

PAN-GWENT MULTI-AGENCY TRANSITION PROTOCOL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

This protocol sets out the roles and responsibilities of the agencies involved in planning and coordinating the transition into adulthood of young people with disabilities and additional learning needs living in the pan-Gwent area. The protocol has been developed as part of a multi-agency project which was set up to improve transition planning in the Gwent area.

Vision

Young people with disabilities and additional learning needs will have well-planned and well-coordinated transition support through their transition into adulthood.

Principles

- Young people should be at the centre of the transition planning process.
- Young people and their parents and carers should be fully involved.
- Transition is not just a series of assessments and reviews. It is a continuous process which is assisted by agreed clear decisions at significant points.
- All agencies will contribute to the development of the young person's transition plan as set out in the legislation and national guidance.
- Effective partnership working is essential so that each young person has a well-planned and well-coordinated transition into adulthood.
- Each agency will be responsible for ensuring that information about this protocol is disseminated to all levels of their organisation.
- The transition process will promote:
 - Independence
 - Integrated planning
 - A holistic approach
 - Choice and control

Commitment

The Pan-Gwent Multi-Agency Transition Protocol requires commitment and support at management and operational levels to ensure that the vision for these young people becomes a reality. By signing this document, the agencies below give their commitment to implement this protocol in the pan-Gwent area.

Dr Andrew Goodall
Chief Executive
Aneurin Bevan Health Board

Albert Heaney
Corporate Director Social Services
Caerphilly County Borough Council

Mark Provis
Chief Education Officer
Torfaen County Borough Council

Simon Burch
Chief Officer Social Care Health and Housing
Monmouthshire County Council

Sylvia Lindoe
Director of Education and Leisure
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Stewart Greenwell
Corporate Director Care & Customers
Newport City Council

Sandra Aspinall
Director of Education
Caerphilly County Borough Council

Shirley Rogers
Central South Regional Director
Careers Choice Dewis Gyrfa

Andrew Keep
Corporate Director of Lifelong Learning
Monmouthshire County Council

Brett Pugh
Chief Education Officer
Newport City Council

Graham Bowd
South East Regional Director
Careers Choice Dewis Gyrfa

Sue Evans
Locality Director, Social Care, Housing & Health
Torfaen County Borough Council

Liz Majer
Director of Social Services
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

1 Introduction

This protocol describes a multi-agency planning process to facilitate the transition of young people with disabilities and additional learning needs from school to adulthood.

- 1.1 This transition protocol meets the current minimum transition plan standards required by the SEN Code of Practice (Wales) 2002, and the additional transition key actions set out in the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (2005).
- 1.2 This protocol has been agreed by Monmouthshire CC, Torfaen CBC, Blaenau Gwent CBC, Caerphilly CBC, Newport CC, Aneurin Bevan Health Board and Careers Wales. Section 5 describes the multi-agency transition process adopted by Monmouthshire CC, Torfaen CBC, Blaenau Gwent CBC, and Newport CC. Caerphilly CBC will use an alternative multi-agency process described in Appendix 2.
- 1.3 This protocol also links with the Aneurin Bevan Health Board's Policy for the Transition of Young People with Healthcare Needs between Children's Services and Adult Services within the Aneurin Bevan Health Board.

2 Background

- 2.1 Historically the transition process has often included a number of separate assessments and a lack of communication and co-ordination between the different agencies concerned. This protocol aims to integrate the assessment and planning processes of the various agencies into a single system that satisfies a variety of legislative requirements. The most significant of these are: The Children Act 1989 & 2004, the NHS and Community Care Act 1990, the Education Act 1996, Disabled Persons (Services, Consultations and Representations) Act 1986, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989.
- 2.2 The current legal requirements for Transition Planning for young people with Special Educational Needs are set out in the SEN Code of Practice for Wales. This document places the responsibility for drawing up a transition plan in year 9 with the school Head Teacher, as part of the statement review process. The Code of Practice also specifies that Careers Wales, Social Services and any relevant Health professionals should be invited to attend the statement review in year 9 and contribute to the transition planning process. The school review process can also be used to draw up transition plans for young people with special educational needs who do not have a statement (for instance young people on School Action Plus).
- 2.3 The Welsh Government published its National Service Framework (NSF) for Children, Young People and Maternity Services in 2005. This NSF document set out key actions for improving the Transition Planning process for young people with disabilities, by 2015.
- 2.4 If the NSF transition key actions are fully implemented, the transition planning process in each local authority area will need to include a Multi-Agency Transition Group, Multi-Agency Transition Plans and Transition Coordinators (also known as Transition Keyworkers) for each young person with disabilities who needs one.

