

national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

Frequently Asked Questions – SAQ Sept 2009

The Transition Support Programme

What is the Transition Support Programme?

The DCSF/DH Aiming High for Disabled Children: better support for families review found that more needs to be done to coordinate services for disabled young people in transition to adult life, and to ensure young people and families can access high quality information at key points. To address this, the AHDC programme announced £19m funding between 2008 and 2011 to develop a Transition Support Programme. We are currently mid-way through the 3 year programme.

What are the aims of the Transition Support Programme?

The Transition Support Programme aims to raise the standards of transition support and provision in all local areas. It aims to support all local areas to meet their statutory requirements and minimum standards in transition and go on to develop good practice. The Programme aims to see greater consistency across all local areas.

Where does the Transition Support Programme fit into the Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme?

Transition is one of the 5 work streams that make up the DCSF/DH Aiming High for Disabled children agenda to transform disabled children's services. The others are short breaks, childcare, palliative care and the Core Offer and national indicator.

Who do you define as 'disabled children'?

The Transition Support Programme aims to improve services for all disabled young people with a statement of special educational needs and young people with complex health needs from the ages of 14 to 19 and beyond. The Programme also aims to make a positive impact on young people at school action and school action plus who will benefit from an improvement in support from IAG providers and from universal support agencies.

For the purposes of the Transition Support Programme we use the definition of disability found in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 – 'a person is disabled if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day' activities.'

The delivery of the Transition Support Programme

Who delivers the Transition Support Programme?

The Transition Support Programme is led by the National Transition Support Team, based at the Council for Disabled Children, working under contract to DCSF/DH and delivered in partnership with the Child Health and Maternity Partnership and National Strategies.

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

Who are the NTST?

The National Transition Support Team is a coalition based at the Council for Disabled Children. They lead the Transition Support Programme and provide named advisor support to local areas in Offer 1.

Who is CHaMP?

The Child Health and Maternity Partnership (formerly CSIP) is a national service improvement organisation supported by the Office of the Strategic Health Authorities Chief Executives and the Department of Health. CHaMP provides named advisor support to Offer 2 local areas and regional support in all 9 government regions.

Who are the National Strategies?

The National Strategies are professional development programmes for early years, primary and secondary school teachers, practitioners and managers. They are one of the Government's principal vehicles for improving the quality of learning and teaching in schools and early years settings and raising standards of attainment. National Strategies provide named advisor support to Offer 3 local areas and their network of 10 LDD/SEN regional Hubs provide regional support.

The Self-Assessment Questionnaire (see Appendix 1.1)

What is the Self Assessment Questionnaire or SAQ?

The SAQ is an assessment designed to capture a local area's practice in relation to the main statutory requirements and guidance at the time of transition for disabled young people. It also enables a local area to share areas of innovation and good practice.

It is evident that in order for disabled young people and their families to experience positive support during the transition process a wide range of agencies, departments and processes need to work together effectively. The Self Assessment Questionnaire has been designed to promote this collaborative working.

What comments were made after the 2008 SAQ 1?

After the SAQ 1 was completed feedback was received directly at the Transition Support Programme pan-regional events, directly from local areas and from partner agencies following their meetings with local transition leads.

There were technical difficulties that needed to be addressed, the need for greater transparency about how the data would be used to determine offers of support, the need for greater clarity in some key areas, and the need to provide more evidence to back-up what is a self-assessment process if it is to be used to determine levels of support.

These comments have been addressed below and reflected in some changes to the SAQ 2. Positive feedback was received from many local areas who said that the SAQ provided an opportunity to revisit their transition practice locally.

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

Who devised the SAQ 2 for 2009?

SAQ 1 has been revised by the National Transition Support Team and Transition Support Programme partners – National Strategies, and Child Health and Maternity Partnership. Revisions have been made in light of consultations with local areas and interested parties.

What's the difference between SAQ 1 and SAQ 2?

The format has been changed to make it easier to use. There have been some technical changes to enable the SAQ 2 to be saved. There are also more questions about key areas that require a more detailed level of response to assess practice, and therefore target support, in Year 3 of the Programme. However, it will still be possible to measure like for like data between SAQ 1 and SAQ 2 and therefore identify progress.

Why is SAQ 2 different from SAQ 1?

SAQ 2 has been amended in the light of feedback from local areas about SAQ 1 and to provide a more detailed response about some key areas e.g. health engagement. SAQ 1 also enabled us to get a better picture of how local areas are working around transition. This greater understanding has led to more informed questions in some areas.

Why have SAQ 2?

The SAQ 2 is being used to capture a local area's position in relation to the key transition indicators in December 2009. It will enable a local area to measure their progress over the 10 months since SAQ 1 and set local priorities for the next year.

The SAQ 2 is also the tool the Transition Support Programme will use to measure progress made by local areas since SAQ 1 and determine how well local areas are meeting statutory requirements and guidance in relation to transition.

The data from the SAQ 2 will be used by DCSF and DH to make decisions about what support is offered to local areas in Year 3 of the Programme.

