

## Newcastle JSNA: Transitions December 2008

### Where are we now?

In strategy, policy and service provision terms, *transition* is used to describe the period of time for an individual, usually between 13 to 25 years old, when young people move from being teenagers to becoming adults.

Often, in political terms, a successful transition means that a young person is classed as EET (in education, training or employment), as there are positive frameworks for young people to develop into adulthood. In the terms of the 'Every Child Matter' agenda, a successful transition would be one where young people are healthy. Safe, able to enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic wellbeing.

According to [Growing Up Matters](#) (CSCI 2007) for young people to achieve a successful transition, there are six key requisites, including commitment, involvement, effective strategic planning and commissioning, a multi-agency approach, a co-ordinated person-centred planning process and monitoring.

Research by the RCPCH '[Bridging the Gaps: Health care for Adolescents](#) (2003) indicated young people face various barriers when accessing healthcare. With reference to transition they highlight that young people are often 'too old' for children's wards, 'too young' for adult wards and can even end up on completely inappropriate wards (such as geriatrics) because no one knows '*where to put them*'.

Newcastle City Council set up a Transitions Board to look at the issues surrounding transition. While most young people progress into adulthood with the support of their parents, families, school and Connexions services there are vulnerable groups of young people who need further assistance as they find it difficult to access universal services. This needs assessment will focus on the following groups.

- Young People with Disabilities
- Young People with Long Term Health Conditions
- Young People who are 'looked after'
- Young Offenders and those at risk of offending
- Young People with Drug and Alcohol problems
- Young People with Mental ill health problems
- Young Carers

## Facts and Figures

- There are currently (in 2007) approximately 20,500 15-19 year olds in Newcastle, now going through transition. This number has peaked and will fall to 17,300 by 2017
- There are currently approximately 271 Looked After Children in Newcastle between the ages of 16 and 21, with 12 (or 4%) in Higher Education
- Every year around 35 children leave care in Newcastle, Social Workers note that care leavers are more likely to experience homelessness, domestic violence or substance misuse. They also have limited existing contacts in the community to whom they can look for help and advice.
- Young men aged 16-24 were most at risk of being a victim of violent crime and nearly a third of young men 16-17 reported committing a violent crime. (SEU).
- Up to 20% of 16-24 year olds have a mental health problem, mostly anxiety and depression (this is double the percentage for all 18-64 year olds)
- Suicide is the cause of 25% of all deaths amongst 16-24 year old men. (SEU)

Source: The Social Exclusion Unit's (SEU) work [Breaking the Cycle](#) (2004) and [Transitions: Young Adults with Complex Needs](#) (2005).

## Targets

Whilst there are no specific targets relating to child adult transition the Good Practice Guidelines developed by Newcastle outlines six key requisites for achieving a successful transition:

1. There is commitment
2. Young people and families are fully involved in the process
3. There is effective strategic planning and commissioning
4. There is a multi-agency approach with good protocols, systems and processes
5. There is a co-ordinated person-centred planning process
6. Monitoring

Local government targets include the provision of support to all teenage parents to help them participate fully in education, employment and training, targets also acknowledged in the Office of Deputy Prime Minister's 2005/6 strategic steer.

## National and local strategies

Article 12 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states:

*"State parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views, the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."*

Main publications setting and advising national policy include:

- *Aiming high for disabled Children- Every Child Matters*, Growing Up Matters: Better transition planning for young people with complex needs (CSCI 2007). This addresses commissioning and ensuring joint strategic planning.
- 16+ Education Green Paper.
- National Service Framework for Children and Young People and Maternity Services
- *'Valuing People'* the National Service Framework for adults with Learning Disabilities.
- *'Improving life chances of disabled people'* (ODPM 2005, the DFES Guide to Transitions for parents and carers (of young people with learning disabilities) (2005). The guidelines require transitions to be: participative, holistic, supportive, evolving, inclusive, collaborative.
- DH Care Matters White Paper (2007)
  - young people will be given the right to stay in care up to the age of 18, and even to remain with foster carers up to the age of 21.
- The White Paper, Choosing health: Making healthy choices easier
  - This commits to action on the health needs of adolescents, including lifechecks, improved access to sexual health services and joint working to meet the needs of young offenders.
- Social Exclusion Unit report (Transitions: Young Adults with Complex Needs, November 2005).
- The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
  - requires that all young people who are 'looked after' by the Council on their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, including those with an SEN, have a pathway plan
- You're Welcome quality criteria: Making health services young people friendly. DH April 2007. The papers main recommendations are:
  - That there is a clear procedure to prepare young people for transition to adult services. Specific attention should be given to young people with chronic, long-term conditions.
  - Staff should be trained to help young people and their parents or carers, with transition to adult services from the age of 12 onwards although in most services transitions usually occur between 16 and 18.
  - Publicity material, presented in a way that is young people-friendly, should be provided that specifically outlines the transition to adult services.