3 The Transition Process set out in the SEN Code of Practice

- 3.1 The annual review of a young person's special educational needs (SEN) is a process. Part of the process involves a review meeting which is a statutory requirement placed on schools under the Education Act 1996. The review process applies to all young people who have a

statement of SEN, and can also be applied to young people with SEN or Additional Learning Needs (ALN) who do not have a statement (e.g. young people on School Action Plus).

- 3.2 The first annual review meeting in Year 9 should include the drawing up of a Transition Plan. All subsequent annual review meetings, until the young person leaves school, should involve the reviewing and updating of this Transition Plan. The Transition Plan should draw together information from a range of individuals and agencies within and beyond school in order to develop an integrated plan for the young person's transition to adult life. The school should circulate the agreed transition plan within 10 days of the review meeting.
- 3.3 Under sections 5 and 6 of the Disabled Person's Act 1986, at the Year 9 Annual Review, the Education Authority has a responsibility to seek information from Social Services about whether a young person with an SEN statement is disabled and may require services from the Local Authority when leaving school. This legal requirement forms the basis for information sharing between Education and Social Services.
- 3.4 The school should also consult child health services and any other professionals such as educational psychologists, or occupational therapists who may have a useful contribution to make.

4 Which young people need Multi-Agency Transition Support?

- 4.1 Some young people with SEN statements can make satisfactory transitions into adulthood without needing additional transition support from Social Services or Health Services. For these young people, their Transition Plans can be drawn up with the help of school staff and their Careers Wales Adviser. In effect, their Transition Coordinator is either a member of the school staff or their Careers Wales Adviser. This type of transition is referred to as a 'Standard Transition' in the flow chart in Appendix 1.
- 4.2 However, there are some young people with disabilities or additional learning needs who will not be able to make satisfactory transitions into adulthood without additional transition support. There are a number of factors that could influence this. If the young person already has a social worker and/or specialist health input, this is an indication that additional transition support is needed. The social worker and any specialist health professional should attend the young person's transition reviews from year 9 until the young person leaves school, and the social worker or specialist health professional can act as the young person's 'Transition Coordinator' as the young person moves into adulthood and leaves school. The Transition Coordinator can make sure that the young person has a Multi-Agency Transition Plan, with contributions from other professionals such as school-based staff and the Careers Wales Adviser.
- 4.3 If the School or Careers Wales Adviser is aware that a young person with disabilities will need additional transition support, but does not currently have any social services support or specialist health input, the school or Careers Wales can make a referral to the local Multi-Agency Transition Group to request additional transition support. It is best practice to do this well in advance of the young person's next school review meeting, so that there is an opportunity to help the young person prepare a draft transition plan for this meeting.
- 4.4 It is important that the young person and their family are aware that a request for additional transition support is being made. Consent for this request should be sought from parents and the young person. If the young person or family members have sufficient information about the process, they should be able to make the request for additional transition support themselves, directly to the Multi-Agency Transition Group.

