



for adults with learning disabilities

# White Paper

# Transitions



Talk to me,  
not behind my back

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Thank you

The members of the Worcestershire **People's** Parliament would like to thank all the following people for their help in preparing this White Paper.

Ezekiel Obileye, **Children's Services Commissioner**

Jonathan Monk and the Young Adults Team

Judy Adams, Worcestershire Association of Carers

Chloe, Helen and Steve Draper

Sharon Paterson, Adult Services Commissioner

Daryl Le Feuvre, Co-chair of the Transitions Reference Group

Rachel and Chris from Our Way Young Consulters

Caroline Jones and Julie Price-Pass at Our Way

Regency High School

Kidderminster College

Heart of Worcestershire College

## Introduction



Transitions involve change, choice and decisions.

We are making changes, choices and decisions all through our lives.

But the change from youth to adulthood is important because this is the first time we take responsibility.



- We move from school to work or college or activities.



- We move from Children's Services to Adult Services

- The support we get changes.



- Our relationship with our family can change.



- The health services we get may change.

We need to get ready for:



- Leaving care, home or school and moving on.



- Sorting out benefits and money.



- Deciding where to live.



- Choosing who to live with.

We need to be ready to look after ourselves:



- Eating regularly and well



- Good timekeeping – getting sleep, getting up, being on time



- Buying and looking after clothes

- Washing and keeping healthy



- Being alone



- Using transport to get to places on time



## Shopping for essential things



- Organising the week



- Joining clubs and groups



- Getting and looking after a pet



- Being tidy



- Choosing friends and partners



- Deciding what to do in emergencies



- Learning from mistakes



Getting the right help and support can make all the difference. Who helps us with this?



- Who helps us understand that change is going to happen?



- Who helps us get information about what is available?



- Who helps us to be involved in making decisions?



- Who helps us cope with our feelings?



To begin to find some answers we made a list of the people to talk to.



- Young people, their families and carers



- Commissioners of **children's** and adults services



- The Social Care Young Adults Team



- Voluntary organisations that support young people and their families through Transitions



- Schools and colleges



- People with learning disabilities and high support needs



We now have an Outreach Worker called Connie Crofts. She visits people with high support needs to find out their views on the things we are talking about. We have put things that Connie found out all through this White Paper.



You can find a list of people that we talked to at the front of this paper. We would like to thank all of them for being so helpful.



We also looked at recent documents about Transitions to see what other people had to say.



There isn't a lot of information in Easy Read so this wasn't simple.



Our meetings and discussions showed us that it is not easy to understand all the different things that go on and services that are running.

We are still finding things out, even after asking for information for over 4 months!



We have organised our White Paper into 3 sections.



At the end of each section we ask some questions.



# Health



We spoke to commissioners from Children’s Services and Adult Services. It can be hard to understand all the different arrangements that there are!



We showed them the report from the Care Quality Commission about Transitions in Health. It is called ‘From the Pond into the Sea.’



We wanted to find out if the problems the report talks about are true in Worcestershire.



We wanted to find out who is responsible for making sure that health services improve as a result of the report.



The main message was that ‘commissioners must listen to and learn from young people and their families’.



One example of good joined up planning between Children’s and Adults services would be if everyone with a learning disability had a Health Action Plan from the age of 14.



This could get young people involved in their health care planning through into adulthood.



We have been told that this is not easy because the different computer systems used by doctors, hospitals and the Council can't share information. It has to be sorted out by hand – and this is a big job.



Another good example of joined up planning would be if the Young Adults Team had a health worker, in the same way as it has a housing worker.



We know that this was part of the My Worcestershire Health Plan.

We ask:



- How can we find out if Health services in Worcestershire have got better since the Care Quality Commission report on Transitions 'From the Pond into the Sea'?



- Information is collected and stored by different agencies in too many different ways. When will this be sorted out so that the right people have the right information?



- Will every person with a learning disability in Worcestershire have a Health Action Plans from the age of 14?



- How will this plan be linked to their Education Health Care Plan?



- Why not have a Health Worker in the Young Adults Team?



## Leaving Home

The Young Adults Team works with people who are assessed with Substantial and Critical needs.



We heard from the Young Adults Team how good it is having a Housing Officer with them. He has helped them get young people with high support needs out of residential care and into independent supported living.



At the same time, people with Low and Moderate needs are losing the independent Housing Matching service because of Future Lives funding cuts.



Connie found that there was more interest in living independently from young people who had already been away to residential college.



**We heard that young people and their parents don't** always have the same feelings about whether they are ready to live more independently.



We heard that District Councils and Housing Associations are not always very good at responding to the needs of people with learning disabilities.



We think they have a big role in helping people live independently.

## We ask:



- How will people who are assessed with Low and Moderate needs get support to find suitable flat mates now the independent Matching Service has gone?



- If a young person assessed with Low and Moderate needs wants to move out, who helps them to get their point over to their parents, carers and providers?

## School and college

Some young people told Connie that school was good for learning about:



- Money,



- Cooking



- Computers.



But young people, families and professionals also said that schools could do more to prepare students for the change to adult life.



At the same time, we shared stories about what we were like as teenagers. We didn't want to face up to change or responsibility. We didn't complain if a school lesson was just putting on a video; no work!



We heard that the Transitions interview, which happens before a young person leaves school, is not the same in every school.



We heard that making it a good meeting depends on the way it is chaired and who turns up. Sometimes there can be loads of teachers and few other people get to speak.



We heard that it can be hard for the young person to get their point of view across.



We heard that the meeting often only looks at school issues and there is no time for things like life skills, mobility, social involvement and living arrangements.



We also heard that in Wyre Forest they have more than one meeting. These are called **‘structured conversations’**. These are working very well.



Young people, families and professionals told us that colleges could do more to challenge students and get them ready for work.



We found out about Life Beyond School events. These are markets held in schools at the end of the summer. Lots of different providers go to give information to students.



College students told Connie that they had been very useful.



We also heard that most of the providers are local and residential colleges or voluntary organisations. There is not a lot of information about employment.



We heard that the new Education Health Care Plan, which replaces educational statements, will mean a lot of changes.



We hope that it will help schools, health workers and social workers to have a better understanding of young people they are working with.

# 0 - 25

We worry that because it covers people from birth to 25 years some people will not be treated as grown-ups.



We ask:

- Does the teaching in Upper School prepare young people to move on?



- How can school pupils all over the county get the very best from their Transitions interview?



- Do colleges provide challenging courses that get more people with a learning disability into work?



- Will Life Beyond School events include Job Centre Plus and other employers in the future?



- Will an Education Health Care Plans be created with the involvement of the young person it is about?

# Our Next Steps



- We will take our White Paper to self-advocacy groups all over the county.



- We will send copies to the Police, County Council, Health organisations, Support and Housing providers, schools, colleges and voluntary groups.



- We will send copies to the papers, radio and TV



- We will keep on talking to people.



- We will keep talking to people with learning disabilities.



## We will invite people to our People's Parliament

- On Friday 5<sup>th</sup> Dec 2014
- at County Hall
- 10.30am – 1.30pm



At the end of the Parliament we will ask commissioners and providers to make Pledges about how they will improve their plans.

## Get involved!



To give us your ideas please contact our Coordinator, Ian Craigan.



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