

national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

NTST Briefing

Valuing Employment Now: real jobs for people with learning disabilities – employment strategy for people with learning difficulties July 2009

Department: Health

Date of Publication: 24 June 2009

Consultation Deadline: N/A

Geographical Scope: England

Link to full document download page:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_101401

Introduction

Valuing Employment Now is a Department of Health strategy that is intended to build on the progress of previous steps in the Valuing People agenda, which started with the Valuing People white paper in 2001 and has been aimed at enabling people with learning disabilities to be better integrated into society. This briefing is intended to give an overview of the strategy in relation to young disabled people's transition into adult life.

The document sets out the government's goal to radically increase the number of people with moderate and severe learning difficulties in employment (paid work of at least 16 hours/week) by 2025. The more specific overall goal is that as many adults with moderate and severe learning disabilities are employed as in the disabled population generally. It uses lessons learned from the Getting a Life cross-government programme. (The cited current employment rates are 10% for people with moderate or severe learning difficulties and 48% for all disabled people)

The relative lack of progress in improving the employment rate of people with learning difficulties compared to progress in this area with the disabled population generally is presented as a key reason for this strategy being produced. It is intended to help local authorities fulfil their obligations under the socially excluded adults Public Service Agreement (PSA 16).

The strategy is very relevant to people with learning disabilities going through transition as a core part of the strategy is to raise the expectations of professionals and parents and the aspirations of people with learning disabilities from an early age. There are however, no new major policies announced in this strategy.

Most of the actions for the DCSF around children and young people are in the areas of increasing the focus of employment in transition planning and post-16 education (point 3 below) and better work preparation in school, college and adult learning (point 4 below).

The National Programme Board for Learning Disabilities will oversee the delivery of the strategy. A Cross Government National Delivery team will support regional and local implementation. The National Director for Learning Disabilities, Learning Disability Partnership Boards, Deputy Regional Directors, Strategic Health Authorities and Local Authorities will also have defined roles in implementation. For more information on these roles see the document *Valuing Employment Now: The delivery Plan* (Available from the download page link above). The government will report on the strategy annually and update the strategy after 3 years.

The Council for Disabled Children and partners working as the national transition support team for the AHDC Transition Support Programme



national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

Opportunities and Risks for Young Disabled People in Transition

This section provides an analysis of the key themes in the document that are particularly relevant to transition, with signposts to the relevant parts of the more detailed briefing below.

Learning outside academic settings

This strategy recognises the problems with limiting the education and training opportunities for people with learning difficulties to those based in academic settings. (See Chapter 2 in the strategy and point 3.a.ii. below). Expansion of Project Search (see 2.b.iv. and 4.c.i. below) and expansion of the workforce of job coaches (6.b.) are points of actions for government departments and it is recommended that schools should organise adequate work experience (4.a.i.; 4.c.iii.). These all suggest a shift towards offering more non-academic based learning opportunities. If these moves go ahead and the agenda progresses more young people with learning disabilities could move into work based settings alongside their peers, potentially benefiting both their confidence and employability.

The commitments listed in this document on this issue are based around developing and extending existing good practice rather than radical policy changes.

Transport

The strategy lists development of accreditation for travel training as a commitment for DCSF (5.a.i.). This could improve the appeal of travel training both to those that receive it and to those that provide it. This is particularly important for young people with disabilities as access to public transport is often vital for gaining independence and maintaining relationships with their peers through leisure activities.

Given this wider importance, those representing the interests of young disabled people may wish to establish travel training and access to public transport a right for all young disabled people as well as way of helping adults with learning difficulties move into employment.

Public Bodies setting an example

It is suggested in this document that public bodies should set an example to other employers in employing people with learning disabilities (6.e.ii-iv). This is an important and useful proposal, but may need more commitments to ensure that it is realised. The commitments of the Cabinet Office and DCSF, for example to 'recruit at least one more person with a learning disability by April 2011', may be seen as not being ambitious enough. The recommendation that Local Authorities and other public bodies become exemplar employers of people with learning difficulties is listed under the heading 'Making it Happen Regionally and Locally', suggesting that local government is expected to take a lead. This may make the promise of change less certain.

The Council for Disabled Children and partners working as the national transition support team for the AHDC Transition Support Programme



national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

Transition planning

The strategy promotes the development of transition reviews and individual planning and the work in the Transition Support Programme to identify and promote good practice (See Chapter 2 in the strategy and point 3 below). We must be aware of the risk, however, of individual transition plans becoming too focused on gaining employment and not appreciating the value of other developments young disabled people can make through successful transition.