- 4.5 The Multi-Agency Transition Group will consider requests for additional transition support, and will decide whether the young person meets 'Trigger Criteria' for needing additional transition support.
- 4.6 Referrals for other forms of support may also be needed: for instance advocacy support, safeguarding (child protection) action, child in need support. These other referrals should be made separately, and any urgent referrals should not be delayed because a referral for transition support has been made.
- 5 Multi-agency Transition Process for young people who meet the Trigger Criteria for additional transition support (See flowchart in Appendix 1). Please note the multi-agency transition pathway being used by Caerphilly is shown in Appendix 2**
- 5.1 The Local Authority identifies young people who will be due for an annual review, including those in Years 9 and above, and sends a list of these young people to each school's Head Teacher during the summer term. The school decides on annual review dates for all young people with SEN statements, and any young people on School Action Plus or School Action who would benefit from an annual review.
- 5.2 The school must ensure that Social Services and any other relevant service are aware of the annual review and are invited to participate.
- 5.3 The school can consider the Trigger Criteria in Appendix 1 to assess whether to make a referral to the Multi-Agency Transition Group.
- 5.4 The Multi-Agency Transition Group includes representatives of Education and Social Services, the Health Board and Careers Wales. This group will decide whether any referred young people meet the criteria for multi-agency transition support.
- 5.5 If the young person does meet these criteria, the Multi-Agency Transition Group will identify a 'Transition Coordinator' for the young person. The Group will take into account the views of the young person and family members when identifying a suitable Transition Coordinator. This person would act as a lead professional and their role would reflect where the emphasis needs to be placed for transition for any individual.
- 5.6 If there is no significant Health or Social Services involvement, the Transition Coordinator could be either the Careers Wales Adviser, a school staff member, or a dedicated Transition Coordinator (if available).
- 5.7 If there is significant Health or Social Services involvement, the Transition Coordinator could be a Children's Team or Adult Team social worker, or a specialist health professional, or a dedicated Transition Coordinator (if available).
- 5.8 In line with the Code of Practice for SEN the school would seek to gain the views of the young person and their family prior to the review. Where the "Transition Coordinator" is not a member of school staff it may be agreed that this role would be undertaken by the coordinator. In those instances the Transition Coordinator will meet with the young person, liaise with their parents/carers and will arrange for the completion of a draft Transition Plan for the young person in advance of the young person's next annual review. Information in appropriate formats explaining the process and its purpose will be provided for the young person and their family.

- 5.9 The transition plan is based on information from the young person and their family, and aims to provide an overview of what is important to the young person, and what support they need - in readiness for the annual review meeting.
- 5.10 The Health Board representative on the Multi-Agency Transition Group will identify appropriate health professionals who may need to provide additional reports or information e.g. from therapy staff. The staff involved should attempt to co-ordinate their visits and assessments to prevent unnecessary duplication and multiple assessment appointments for the family.
- 5.11 The draft transition plan is completed and agreed with the young person and their family, along with consent to share the information in the plan. It should be sent to the school's Head Teacher at least 6 weeks before the annual review, for circulation to other professionals.
- 5.12 Based on their knowledge of the young person, the Head Teacher, in consultation with the Transition Coordinator and the young person, will decide if there is a need for any additional information / assessments from any professional whose input would add to the understanding of the young persons' needs in transition.
- 5.13 Any additional assessments should be brief and focused and should not repeat other information already supplied.
- 5.14 Any additional assessments or reports will need to be completed and returned to the person co-ordinating the review (normally the Head Teacher in Special Schools or the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator in mainstream schools) at least 6 weeks before the review date.

6 Transition Review (Annual Review in year 9)

- 6.1 The Head Teacher will collate and distribute the assessment information at least 2 weeks before the Review meeting. The School must invite the following people to form a review team:
- The young person (who may choose to bring an advocate or supporter)
 - The parents/carers (who may choose to bring a supporter)
 - A member of the school staff
 - Careers Wales Adviser
 - Social Services
 - Any other person specified by the Head Teacher
 - Any other person considered appropriate - this should include health professionals involved with the young person.

7 Involving the Young Person

- 7.1 The young person must be invited to the review. Where possible the young person should be encouraged to attend the review meeting with appropriate support to enable the young person to prepare and participate effectively. If the young person chooses not to attend, they should be made aware of the review process and their views should be taken into consideration.
- 7.2 Key actions will be agreed at the meeting, and an Action Plan should be drawn up with details of who should be doing which action and by when.

