

## Learning from the Development of Principles of Good Transition in Scotland Online Workshop 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023, 10:30-12pm

### Summary Notes from Breakout Room Discussions

#### Views on the Scottish work completed on Principles into Practice (Pn2P) Compass

- Participants saw a lot of value in the work that has been done on both developing Pn2P (and the indicators included within it) and the development of the Compass software/app. A key aspect is that parents/carers and disabled young people are all able to access the **right** information and guidance at the **right** time for them.
- As a free online tool, the App was seen as having a lot of potential uses in the North East for young people, parents/carers and professionals alike. One idea was to link it to the Year 9 EHCP review (N.B. Young people start Year 9 aged 13 and end aged 14). It could help give ownership over transition to young people. The co-production approach to its development was appreciated and how it had helped turn the lens around from the practitioner to young people and their families. People liked the emphasis on strengths and empowerment and looking at people holistically.
- Some acknowledged that there was work to be done before they felt they were in a position to explore the framework. It was felt that some local authorities need to 'get their own houses in order', before taking this type of project on.
- Specific reflections from a social worker who has been involved in piloting Pn2P in Scotland:
  - They have changed their working practices because of the Pn2P work; key players from across departments are involved.
  - Through Pn2P, they participate in regular learning exchange meetings with other local authorities, and this has been incredibly helpful.

#### North East and Cumbria Contexts

- Discussion about the range of transition pathways disabled young people can be on, and parents/carers too. They can be linked into multiple systems that do their own version of transition, with different rules and processes. These multiple pathways can be fragmented and start at different times rather than joined-up - people can be working in silos. Can we make this journey better (for parents/carers, young people)?
- A key concern is that parents and carers aren't being adequately involved in the process. This is particularly the case for the Year 9 EHCP review, when parents are not always told how important this review is – and do not receive the information and guidance they should have ahead of the review to plan

properly for it. Parents also aren't always told about how long it can take for adult services to be put in place and are often totally unprepared for this.

- Concern about the ways in which disabled young people are suddenly switched to adult social care/safeguarding services – this is not appropriate, particularly when many young disabled people have experienced a lot of trauma – this cliff edge needs to be smoothed.
- Bringing together health, social care and education is necessary but challenging – time and capacity are a barrier. Professionals are often asked by parents/carers for transition advice and guidance in relation to all aspects of transition, but they are within their professional specialism (e.g. healthcare professionals being asked about the transition from DLA to PIP) and it can be difficult to know where to signpost people. This appeared particularly difficult in health, where input is relatively small and spread across a number of different localities. At the same time within the healthcare arena, the focus on health can exclude other considerations. Working in this field can be isolating. The problems here are not just specific to the North East and Cumbria, there is an absence of up-to-date and coordinated policy and strategy in the English context.
- The whole transition period is challenging as many families are 'terrified' about what comes next/what might and might not be available.
- At the moment, many parents are simply signposted to the 'Local Offer' part of their local authority's website. This can be very difficult for parents/carers to navigate and many simply do not access it because it is not user-friendly to them or accessible or appealing to young people.
- There are inequities within local authorities (e.g., county to county) as well as between local authorities.
- While a lot of challenges were identified, some areas of good practice and potential were also identified:
  - A driver of better coordination across services occurs currently when authorities have a SEND local area inspection and are required to provide a statement of action – this shows that better coordination is possible, but unfortunately, it can require services to be 'failing' first.
  - Lots of pockets of good transitions work have taken place in the North East and North Cumbria, particularly in recent years (e.g. work on [Developmentally Appropriate Healthcare](#)) – but much more co-ordination required across different sectors.
  - [The transitions page](#) on the Healthier Together website was flagged as a good template and one produced in consultation with young people's forums in Gateshead and Sunderland.

### **Possible ways forward/Priorities**

- Support for the Pn2P and how this could be useful for developing a common basis in what is a fragmented landscape; what seems to be needed is to adopt a common approach across the region, embedding Pn2P into shared practices, but also recognising that things might look different from place to place.

- We cannot underestimate the impact of a **good soft landing** in any transition period (for *all* young people). We need to taper that cliff-edge and find ways to create that good soft landing.
- Some participants wanted to know more about and adapt the training courses provided by ARC – particularly how they are co-delivered with young people, and that some are aimed at parents/carers. Many stated that it would be great to have something similar available in the North East, as parents and carers find it very difficult to know where to go to get reliable information and advice. Training also included those who perform key duties across different professions which, again, they felt could be emulated.
- It would also be really helpful to have better information sharing/a platform/network for professionals working in this field across different sectors.
- Also really important that any co-ordinated work along the lines of Scotland helps to break down some of the myths/misperceptions that disabled young people and parents/carers may have about what transition and what future services do and don't look like.
- The Integrated Care Partnership would be a good vehicle through which to coordinate any transitions work in the North East. But others also stressed the value of tying into local offer.
- It was felt that given much of the work had been done in developing the tool, it would be wasteful not to replicate it in England. Innovative work already taking place in the North East would make it an ideal place for a pilot scheme.
- The group stressed the importance of effective communication. It is helpful to use appropriate medias (eg TikTok and YouTube) to convey information to young people. Good to retain the Scottish model of employing a young social media person if work is rolled out in England.
- A flowchart specific to the English/NE context would need to be created to adapt Compass, but the bulk of the background work has been done. ARC England would be keen to support the development of this work.
- Potential for developing connections and building on relationships across the region - people have relationships and connections that cut across the region, through schools/workplaces/social groups.
- Importance of communication between services and starting early; 'co-production from the beginning is important!'; requires communication and preparedness.
- Emphasis on long-term planning and a longer view - services can drop off at 18 and this can leave people with nothing; shock going from a comprehensive service - need to think beyond 18, e.g. to age of 25; need to convince policy makers and make clear what it is like on the ground.
- Resources are needed both in relation to staffing and direct support to families.
- Skilling up staff is vitally important.
- It is critical that senior management commit to the process and provide leadership.

- Questions about dovetailing and fitting into what is already done; some mention of the care passport - seems like it could help with conversations across spaces; while ensuring things are not duplicated.
- ARC England raised a question about funding for any roll-out and where responsibility for it might lie. It was suggested that the Department for Education's Innovation Fund might be appropriate, but it is unclear whether this is still in operation. [After the event we looked on [the Govt Department of Education website](#) and this fund does seem to have closed].