

Deep Dive into Practice to Support Children's Transition from Children's to Adult Services May 2022

Why we did this deep dive:

This was done in response to the [Learning Review of Child G](#) and the [Safeguarding Adults Review of Mr D](#) both undertaken in 2019. Child G had a complex degenerative and life limiting condition, and Mr D had significant learning disabilities and medical needs. The needs of these young people were such that they would continue to need support from statutory services into adulthood. In both reviews it was found that there were delays in achieving effective transition planning from children to adult services for when they reached 18 years of age. The reviews concluded that there should be a joint exploration with the Portsmouth Safeguarding Adults Board (PSAB) of the effectiveness of transition arrangements in Portsmouth.

Learning from these reviews also resulted in Children and Adult Services reviewing the [Transition Protocol](#) for Portsmouth, with the revised document being published in July 2020. The PSCP and PSAB agreed to wait 18 months post the publication, to allow for the new protocol to be embedded into practice across the children's and adults' workforce before considering the effectiveness of these new arrangements.

How we did this deep dive:

The primary purpose of this Deep Dive was to explore the effectiveness of transition arrangements for children with significant learning difficulties and/or disabilities; and to consider the impact of the revised Transition Protocol on the effectiveness of transition planning for young people. In order to achieve this the following was undertaken:

- Multi-agency practice rev
- Learning from case review findings
- Feedback from families
- Review of multi-agency data
- Practitioner survey
- Workshop event facilitated by the Council for Disabled Children

What we learnt from this deep dive:

What's working well?

- Referrals to Adult Social Care (ASC) are made from Children's Social Care (CSC) when the child reaches 14yrs old in line with the Protocol and Care Act 2014 duties
- The staff within special schools and the child's social workers engage early with families to explain transition and the process that will be undertaken
- There were timely health transition and Continuing Health Care assessments. Child Paediatric Medical Services continue providing support until the young person reaches 19 years of age, and so (where they are open to CPMS) the Paediatrician is able to offer consistency in care during the young person's transition to ASC
- For children who are looked after, their Independent Reviewing Officer provided additional scrutiny by checking that a transition plan was in place and managed effectively by their 18th birthday

What are we worried about?

- Quality of practice was reliant on the workers supporting the child - there was inconsistent practice evident seen with some very good practice from individual workers, but we need to improve the consistency of practice to make sure all young people have a good transition

- ASC were not adding young people to their recording system before their 18th birthday. When CSC referred a child aged 14yrs, it was therefore unclear where this information was stored and how ASC were monitoring these to ensure effective planning for transition was occurring
- Some children were not referred to ASC as CSC believed their needs meant they would not meet the threshold for receiving services. However, all children whose needs will continue to make them vulnerable into adulthood should be referred, as even if they are not eligible for services ASC will be able to signpost them to other appropriate sources of support
- There was limited understanding of the Mental Capacity Act and the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards within the children's workforce and the impact these have upon including children and their families withing transition planning, including consent for referrals and information sharing
- There needs to be an improvement in the information available to families regarding services and support available preparing for & during transition, and into adulthood. This information should also be supplied in accessible formats.

What we will do next:

Following this review the PSCP and PSAB have made a series of recommendations based on this learning to improve practice and multi-agency arrangements for young people's transition into adulthood. The progress against these recommendations will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure they are embedded in Portsmouth.

These recommendations include:

1. Improving the information available to families and the workforce regarding services and support available to young people preparing for & during transition, and into adulthood.
2. Strengthen the recording of young people's views about their wishes for adulthood, demonstrating how this is influencing the decision-making during transition. For workers to record how they are supporting a young person to be able to make decisions about their future.
3. Reviewing the planning tools & resources used across the partner agencies, to ensure they are fit for purpose to support young people and families to understand & be involved in transition planning and decision making.
4. To review and revise the Transition Protocol to ensure the guidance within it reflects best practice, is compliant with legislation, and is easily understood by practitioners.
5. To support the workforce in education settings to recognise a young person's capacity to make decisions about their futures and to proactively work with them (using appropriate resources) to build on their decision-making ability.
6. For Adult Workers to attend appropriate meetings where transition is being discussed with a young person, to ensure they are advising on the appropriateness of transition planning.

Adult Social Care has also employed a Transition Lead who works closely with Childrens Services and the Inclusion Service, to ensure that there is now strong oversight of the transition planning for young people.