8 The Transition Plan

- 8.1 The format of the transition plan can vary according to the young person's preferences and the documentation currently in use.
- 8.2 Wherever possible, the transition plan should include information about the young person's communication skills, health and safety needs, family and friends, leisure interests and transport needs, what the young person wants to do after leaving school (education, work, training or other activities), what support they are likely to need and what financial resources they will be able to use. The emphasis of the plan is likely to reflect the needs of the young person and the expertise of the lead professional helping the young person to complete the draft plan.
- 8.3 After the review meeting the school produces a Statutory Review document within 10 days of the review meeting, which it must circulate to parents, and the professionals involved.
- 8.4 The Statutory Review document should be accompanied by the Transition Plan, along with a summary of the Action Plan agreed at the meeting.
- 8.5 If the young person with disabilities is 'looked after' by the local authority or is a Care Leaver, the Transition Plan will become a Pathway Plan and will be reviewed every 6 months as part of the Pathway Plan Review Process. In this case the young person should have access to a Personal Adviser who can assist with their Transition and Pathway planning.
- 8.6 It is good practice to link or combine the school Annual Review with any social services review meeting (LAC Review, Child in Need Review, Pathway Plan Review).

9 Involving Adult Social Services.

- 9.1 The Social Services Children's Team will notify the appropriate adult social services team in line with internal procedures when the young person reaches the age of 14 to ensure a smooth transfer to adult services if this is appropriate.
- 9.2 Similarly, the relevant adult health service professionals should be notified to ensure a smooth transition from children's health services.
- 9.3 Some young people with disabilities do not have any significant social services or health involvement. If it seems likely that a young person with a disability will need additional transition support during the transition from school into adulthood, a referral can be made to the Multi-Agency Transition Group for additional transition support. The referral can be made by the young person, any member of the young person's family, school-based staff, Careers Wales or anyone else who knows the young person. The referral needs the consent of the young person and those with parental responsibility.
- 9.4 If there is likely to be involvement from adult social services, an adult team social worker should attend the young person's Transition Reviews from year 9 until the young person leaves school, to consider how best the young person should be supported into adulthood.
- 9.5 If it appears that continuing health care support is required into adulthood, Social Services and Health professionals will need to discuss the implications of this with the young person and family members at an early stage to ensure continuity of care. If a Continuing Healthcare (CHC) Assessment is needed, this should be arranged as early as possible. The assessment

for eligibility under the Adult CHC Criteria should commence during the individual's 16th year to enable an 'in principle' decision to be made by the young person's 17th birthday, as set out in 'Continuing NHS Healthcare: a Framework for Implementation in Wales'. An appropriate Health professional who can facilitate this assessment will need to be identified. The Multi-Agency Transition Group should be alerted if there are any problems with this Assessment process.

- 9.6 If specialist placement options are being considered in order to meet the young person's health, educational and/or social needs, these options will need to be discussed by the young person, family members and the relevant Careers Wales, Health, Education and Social Services professionals to make sure that all funding and transition implications are considered.

10 Transition planning after the young person leaves school

- 10.1 If the young person leaves school and starts to attend college, work-based training, employment or some other daytime activity, they can continue to develop their Transition Plan. The Transition Plan will be reviewed and updated if the young person has ongoing support from their Transition Coordinator. The Transition Plan could also be reviewed by the Careers Wales Adviser, Social Worker, or by staff in the young person's college, work-base or daytime activity placement.
- 10.2 The Review of the Transition Plan is no longer part of the statutory statement review process, which stops when the young person leaves school. However, the young person should benefit from reviewing their Transition Plan and updating their Action Plan.

11 Complaints and Disputes

- 11.1 If a young person or family member is unhappy with the transition support they are receiving, they can contact one of the agencies providing transition support (school, education service, social services, health board or Careers Wales), or they can write to a representative of the Multi-Agency Transition Group in their area. The contact details for these groups are given in paragraph 12.1 below.
- 11.2 If a young person or family member is unhappy with the outcome of a decision made by the Multi-Agency Transition Group, such as whether the young person is eligible for Multi-Agency Transition Support, or which person will act as Transition Coordinator, then they should write to the Multi-Agency Transition Group in their area.
- 11.3 If the response to any initial complaints under paragraphs 11.1 or 11.2 does not resolve the issue, the young person or family member can make a formal complaint to the Local Authority, who will determine which agency needs to deal with the complaint.

