

# School/College Perspectives on the Transition from Residential Education to Adult Support for Young People of Transition Age with Learning Disabilities/Autism

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## Background

- Many young people with learning disabilities/autism **attend residential schools or colleges, on either a termly or a 52 week basis.**
- Previous research has focused on the use of residential educational placements (e.g. Gore et al., 2015), or the characteristics of young people placed in them (e.g. Pilling et al., 2007), however little is known about the **transition process from such placements to adult support.**
- The current data provide an **overview of school/college staff perspectives on the transition process from education to adult support provision.**

## Methodology

- Data were collected as part of a larger study relating to transitioning from a residential educational setting.
- Fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with school and college staff** focusing on their experiences of the transition process in order to identify factors related to subsequent placement being in- or out-of-area.
- Interviews were transcribed and thematically analysed.**

## Most common factors identified related to placement location

Theme	Description
<b>Characteristics of young people (YP)</b>	YP with challenging behaviours and physical disabilities are the most difficult to place upon leaving an educational setting
<b>Specialist support required</b>	Does the YP require continued access to specialist support such as speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and medical support?
<b>Family context</b>	Family carers may advocate for out-of-area placements if they think this will better allow their child's needs and aspirations to be met
<b>Student Voice</b>	What does the young person want, where do they want to live, who do they want to live with and how do they wish to spend their adult lives?
<b>Adult social care</b>	Are the number of places required exceeding those available and are those that are available appropriate?
<b>Professional context</b>	Perceptions are that the initial aim of the local authority is to return the YP back to their local area. However, joined-up multi-agency working is vital, particularly between children's and adults' services
<b>Transition process &amp; prior planning</b>	It is essential that the transition process is planned well enough in advance in order for both the YP and all professionals involved to secure a smooth and thorough transition

If you're talking about going back to your local area, you are not going to have... an SLT probably who can support you with your communication...

...the thing that I think is always forgotten in a transition, or isn't given enough precedence, is the young person's preference

... it is really about the local offer and what the local authority can offer the child, or the young person as well, when that's all very dependent on the location of the family

The children and young people that have **complex needs** and **challenging behaviours**, they're the ones which make difficult transitions because... **those placements are a lot more scarce**

**Some parents have moved** to be closer to here, and will more than happily move again... for them having a contented happy child is vastly more important to the family...

...it's **often age inappropriate**... It could be a care home... with maybe the youngest person who is 40/50 and then you've got a 20-year-old quite often with various complex needs...

...if it's a residential house **you have to go when there's a bed**, and when there is a bed you need to **secure the funding** and you need to go, because very, very rarely will local authorities do an overlap in funding to allow that transition period

## Conclusions

### Residential education staff perceive that:

- Availability of **suitable local adult social care provisions** may be **limited** according to the young person's specific needs.
- Young people and family carers may consider **out-of-area provisions** if they **better suit the young person's future needs and aspirations.**
- The apparent **shortage of adult social care provision is likely to rise** as more young people transition from residential educational settings each year.
- Prior **multi-agency planning** is essential in order to secure a smooth transition and avoid a potential shortage of provision.

This poster presents independent research funded by the National Institute for Health Research School for Social Care Research. The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the NIHR SSCR, NHS, the National Institute for Health Research or the Department of Health and Social Care.