**For Disabled children:** The 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review and Aiming High for Disabled Children (published by the Treasury in May 2007), commits government to providing significant additional resources - £340 million – (2008-2011) to transform services (for disabled children) nationally. Specifically, £19 million is being made available for a Transition Support Programme to help local authorities improve services for disabled young people in transition to adulthood.

**For Looked After Children:** Nationally 'a radical package of measures', worth an additional £305m is planned for the next four years.

## **Newcastle's current strategies and priorities**

Wherever possible, Newcastle City Council will strive to ensure young people have an involvement in policy, strategy and service delivery.

- Current local (Newcastle upon Tyne and region) strategies linked to the Newcastle City Council's Transitions Strategy include:
  - Children and Young People's Plan
  - 14-19 year old Strategy
  - Integrated Youth Strategy
  - Looked After Children Strategy
  - Participation Strategy for Parents and Carers
  - Safe Newcastle Strategy
  - Connexions Newcastle Delivery Plan
  - Employer Engagement Strategy
  - Family Learning
  - Learning Skills Council Annual Plan
  - Local Authority Housing Strategy
  - NEET Preventative Strategy for young people in Education
  - Regeneration Strategy
  - Regional Economic Strategy
  - Skills for Life Strategy
  - Social Inclusion Strategy

## **Current activity and service provision relating specifically to transition**

### **Young People with Disabilities**

- A successful pilot funded by LSC in 2006/07 to support young people to use mainstream transport while they were still at school. Enabled 9 young people to learn to travel independently.
- A Transitions Worker is in place who co-ordinates systems to ensure young people are identified and key professionals allocated in Year 9.
- There are information sharing arrangements in place (with consent) across agencies and with their parents.
- Use of person centred planning and Direct Payments
- There is a transfer protocol between children and adult services for young disabled people.

### **Young People with Drug and Alcohol problems**

- Drug and Alcohol Transitions Group meets monthly.

- Developing new transitions protocols with adult treatment services and reviewing any existing arrangements
- Analysis of data to identify gaps in services
- Transitions issues key priority in both young people's and adult treatment plans
- Range of needs identified for 17 year old problematic substance misusers, very rarely single issue. Housing stability and support key to making progress in other areas.

### **Young Offenders and those at risk of offending**

- A Youth Offending Team (YOT)/Probation Protocol operating across Northumbria area in place to clarify division of labour and transfer of cases between YOT (8 to 17 year olds, and in certain cases beyond that) and NPS (18+).
- YOT membership of Safe Newcastle Reducing Re-offending Group to ensure transition issues for young people who offend and adult offenders are addressed (eg Prolific and other Priority Offenders).
- YOT/Probation operational management meeting monthly to consider those young people known to YOT who will be 18 in next 3 months.
- YOT/Housing protocol (YoHARP) agreed and operating to address housing needs of young people in contact with the YOT.
- YOT lead operational manager for accommodation issues is well networked with planning of future resource development with Strategic Housing and Supporting People programme.

### **Young Carers**

- A Young Carers Service has been established with mainstream funding agreed in principle for 09/10.
- Additional funding obtained to 2011 to pilot work with primary schools in South Central area of Newcastle, focusing on early identification, intervention and prevention particularly relating to substance misuse and mental health issues.
- 77 new referrals to the Young Carers service in 07/08. Over 1500 young people and approximately 200 professionals, including Youth Workers, have had awareness raising sessions and the Youth Service is committed to all staff having training.
- Self evaluations based on the Every Child Matters outcomes indicate that working with the Young Carers Service has led to improvement in all relevant outcomes for each young person and family.
- Partnership work with the Youth Service is providing regular focused 'time out' for young carers through the Youth Bus. This is leading towards young carers accessing mainstream Youth Service activities.

**Connections:** aims to enable successful transition and help young people prepare for adult life by:

- offering advice and support on a broad range of issues.
- a NEET Prevention Strategy, offering 'timely, appropriate, individual and impartial information, advice, guidance and support' to help successful transition into education, training and employment for 13 year olds and above.
- working with people from vulnerable groups, offering additional support and referrals to specialists where necessary.

**Supporting People (SP):** a programme providing a range of 'welfare services', including some aimed at young people, which aims to enable people to live more stably in their own homes. Services for young people are a priority in SP's Newcastle Plan as it is recognized that a lack support for young people could significantly increase future demand in other client groups. Support is provided to the following groups:

- young people who need short term accommodation with support, or who need help to keep a tenancy going
- people of all ages with mental health problems or dementia
- people with learning disabilities
- people with drug or alcohol problems
- people who are leaving prison
- people and families who are homeless

**What is this telling us?**

**What are the key inequalities?**

**Young people with disabilities** - Research carried out by the Home Farm Trust and Norah Fry Centre (2002) showed that a fifth of young people with learning difficulties left school without a transition plan and that the quality varied significantly. Additionally, there was a lack of easily accessible information for parents and young people about future possibilities, and few post-school opportunities particularly in relation to housing and employment.

**Young People with Long Term Health Conditions** - Can be severely compromised by poorly managed transitions. Many congenital conditions, such as cardiac malformations or cystic fibrosis, are rare and unfamiliar to those working in adult services and figures show attendance at some diabetes clinics almost halved after service transfer.