12 For Further Information about this Protocol please contact:

- 12.1 List of Multi-Agency Transition Group contacts in each area:

Blaenau Gwent	Damien McCann	01495 322777 damien.mccann@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Caerphilly	Tina Blake	01443 864631 blaket@caerphilly.gov.uk

Monmouthshire	Keith Self	01873 735455 keithself@monmouthshire.gov.uk
Newport	Jonathan Griffiths	01633 656656 jonathan.griffiths@newport.gov.uk
Torfaen	Sarah Paxton	01633 648343 sarah.paxton@torfaen.gov.uk

12.2 This Protocol will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it is fit for purpose. Any problems relating to this Protocol should be reported to the contacts listed in paragraph 12.1.

12.3 Information Sharing between young people, families and professionals is a fundamental requirement for good Transition Planning. Personal information must be handled lawfully by all those involved. The Information Sharing requirements of this Protocol are supported by Information Sharing agreements in each of the local authority areas.

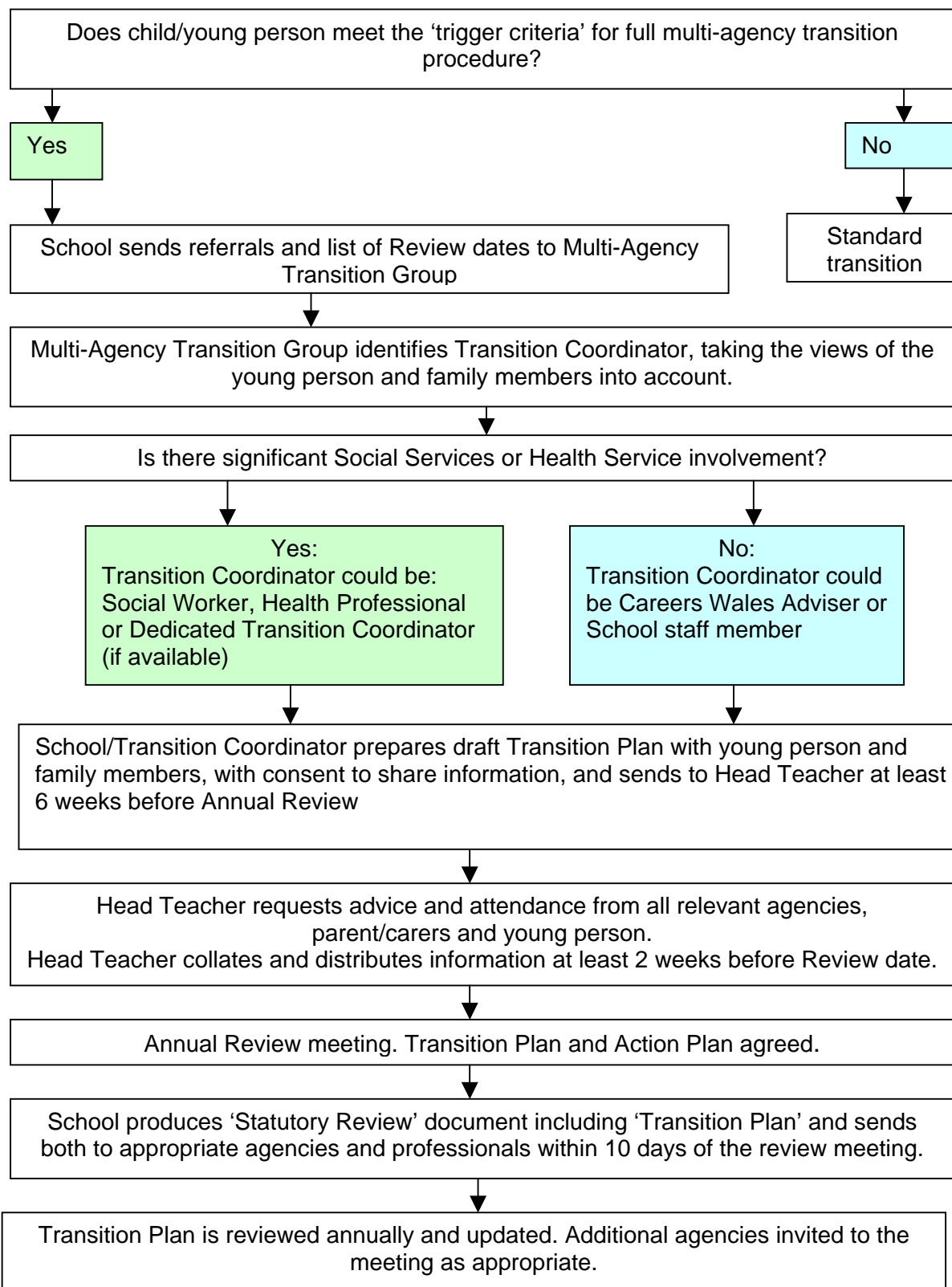
Appendix 1: Multi-Agency Transition Process For Young People with Disabilities and Additional Learning Needs