It hasn't been 12 months since I completed the SAQ 1...

The deadline for the SAQ 2 is 1st December 2009 and will record the progress that had been made over 10 months since the SAQ 1. This is a reasonable time span if not empirically ideal. The deadlines allow time for Government to consider the SAQ 2 recommendations, consult Ministers and make funding decisions for 2010/11.

Why should I complete SAQ 2?

The Transition Support Programme is delivering part of the Government's Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme to transform the lives of all disabled young people and their families. Completing the SAQ 2 will ensure that your local area can take advantage of support offered by the Transition Support Programme to local areas in 2010/11.

The SAQ 2 also provides a point from which to mark progress and plan for the next year.

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

Is the SAQ 2 voluntary?

Aiming High for Disabled Children is a priority Government programme. Funding has been provided under the transition strand to each local authority to encourage inclusion of the SAQ into your normal planning cycle along with associated activity to support input from relevant services and greater engagement with young people. Non-completion of the SAQ would highlight that the funding and local advisor support is not being used and potentially raise additional questions about how the local area is providing effective support for disabled young people.

Can I provide a local assessment or report instead of completing the SAQ2?

No. Without a national/standardised response it would be impossible to benchmark areas and target the levels of support provided by the Programme.

Completing the SAQ 2

Who is the SAQ 2 sent to and why?

The SAQ 2 is being sent to the Director of Children's Services who has overall responsibility to implement the Government's Aiming High for Disabled Children's Programme across the local area. Therefore the Director of Children's Services will be able to ensure that the correct professionals are supported in completing the SAQ.

The completion of SAQ 2 is most likely to be coordinated by the Local Authority transition lead. Their details will accompany the letter to agency leads. They will be sent a password to access the on-line SAQ directly.

Transition is a joint and multi-agency responsibility. Information about the SAQ 2 process is also sent to the Director of Adult Services, the Local Authority Education lead and the PCT chief executive. It will also be copied to the service/strategic manager for disabled children and, to the Lead Member for children and families.

Who should complete the SAQ 2?

The SAQ 2 should be coordinated by the Local Authority transition lead. It should be completed in partnership with PCT's, children's social care, adult social care, other partner agencies and disabled young people and their families.

How long will it take to complete SAQ 2?

SAQ 2 is a more in-depth document than SAQ 1 that explores further the systems, processes and evidence in place regarding transition services. Consequently it will take more time to collate the necessary information to complete SAQ 2 effectively. Your named advisor should have been supporting you to begin to collate the information necessary for SAQ 2 in the work they are completing with you. In conjunction with the online version we have produced a word version that can be shared with other lead transition professionals so that each respective agency can contribute effectively to the areas of SAQ 2 that involve them.

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

Once this information has been collated it should take the transition lead no longer than 1 ½ hours to input this information onto the online version. This year each page is able to be saved and returned to and therefore does not need to be completed in one sitting.

Who are the 'transition leads'?

The actual role of the 'transition leads' are different in each Local Authority. They are usually the person with strategic responsibility for Transition within the local area (i.e. Connexions, PCT, Adults Social Care, Children's Social Care and Education representatives). The transition lead is the main point of contact with the Transition Support Programme's named advisor and the person coordinating the local Transition Development Plan.

Who are the 'named advisors'?

Each local area has been working with a named advisor from one of the Transition Support Programme's partner agencies in Year 2. Named advisors for Offer 1 local areas are from the National Transition Support Team; Offer 2 named advisors are from CHaMP and Offer 3 are from National Strategies. Please follow the link where you will find a link to the regional leads for CHaMP and National Strategies <http://www.transitionsupportprogramme.org.uk/resources/regional.aspx> who can put you in touch with local named advisors.

What support will I get to complete SAQ 2?

Each local area received £10,000 in May 2009 from the DCSF Transition Support Programme as part of the Aiming High strand of the Early Years, Sure Start and Childcare Grant 2009/2010. This funding has been made available to all local areas to support the completion of the SAQ, facilitate multi-agency working and engagement with disabled young people. Fuller information is available at:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/research/publications/surestartpublications/1925/>

Each local area has a named advisor from the Transition Support Programme. Part of their role is to provide support in completing SAQ 2.

What can we use the £10,000 in the Sure Start grant for?

Guidance from the DCSF about use of the funding for transition was set out in the Early Years, Sure Start and Childcare Memorandum of Grant letter sent to all Local Authorities in February 2009 (paragraphs 51 & 52). The text made it clear that the £10,000 was to be used to provide 'funding to each local authority to encourage inclusion of the questionnaire into your normal planning cycle, associated activity to support input from relevant services and greater engagement with young people about access to recreation facilities, work and training.' Your Sure Start finance officer should have a copy of the letter, but if not it can be accessed at

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/research/publications/surestartpublications/1925/>

What support can my named advisor give in completing the SAQ 2?

Your named advisor is familiar with your local area and your local priorities. They will be able to offer advice and support on completing the different sections and answer or seek clarification from the NTST on any additional queries you may have.

