



The transition between young people focussed services and adult oriented services: Best practice guidance for a successful transition.

1. Scope

These key principles are relevant to all partner agencies within the Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB) that are engaged in transitions processes for young people.

2. Purpose

The purpose of these key principles is to provide a foundation for good practice in both Adult's and Children's Services, that can be used to develop protocols that ensure a consistent and co-ordinated approach when working with and supporting young people and families through the transitions process

3. Introduction

3.1 Whenever there are safeguarding concerns about a young person, or they are at risk of significant harm then they will be receiving support services that meet their particular needs and keep them safe.

3.1.1 While they are a child this support will come from a range of children's services. When a young person reaches a certain age (usually 18 but this may vary between agencies), their care and support needs will transfer to adult services.

3.2 Making the transition to adulthood may be a difficult time for young people particularly if they need extra support. Supporting young people into adulthood is not just about transferring services it is about enabling a young person to realise their full potential as an adult. For some young people who require extra support, this may be a difficult time with social attitudes and a lack of access and opportunity to meet their specific needs.

3.3 For young people and their families this period of transition may be a very stressful and anxious time with familiar support services and routines coming to an end. Alongside this there is the uncertainty of what support will be offered in the future.

- 3.4 Young people and their families who are engaged in any transitions process are often already vulnerable, it is therefore important to share information between services to ensure that a young person gets the support they need as an adult. If this time of change is not managed effectively then this could lead to information being lost; needs not being met and in some cases vulnerable young people may be placed at risk.
- 3.5 It is important therefore that the transitions process ensures that the welfare of young people is promoted and safeguarded throughout the transfer of support from children to adult services.

4. Key Principles

- 4.1 No single service can meet all the needs arising in families where a young person is engaged in a transitions process from children's to the adult world and there are complex needs.
- 4.1.1 This work will often also involve wider partner agencies, including the combined health, education and social care service. It is important therefore to adopt a multi agency approach to assessment and planning within the transitions process.
- 4.2 Assessments should be conducted in a holistic way and be a single process in line with the whole family / household approach.
- 4.2.1 A single key worker should be allocated and become the link between the young person, their family / carers and support services. The key worker will be a professional working with the young person and their family / carers in the transitions process who they can contact about the process and who will in turn liaise with them regarding information from the support services.
- 4.2.2 It is also good practice to enable a young person to have access to an advocate where appropriate. An advocate should be independent of the agencies engaged in the transitions process in order that they can focus on advocating on the young person's behalf.
- 4.2.3 Wherever possible identified needs should be met with support services at the lowest level and within local communities.
- 4.3 Transitions planning should be carried out in partnership with young people and their families / carers to ensure that they are fully consulted and given adequate information and support about services that are available. They should be fully engaged in any decision making process and as far as possible given real choices.
- 4.4 Transitions planning should start early in a young person's life. It is important that needs are identified early and then a plan for a seamless transition into adult services can be formulated. For most young people this process will begin at 14 years.
- 4.4.1 This will ensure that when a young person reaches the age of 18 all agencies are clear about any vulnerabilities and safeguarding issues in the young person's life and a plan is in place to address these.

- 4.5 The transition of a young person from child centred services to adult oriented ones should be a seamless and ongoing process that as far as possible should be conducted within a time specific.
- 4.6 Not all young people will be ready to make the transfer to adult services at the same time; consideration must be given to cognitive and physical development; their emotional maturity and their state of health.
- 4.6.1 It is important to note that transitions is a lengthy process that will often continue on into adulthood. Therefore the responsibility for ensuring effective transition does not stop at the point of transfer to adult services.
- 4.6.2 Starting transitions planning late may mean that young people and families that are already vulnerable may experience high levels of anxiety and uncertainty about the future and push some families into crisis.
- 4.7 Many young people with complex needs experience discrimination due to negative attitudes and exclusion by society (purposely or inadvertently). The transitions process should aim to reduce these barriers wherever possible.
- 4.8 It is important that the transitions process enables a young person to achieve their full potential and be as independent as possible. However, in some cases it will be necessary to assess the capacity of a young adult to understand the issues and processes around transition and along with their families / carers, take important decisions about their future (See below for information about the Mental Capacity Act 2005).
- 4.8.1 The aim should always be to empower a young person to be as self managing as possible and be enabled to participate in decision making where appropriate.
- 4.9 Planning should be as inclusive as possible, and to this end any communications with young people and their families should be easy to understand, and appropriate communication tools and services should be used to facilitate this.
- 4.10 If a young person lacks capacity to make a particular decision it is a legal requirement to ensure decisions are made in their best interests and are compliant with the Mental Capacity Act 2005

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA)

The Act applies to people 16 or over. It empowers and protects people who are unable to make their own decisions

There are 5 key principles:

- Assume a person has capacity to make a decision unless proved otherwise
- Do not treat people as incapable of making a decision unless you have tried all practicable steps to help them
- Do not treat someone as incapable of making a decision because their decision may seem unwise
- Always do things or take decisions for people without capacity, in their best interests
- Always do things in the least restrictive way

A summary of the main points can be found by following the link below:

www.dca.gov.uk/menincap/mca-act-easyread.pdf

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)

To ensure compliance with Article 5 of the European convention of human rights a person deprived of their liberty must have their detention in a process of law. Allowing for reviews and rights of appeal, one or more of the following will apply:

A person kept in a care home or hospital against their wishes

There are restrictions imposed on their freedom within the setting

Restraint or sedation is used to control behaviour

The right of visitors are restricted

A relative or advocate objects to the placement.

A summary of the main points can be found by following the link below:

safely.http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?documentID=1327