Timetable

STAGES

Summer of year 8

In year 8, the Education Service identifies young people due for Annual Review in the following school year (year 9) and sends the list to schools in July.



At least 6 weeks before Review (Year 9)

At least 2 weeks before Review

Review Meeting

Within 10 days of Review

Annual update of plan

Children's Social Services and Health workers arrange timely transition handovers, as and when appropriate, to adult teams in Social Services and Health.

Appendix 1 continued

"Trigger Criteria" to Initiate Full Multi-Agency Transition Procedure

The Trigger Criteria are intended to cover the range of young people who are likely to need significant provision of services, advice and/or support in adolescence and adulthood due to the impact of their disability on their families and/or their life chances. The criteria attempts to look at the impact of the disability rather than the medical diagnosis or category.

Trigger Criteria for additional transition support

Young people with a permanent or significant disability or health condition and who have one or more of the following;

- A high level of dependence on others for personal care or other needs.
- A clearly identifiable risk of family breakdown, because of the family situation, stress on the carers, or the task of caring for the young person.
- A disability or health condition where there is a serious risk of harm or injury to themselves or others, including those young people who have little or no sense of danger and who need constant monitoring to keep them safe.
- A major sensory disability.
- The young person is in need of specialist services other than education and School Health Service.
- The young person is placed out of authority in a specialist education placement.
- The young person is Looked After by the Local Authority, or considered to be a 'Child in Need'.

Appendix 2

Multi-Agency Transition Process for Young People with Disabilities and Additional Learning Needs in Caerphilly

5 Multi-agency Transition Process

The role of the Local Authority in the annual review and transition process is to circulate to all schools and settings a list of pupils who will require an annual review and to ask schools to inform them of the dates of the annual reviews due to take place over the academic year.

For the purposes of the multi-agency transition process a specific transition database will include young people with statements, young people with complex needs at school action plus and looked after young people educated in county and out of county. This database will be managed by the Local Authority and used by the multi-agency transition panel to identify and track young people undergoing transition. A data management protocol will be included in the terms of reference for the multi-agency transition group. A multi agency transition group will consider referrals via the process described at the end of this document.

5.1 Transition Process Stage 1 (Y8 Reviews)

The Local Authority acknowledges that a barrier to effective transition planning is that the 'right' professionals do not attend the first transition meeting in Y9. This can result in delays in referrals to appropriate agencies and in some cases to needs not being fully identified prior to the involvement of adult services. In order to address this, transition coordinators /SENCOs in schools or other settings will be required to complete a Transition Planning pro-forma to be included with the Annual Review report following the Annual Review in Y8. For identified young people at School Action Plus, SENCOs will be requested to undertake a Future planning Review and complete the same pro-forma

Following the Y8 review the school will send the Annual Review report with recommendations and the transition pro forma completed to the Local Authority. The FPR and transition pro-forma will be returned for young people in identified vulnerable groups. The pro-formas will be analysed and where multi-agency involvement is indicated these cases will be put forward to a multi agency Transition Planning Panel. This Panel will include representatives from Education, Social Services, the Health Board and Careers Wales.