**Young people who are 'looked after'** - Issues include higher prevalence of mental health disorder, teenage pregnancy and involvement in crime. There can be a lack of provision of information for Care Leavers about choices affecting their future. Evidence suggests individuals with a stable care history are more likely to enter and remain in employment, training or studying.

**Young Offenders and those at risk of offending** - The proportion of young people with a learning disability/difficulty referred to the Youth Offending Team is high although it is unlikely the disability is severe enough to be eligible for help from Social Services Children With Disabilities team.

**Young People with Drug and Alcohol Problems** - The number of 18-21 year olds accessing drug/alcohol treatment is lower in Newcastle than in neighbouring and comparable local authorities.

**Young Carers** - take on inappropriate levels of care and tasks for family members with mental health issues, substance misuse and alcohol issues, disabilities, chronic and terminal illness, usually an adult parent or carer. Often the parenting of siblings is part of the role as the parent's parenting capacity is reduced. Young

people living in poverty or areas of high deprivation are more likely to belong to families where illness, disability, substance and alcohol misuse, and mental health problems are an issue. They are also more likely to go unnoticed, particularly those caring for a family member with issues that carry a stigma.

### **What are the key gaps in knowledge / services?**

#### **Young People with Drug and Alcohol Problems**

- 16 and 17 yr olds with complex needs require well coordinated and flexible services to ensure we are able to provide maximum support into adult services and that these needs are recognised at the point of transition.
- More proactive work with 17/18/19 yr olds to ensure clients don't opt out of services at this point. Housing issues remain a priority for the most at risk young people.
- Improved communication with Supporting People around specific cases.

#### **Young Offenders and those at risk of offending**

- Funding does not always follow plans and need – transition issue acts as a discontinuity.
- A small number of high risk/high need young people are not well served by the current system (eg someone who is a vulnerable young person and is receiving support pre-18 will not be identified as needing support post-18, which can place both them and their neighborhood at risk).

### **What are the risks of not delivering our targets?**

Children and young people who do not make a successful transition into adulthood will have less successful adult lives.

### **Is what we are doing working?**

#### **Young People with Drug and Alcohol Problems**

- Very occasionally young people (17 yr olds) do access treatment through adult services. We would aim to ensure that these young people are offered the same level of support as a young person accessing treatment through D'n'A or CAMHS.
- Referrals from D'n'A do go to a range of services depending on the need of the young person and a worker would support a young person through this transition.
- Adult services can be daunting for a young person, and the most vulnerable 18 yr olds may require on going additional support which we would continue to provide wherever possible. Young people leaving care are prioritised.

#### **Young Offenders and those at risk of offending**

- Works well with the vast majority of cases (eg service specification for Supporting People is adapting to take account of YOT case profile and needs, transfer decisions from YOT to Probation can take account of need and risk on most occasions).
- Protocols are developing as a result of practice experience and exception-reporting between agencies.

### **What is coming on the horizon?**

## **Disabled Children and young people.**

- ❖ The launch of the Aiming High for Disabled Children children transition programme in Oct/Nov 2008.
- ❖ Personalisation- invitation to tender for individual budgets (IBS) for local authorities in Nov/Dec 08- opportunity to build on Newcastle's early experience of IBs.

## **What should we be doing next?**

### **Young People with Disabilities**

Continue the development and the awareness raising of the Young Carers Service.

Additional funding obtained to 2011 to pilot work with primary schools in South Central area of Newcastle, focusing on early identification, intervention and prevention particularly relating to substance misuse and mental health issues.

### **Young People with Long Term Health Conditions**

- Develop/commission new services where adult services for young people with long-term healthcare needs are not available. Possibilities include:
  - dedicated adolescent clinics (multi-disciplinary)
  - Joint adult/child specialist clinics for conditions that are rare in childhood (e.g. rheumatology, haematology) and
  - handover clinics to provide an introduction for young people to adult services and clinicians
- Ensure transition planning and services for young people are included when setting quality standards.

### **Young Offenders and those at risk of offending**

- Pilot programmes enabling young people with learning difficulties/ behavioural problems aged 11+ to stay engaged in education, not end up socially excluded.
- Build on the strengths of existing partnerships with voluntary sector youth providers.
- Learn from the NRF Working with Racially Aggravated Perpetrators (WRAP) project and extend this across the City.

### **Young Carers**

- Improve take up of Young Carers Service support by schools to ensure proactive transitions between Primary and Secondary schools and continued support by schools.
- Obtain a mandate and develop clear and active mechanisms for Adult Services to identify, support and refer young carers.
- Improve services for 18-25 year old carers.
- Improve take up by all services of Young Carer Awareness training particularly the impact on emotional wellbeing and future prospects if early identification not achieved.

[1](#) Chris Dearden and Saul Becker, 2000. Growing up caring: Vulnerability and transition to adulthood - young carers' experiences. National Youth Agency in association with Joseph Rowntree Foundation.