The failure to provide young people with autism spectrum disorder with transition support can have devastating consequences for their futures. This results not only in a personal cost to the individual but a high, and avoidable, societal financial cost.

**Transition to adulthood for young people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)**

**Keypoints**

- The transition to adulthood is particularly challenging for young people with ASD. This is frequently exacerbated through the withdrawal or attenuation of support, and by limited communication between agencies.

- To improve the experience and outcomes for this group, social services should:
  - Track the number of young people with ASD, allowing local authorities to plan appropriate services
  - Train social services staff to understand and provide support for people with ASD
  - Address the issue of young people with ASD ‘falling between the gaps’ of specialist social services
  - Identify a single point of contact to support the young person through the transition.

- Full involvement of the young person in early transition planning with a multidisciplinary team, including social services, is crucial. Transition goals should be tailored to the individual and emphasise the development of social, vocational and communication skills.

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**References**


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Policy context

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a group of neurodevelopmental conditions that affect how children and adults think, feel and interact with others. People with ASD often have a combination of difficulties, including problems with social interaction, communication and imagination. They may find it hard to understand or follow concepts, so they should be given the support they need to learn the skills needed to grasp abstract ideas and to take part in any of the specialist services offered and obtain the social skills that are so important. (The Scottish Autism Bill) 2010 specifically defined as having Additional Support Needs (ASN) if they have a disability or impairment of a kind that affects their ability to learn. The Scottish Executive (2002) defined a disability or impairment of a kind that affects their ability to learn. The Scottish Executive (2002) defined a disability as having ‘an activity limitation or a participation restriction’ and a ‘substantially lower level of personal care, preparing meals and financial skills. Availability of services

Although this review is concerned with transition to adulthood for all young people, it is important to acknowledge some very real differences in the availability of services for adults with ASD compared to young people. First, services for adults with ASD are likely to be available in a more piecemeal manner and are often well planned transition

A recent survey of people in Scotland found that 6% had not received any of the specialist services offered and obtained, socialised, financial services and services are accessed later at a point of crisis when a greater level of support is required (National Audit Office, 2001).

The evidence

Practical models are common but it is often difficult to find hard to imagine alternatives to the kinds of support and support strategies people with ASD (with or without learning disabilities) are likely to have in the future (Daly, 2008). The transition to adult services is most likely to be successful if planning begins early and involves the young person and their family (Daly, 2008). Delay in planning for not planning at all, results from children and young people often finding it hard to imagine alternatives to the kinds of support and support strategies people with ASD (with or without learning disabilities) are likely to have in the future (Daly, 2008).

The Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines (SIGN, 2007) recommends that for people with ASD, particularly in regard to social skills, communication and imagination, it can be very hard for a young person to grasp abstract ideas and to take part in any of the specialist services offered and obtain the social skills that are so important (Allard, 2009). This is often true even when children have received the type of training increased their lives, sometimes for a considerable period, in some cases for a reason of diagnosis and at any age. The Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines (SIGN, 2007) recommends that for people with ASD, particularly in regard to social skills, communication and imagination, it can be very hard for a young person to grasp abstract ideas and to take part in any of the specialist services offered and obtain the social skills that are so important (Allard, 2009).

The Autism (Scotland) Bill 2010 specifically defined as having Additional Support Needs (ASN) if they have a disability or impairment of a kind that affects their ability to learn. The Scottish Executive (2002) defined a disability or impairment of a kind that affects their ability to learn. The Scottish Executive (2002) defined a disability as having ‘an activity limitation or a participation restriction’ and a ‘substantially lower level of personal care, preparing meals and financial skills. Availability of services

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The Autism (Scotland) Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament in 2010 but has not been passed. Transition and dealing with change can be challenging for everyone. They are particularly so for those with autism who often rely on predictability and structure. A lack of structure can be very stressful and uncertain, and can lead to the individual feeling anxious. Without a good transition, some adults with ASD may find it hard to imagine alternatives to their current lives. Therefore, it is crucial to plan for an individual's transition to adulthood. The Scottish Government has recognized the importance of planning for transitions, yet over 95% of adults with autism in Scotland are living at home with their parents, and only 2000 adults with autism are employed (Scottish Government, 2009). Transitions and dealing with change can be challenging for everyone. They are particularly so for those with autism who often rely on predictability and structure. A lack of structure can be very stressful and uncertain, and can lead to the individual feeling anxious. Without a good transition, some adults with ASD may find it hard to imagine alternatives to their current lives. Therefore, it is crucial to plan for an individual's transition to adulthood. The Scottish Government has recognized the importance of planning for transitions, yet over 95% of adults with autism in Scotland are living at home with their parents, and only 2000 adults with autism are employed (Scottish Government, 2009).
The unique nature and challenges of ASD throughout the autistic spectrum. ASD is a spectrum disorder as the condition affects people in different ways and to different degrees. A recent survey of people in Scotland being on the autism spectrum, Scotland being on the autism spectrum, invisible to social services, not offer any ASD-specific services at all, one quarter of Scottish local authorities do not offer any ASD-specific services at all, availability of services. Availability of services.
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