fund the care and support to meet the needs of the young person moves from Children to Adult services on their 18th birthday. What is different for these young people will be their allocation of social worker and to support their leaving care entitlements.

4.3 Post Adult assessment allocation of personal adviser for care leavers.

When a young person's adult assessment and planning is completed by their adult social worker, and they are under the age of 21 then the worker will need to refer the young person to the 16+ service. They should contact the team manager at 16+ to discuss the allocation of a personal adviser to support the young person's continued pathway planning. This is to support young people and to meet our duties to them under the 2000 Leaving Care Act.

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