The Y8 multi agency Transition Planning Panel will meet on an annual basis. This group will decide whether any referred young people meet the criteria for multi-agency transition support. If a young person's referral is agreed the Panel will consider which agencies need to be involved for the Y9 Review and, if appropriate, nominate the professional from the relevant agency/agencies who will attend. Following this the school will be informed of the outcome of the Panel and who has been nominated to attend. Schools will be asked to provide a date for the Transition Review by the end of September in the new academic year. These dates will be circulated to all relevant agencies.

5.2 Transition Process Stage 2 (Years 9- 10)

The Local Authority will inform schools /settings prior to the beginning of the academic year, which young people require an annual review and transition plan. Schools will have already been informed if representatives from health or social care have been nominated to attend and

will include them on the attendance list. The Head Teacher or SENCo will organise the annual review and transition plan meeting as indicated in the SEN Code of Practice for Wales

The format of the transition plan can vary according to the young person's needs/preferences and the documentation used by the school/setting (The transition plan should include information about the young person's communication skills, health and safety needs, family and friends, leisure interests and transport needs, what the young person wants to do after leaving school (education, work, training or other activities), what support they are likely to need and what financial resources they will be able to use. Key actions will be agreed at the meeting, and an Action Plan should be drawn up with details of who should be doing which action and by when

If the young person is 'looked after' by the local authority or is a Care Leaver, the Transition Plan will become a Pathway Plan and will be reviewed every 6 months as part of the Pathway Plan Review Process. In this case the young person should have access to a Personal Adviser who can assist with their Transition and Pathway planning.

Following the annual review meeting, the report and Transition Plan will be forwarded to the Local Authority for processing. If the young person was referred in Y8 for multi-agency involvement the outcome from the Transition Action Plan will be put forward to the Y9/10 Transition Review and Planning Panel. New referrals will also be forwarded to the Panel for consideration.

At the Y9/10 Transition Review and Planning Panel the continued involvement of agencies in the transition process will be reviewed and new cases considered for involvement. Following the Panel, schools will be informed of the outcome and whether an external representative will attend the review meeting in the following academic year. Adult social services and adult health professionals will be notified of cases, which at this stage look likely to require additional support into adulthood.

If there is significant Health or Social Services involvement, the Panel will recommend that the school /setting works closely with these agencies, using a team around the child/family approach to planning in order to ensure that assessments are coordinated. In some cases, and in negotiation with the school and family, a Children's Services social worker, or a specialist health professional could be nominated as a 'Transition Coordinator'

5.3 Transition Process Stage 3 (Years 11-14)

The Local Authority will inform schools /settings prior to the beginning of the academic year, which young people require an annual review and transition plan. Schools will have already been informed if representatives from health or social care have been nominated to attend and will include them on the attendance list. The Head Teacher or SENCo will organise the annual review and transition plan meeting as indicated in the SEN Code of Practice for Wales. Review meetings in years 11-14 should focus on reviewing the Transition Plan and Transition Action Plan.

Following the annual review meeting, the report and Transition Plan will be forwarded to the Local Authority for processing. If the young person was referred in Y9/10 for multi-agency involvement the outcome from the Transition Action Plan will be put forward to the Year11/13 Transition Review and Planning Panel. New referrals will also be forwarded to the Panel for consideration.

If it appears that continuing health care support is required into adulthood, Social Services and Health professionals on the Multi Agency Transition Panel will be responsible for notifying the relevant people in their agencies so that, if appropriate a Continuing Healthcare (CHC) Assessment can be arranged in line with guidance in 'Continuing NHS Healthcare: a Framework for Implementation in Wales'. The Multi-Agency Transition Panel should be alerted if there are any problems with this assessment process.

If specialist placement options are being considered in order to meet the young person's health, educational and/or social needs, these options will be discussed at the Multi Agency Panel to make sure that all funding and transition implications are considered. The Multi-Agency Transition Panel will nominate a Transition Coordinator to oversee individual cases of this nature and to liaise with the young person and their family and any other services involved

If, following a transition review in Year 11 the Multi-Agency Transition Panel is informed that the young person is leaving school and will be attending a FE College, the Multi-Agency Transition Panel, will consider whether ongoing monitoring is required and, if appropriate appoint a Transition Coordinator to oversee the case

Appendix 2 continued: Caerphilly's Multi Agency Transition Process