The Council for Disabled Children and partners working as the national transition support team for the AHDC Transition Support Programme



The national transition support team is a programme of the Council for Disabled Children, which is hosted by the National Children's Bureau. Registered Charity No 258852. Registered in England and Wales No 952717. Registered office: 8 Wakley Street London EC1V 7QE. A Company Limited by Guarantee.

national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

Overview of Key Proposals and Key Quotes

This Section will include relevant comments and proposals or action points from the document. Examples of relevant practices and projects identified and developed through the Transition Support Project are also provided in the 'TSP Case Study' boxes

1. Comments on Learning from Getting a Life (Introduction pp19-27)

- a. “[So far, Getting a Life has shown that] there is no clear path into employment for young people with severe learning disabilities. Rather, there are a number of processes that have often been assumed to be part of a path. There are low work expectations for this group among all the key agencies, which has a huge impact on people and their families. When people do aspire to work, there is often confusion about how to achieve it.”
- b. “Assessments, work experience, further education and employment services are often not adapted to help people with learning disabilities plan for work”.
- c. “Some people believe that employment discussions should come later than for non-disabled children; whereas families in Getting a Life sites have said that they actually need the information and support earlier, to counteract the low aspirations in the system and in society.”
- d. “There is significant scope to improve the capacity and skills to provide employment support throughout the transition period.”

TSP Case Study – The Getting A Life Project in Richmond

The London Borough of Richmond is a Valuing People Getting a Life (GAL) site and therefore has a clear focus on developing employment skills and opportunities for people with learning disabilities (paid and voluntary) and with TSP support has piloted two employment projects for disabled young people. On one such project they work closely with Richmond Furniture Scheme, a charity that recycles second hand furniture, to train and provide paid part time employment for a small number of young people. There has been a great deal of learning from the project including how to make information about the job and interviews accessible, how to help young people open bank accounts, and how young people can take part time work without income being adversely affected through loss of benefits by completion of “better off” calculations.

The second project is a joint initiative between Connexions and a local special school to help young people with learning disabilities develop a gardening project. Tools for the work were purchased through TSP support, land provided by Strathmore Special Educational School and a volunteer gardener recruited to support young people. Another local business has expressed an interest in becoming involved and this had led to an opportunity to sell some of the produce grown through a local green grocers.

More information about work in transition in Richmond is available here:

[http://www.transitionsupportprogramme.org.uk/pdf/TSP %20TM%20Richmond%20CS%20Final.pdf](http://www.transitionsupportprogramme.org.uk/pdf/TSP%20TM%20Richmond%20CS%20Final.pdf)

More information about The Getting A Life Project is available here: <http://www.gettingalife.org.uk/>

The Council for Disabled Children and partners working as the national transition support team for the AHDC Transition Support Programme



Council for
Disabled
Children

national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

2. Growing the Presumption of Employability (Chapter 1 pp27-32)

a. DCSF Actions

- i. DCSF will commission an awareness campaign for parents and carers.

b. Other Actions

- i. The Government will use workforce training to raise key staff's expectations of work for people with learning disabilities and their role in this, including:
 1. As part of teacher training on the FLT;
 2. In guidance on qualifications for those who teach people with learning disabilities at all ages;
 3. As part of Jobcentre plus staff training on the new Disability employment programme; and
 4. DH will support frontline NHS staff to manage better messages given at birth.
- ii. The national Delivery team will work with Sector Skills Councils to develop accredited training modules for frontline staff.
- iii. There will be two more Getting a life demonstration sites to provide at least one per English region. at least two of the young people supported per site will have complex needs.
- iv. Expansion and promotion of Project Search sites(varied internship programmes for people with learning disabilities with jobs with host employer on offer at the end).
- v. 8 -10 Support broker demonstration sites for helping effective use of in-work benefits to go live in autumn 2009.

The Council for Disabled Children and partners working as the national transition support team for the AHDC Transition Support Programme



The national transition support team is a programme of the Council for Disabled Children, which is hosted by the National Children's Bureau. Registered Charity No 258852. Registered in England and Wales No 952717. Registered office: 8 Wakley Street London EC1V 7QE. A Company Limited by Guarantee.

national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

3. Joint Working to Create Individual Paths to Employment (Chapter 2 pp33-38)

a. Comments

- i. “DCSF expects all transition planning to include the young person and to focus on future jobs as well as health, friendships and independent living.” (TSP is also described here)
- ii. “For people with learning disabilities in particular, it is important that this [new compulsory 16-17/18] education and training directly relates to their work aspirations and will help them to get a job. the section 139(a) learning assessments that local authorities usually carry out through Connexions should be informed by an individual’s person centred transition plan. through section 139(a) guidance to local authorities, DCSF will promote employment as an outcome for people with learning disabilities and that the means to this should be explicit in any assessment.”
- iii. “[Where individual budgets are being piloted in transition] young people could, for example, choose to use part of their IB to fund job coaches for Saturday jobs and for work experience.
- iv. The evaluation of the IB pilots will include whether or not an IB increases a young person’s participation/ activity in the labour market and, if successful, will create evidence for further roll-out.”