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

It is also the role of the named advisor to gather supporting evidence for the SAQ 2. They will be able to verify additional materials or information that supports answers provided in SAQ 2.

What supporting evidence will I need to provide?

You should be able to verify the answers you provide on the SAQ 2 if required. You are not expected to provide additional evidence for every answer, for example, if you say that you have a multi-agency steering group, if required, you will need to provide evidence supporting this. For example if your named advisor has attended one of these steering group meetings they can verify this or you may be able to show them Minutes from the meeting.

Analysis of the SAQ (see 'SAQ assessment process' for more detailed information)

Why do you analyse the SAQ?

The SAQ 2 provides a measure of a local area's performance in key areas of transition for disabled young people. This measurement is used to help target what support will be offered to each local area to move forward towards and beyond minimum standards for transition.

How will you analyse the data in SAQ 2?

Each question in the SAQ 2 is related to statutory requirements, the application of government guidance or demonstration of good practice in transition. A scoring system will be used to determine how a local area has assessed it is meeting these indicators. This analysis will be used with other evidence to determine the support offered to the local area in Year 3.

What other evidence will be considered?

We will look for materials that we would expect local areas to have in place in order to support disabled young people through their transition to adulthood, and reflect the information provided in the SAQ 2. Some examples would be information for young people about transition, an operational transition pathway, minutes of transition steering group meetings.

Your named advisor will also be providing additional information about progress being made on your Transition Development Plan.

Who will gather this evidence?

Supporting evidence will be gathered by your Transition Support Programme named advisor. They may simply need to verify that they have seen the evidence, rather than take a copy.

Why do you gather additional evidence?

The SAQ 2 is fundamentally a self-assessment. This year we are able to gather the additional evidence local areas have to support the information in the SAQ 2. This will enable a more comprehensive assessment and provide greater transparency and levels of confidence in decision making about support offers in Year 3.

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

What will you use the analysis for?

The data on the SAQ 2 is used to assess how well a local area is meeting its statutory responsibilities and minimum standards for transition, and to measure progress and change since SAQ 1. It will also demonstrate evidence of good practice in the local area. This will be used to target the support offered to that local area in Year 3.

Will the data be used for anything else?

The collated data will be used to capture a national overview of transition, and monitor national progress and change since SAQ 1. This will inform government about the effectiveness of the Transition Support Programme.

How decisions about Year 3 support are made (see ‘SAQ assessment process’ for more detailed information)

What information will you use to make decisions about support in Year 3?

The assessment of support around transition is complex and multi-agency. The SAQ 2 will provide a quantitative measure. The supporting evidence will provide qualitative information to give context to the SAQ.

The key decision will be determining if a local area is meeting statutory requirements and minimum standards. The SAQ 2 data will be key in making this decision. Evidence from the named advisor will support this decision.

Evidence of (emerging) good practice across the 5 TSP focus areas will also be considered. For more information see SAQ assessment process (document can be found on the website).

Who will make the decisions?

The Transition Support Programme partner agencies will make decisions about a local area's support (see SAQ assessment process). They will then make recommendations to the Department for Children Schools and Families and the Department of Health about what level of support should be offered in Year 3.

DCSF and DH will consider the recommendations and the evidence supporting how the decisions were made and make recommendations to Ministers. They may ask questions, seek clarification or request to see evidence before reaching their decision.

How will they make the decisions about what support local areas get in Year 3?

The offer of support in Year 3 will be based on an assessment of your local area's ability to move beyond minimum standards and develop good practice.

There is a 4 stage assessment process that is outlined in the ‘SAQ assessment process’.

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

When will we be told what support we will get in Year 3?

Your offer of support for Year 3 will be made in early 2010

Will we get any other feedback?

You will receive feedback from your named advisor in early 2010

What if I disagree?

In the first instance you should have a meeting with your named advisor who should be able to outline how the decision about your level of support was reached and address your concerns. If you are still unclear your concerns will be addressed by the National Transition Support Team, Programme Director.

What will support look like in Year 3?

The Programme has weighted funding into Year 3 when it is anticipated more local areas will be in a position to move on beyond minimum standards and develop good and sustainable practice in transition. All areas will continue to have a named advisor to offer support with plans for development.

Why don't you make the SAQ analysis public?

The process of how the SAQ 2 is analysed is public – see the SAQ assessment process. The Programme is concerned with seeing progress in individual local areas, not simply with attainment. The Programme aims to provide support to local areas to deliver this progress. Feedback on SAQ 2 analysis can be most effectively used at a local level and will be shared locally by the named advisors.

Why can't I compare myself to other local areas?

The Programme's focus is on supporting individual local areas to improve the service they provide to disabled young people in their area.

Without all the additional supporting information comparisons are not easy to make and it is not a priority to attempt to do so.

The regional support offered by the Programme provides an opportunity to share good practice regionally and make networks to help all local areas develop their work around transition.

National Transition Support Team

3rd September 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.