b. DCSF Actions

- i. DCSF will in 2009 work with local authorities to improve transition planning and ensure this includes future employment for people with learning disabilities. DCSF will promote employment pathways and will work with local authorities to embed this.
- ii. DCSF is enabling learning from the transition support programme to be gathered and shared nationally and across regions.

c. Other Actions

- i. The national delivery team will support local areas to work together to deliver this strategy.
- ii. DH will make sure that advice and guidance for local health and social care commissioners encourage the Prioritisation of employment in any contracts relating to supporting adults of working age in any setting.
- iii. It is recommended that local authorities use their responsibility for 16–19 learning to ensure that courses for people with learning disabilities are focused on employment outcomes and to commission supported employment. This will be stressed in the national Commissioning Framework which DCSF will publish for open access in autumn 2009, and which the YPLA plans to issue as part of statutory guidance in April 2010.

The Council for Disabled Children and partners working as the national transition support team for the AHDC Transition Support Programme



national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

4. Better work reparation at school, college and adult learning (Chapter 3 pp39-44)

a. Comments

- i. "Too often, Year 10 and 11 students who have learning disabilities are not offered quality work experience for many reasons, including because of a shortage of willing employers."
- ii. "mechanisms such as bonuses could be used to reward providers when learners with learning disabilities are placed into sustainable work."

b. DCSF Actions

- i. DCSF will strongly promote real work experience for people with learning disabilities, including to employers.
- ii. DCSF is committed to people with learning disabilities being better prepared for work. DCSF will use the recommendations from the Ofsted SEN review to consider changes to the curriculum and assessment process.
- iii. DCSF will use the FLT to embed supported employment models in learning and training, including making clear the criteria by which learning providers will be able to fund job coaches under the FLT.
- iv. DCSF will examine ways to incentivise employment outcomes from learning providers.
- v. Guidance on the FLT will include examples of supported employment models which DCSF will encourage learning providers to adopt.

c. Other Actions

- i. BIS will ensure that employers can use the Project Search internship year as a route into an apprenticeship.
- ii. BIS will ensure that the Adult is well able to meet the needs of all people with learning disabilities, and that skills accounts are inclusive for these adults.
- iii. It is recommended that Schools, colleges and other learning providers provide open, supported work experience for all young people with learning disabilities.

The Council for Disabled Children and partners working as the national transition support team for the AHDC Transition Support Programme



The national transition support team is a programme of the Council for Disabled Children, which is hosted by the National Children's Bureau. Registered Charity No 258852. Registered in England and Wales No 952717. Registered office: 8 Wakley Street London EC1V 7QE. A Company Limited by Guarantee.

national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

TSP Case Study – Young People with Learning Disabilities Preparing for Employment in Bradford

In 2008 Bradford piloted a work experience project, where young people were supported to identify placements for the days when they were not at college. One of the aims of this project was to engage Supported Employment services with young people earlier on, and not just when they were ready to leave college.

Young people had been consulted in one special school about their aspirations for the future, with a particular focus on employment.

The project was funded by the Learning and Skills Council as a pathfinder project to develop the links between the supported employment service, and schools, and to raise young people's aspirations. Young people produced booklets identifying their aspirations, and then created an action plan as to how they can reach their goals, including college courses or work experience opportunities to support this.

More information about work on transition in Bradford is available here:

http://www.transitionsupportprogramme.org.uk/pdf/TSP_TM%20Bradford%20CS%20Final.pdf

The Council for Disabled Children and partners working as the national transition support team for the AHDC Transition Support Programme



The national transition support team is a programme of the Council for Disabled Children, which is hosted by the National Children's Bureau. Registered Charity No 258852. Registered in England and Wales No 952717. Registered office: 8 Wakley Street London EC1V 7QE. A Company Limited by Guarantee.

national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

5. Transport (Chapter 9 pp 71-74)

a. DCSF Actions

- i. DCSF will accredit travel training through the FLT
- ii. DCSF will in 2009 publish best practice in travel training.

b. Other Actions

- i. DFT will by late 2009 develop a website with guidance and best practice on travel training, and will include the needs of people with learning disabilities in its guidance to local authorities on local transport plans.
- ii. DFT will continue to work with the government's Disabled persons transport advisory Committee to further increase the accessibility of public transport, keep its publication Inclusive Mobility under review, and consider the accessibility needs of disabled groups in rural areas.
- iii. DFT will also consider how to work with the national Forum for people with Learning Disabilities to ensure that people with learning disabilities are fully consulted on its policies.

TSP Case Study – Travel Training in Redbridge

Transport for London provides travel training for disabled people across London. One disabled young person in Redbridge was supported by Transport for London to learn to travel to and from college on the bus. Transport for London provided him with 20 sessions, initially fully supervising him, and later on just observing from a distance. The young person learnt which bus to get, where to get on and off, and how to use his freedom pass. Transport for London provides this service for free, following a referral from a professional. This young person is now able to travel to college independently, and his Mum is free to pick up his younger sisters from school.

More information about work on transition in Redbridge is available here:

http://www.transitionssupportprogramme.org.uk/pdf/TSP_TM%20Redbridge%20CS%20Final.pdf

TfL has produced travel training guides, which are available from here:

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/gettingaround/transportaccessibility/1201.aspx>

The Council for Disabled Children and partners working as the national transition support team for the AHDC Transition Support Programme



Council for
Disabled
Children

The national transition support team is a programme of the Council for Disabled Children, which is hosted by the National Children's Bureau. Registered Charity No 258852. Registered in England and Wales No 952717. Registered office: 8 Wakley Street London EC1V 7QE. A Company Limited by Guarantee.

national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

6. Other areas of action

- a. Comments on the role of budgets and social care (Chapter 4)
 - i. Personal Budgets can and should be used to by support to get and keep a job.
 - ii. Person Centred Planning should be used to help individuals think about their aspirations for work.
- b. Increasing High quality job coaching (Chapter 5)
 - i. By producing a strategy by 2010 to grow workforce
 - ii. Publishing quality standards by 2009
 - iii. Changing Access to Work rules to better support people with learning difficulties.
- c. Clearing up the confusion around the benefits system (Chapter 6)
 - i. DWP is working with jobcentre plus, DCSF and DH on ways to improve the transition into work of 16-24 year olds who claim DLA
- d. Promoting self-employment (Chapter 7)
- e. The need for employers to see the case (Chapter 8)
 - i. DWP will help develop employers understanding of the benefits of employing disabled people in 2009
 - ii. DWP are offering 400 employment opportunities, DH and DCSF one each by 2011.
 - iii. Cabinet Office Jobcentre Plus, Social Exclusion Task Force and IDeA to support other public bodies to employ more people with learning difficulties.
 - iv. It is recommended that local authorities and other public bodies become exemplar employers of people with learning disabilities.
- f. Addressing barriers with where people live (Chapter 10)
 - i. DH will in 2009 consider the business case for local authorities to reduce residential care charges for people with learning disabilities who wish to work.
 - ii. DWP will introduce the recently announced permitted work income disregard for people on contributory Employment and Support Allowance, Severe Disability Allowance or Incapacity Benefit from April 2010.
 - iii. DWP will launch a public consultation on Housing Benefit reforms in July 2009
- g. Employment for the most excluded adults with learning disabilities (Chapter 11)
- h. People with learning disabilities and their families leading the way (Chapter 12)
 - i. The National Delivery Team will include a post for a self advocate and post for a family carer.

The Council for Disabled Children and partners working as the national transition support team for the AHDC Transition Support Programme



national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

- ii. It is recommended that Learning Disability Partnership Boards ensure that people with learning disabilities and their families are fully involved in delivering *Valuing People Now* and *Valuing Employment Now*
- iii. It is recommended that regions consider using part of PSA 16 regional allocations for the Family Led Jobs programme
- i. Better Data and Performance (Chapter 13)
 - i. The Government will publish targets and milestones for this strategy in 2010
 - ii. PSA 16 may be adjusted after review of the first set of data
 - iii. DH will recommend that Learning Disability Partnership Boards report progress on every area of *Valuing People Now* and select targets based on it.

TSP Case Study – Local Authorities Employing Young People with Learning Disabilities in Leicester City

The Learning Disability Partnership Board in Leicester has an employment sub-group to look at the employment of people with learning disabilities. The chair of this group led on negotiations with the local authority. As a result, 18 people with learning disabilities are now employed by the council in various roles including administration, person-centred planning training assistants, and co-chair of the partnership board.

More information about work on transition in Leicester is available here:

http://www.transitionsupportprogramme.org.uk/pdf/TSP_TM%20Leicester%20City%20CS%20Final.pdf

Keith Clements – Policy Officer, National Transition Support Team – 03/08/09

The Council for Disabled Children and partners working as the national transition support team for the AHDC Transition Support Programme



The national transition support team is a programme of the Council for Disabled Children, which is hosted by the National Children's Bureau. Registered Charity No 258852. Registered in England and Wales No 952717. Registered office: 8 Wakley Street London EC1V 7QE. A Company Limited by Guarantee.