

# **Strategic Transition to Adulthood Group (STAG) south east**

## **Newsletter No. 4 – December 2009**

**Welcome to the fourth STAG Newsletter.** We hope that our series of newsletters will keep you up to date with some of the things that are happening in transition from school to adult life for young people with learning difficulties and/or difficulties (LDD). We hope it will be useful whether you work with young people as they plan their futures or if you just want to keep up to date with what is happening to make transition better for these young people.

### **Transition in the South East Region**

#### **The Transition Support Programme**

Many of you will have been involved in completing the self-assessment questionnaire, which helped local authorities and their partners analyse the progress they have made in the second year of the Transition Support Programme. The questionnaire was complex and comprehensive so STAG was very pleased that all local areas in the south east completed and submitted theirs on time. The national transition support team (ntst) completed an initial report for the DCSF in early December and this was followed by a meeting between the DCSF, ntst and their partners in the Programme – the Child Health and Maternity Partnership and National Strategies - and it is anticipated that information about how support and funding for year 3 of the Programme will be allocated will be available in the New Year.

#### **Transition Support Programme workshops**

In the region, the SEN Regional Hub is working as a part of the Programme to offer a number of workshops designed to help improve practice in transition. Following the successful events that have already taken place, further workshops are planned on the themes of self directed support and post 16 opportunities, with follow-up workshops if there is a demand. There will also be a follow up to the workshop on the transfer of responsibilities from the LSC to local authorities and there is likely to be a transition conference later in the year.

Some of you will have been aware that the assessment workshop planned for the autumn was postponed and this will now be held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2010.

Details and dates of the workshops will be circulated to local authorities but further details can be obtained from [chantal.homan@scpct.nhs.uk](mailto:chantal.homan@scpct.nhs.uk).

If you would like more information about the work the SEN Regional Hub is contributing to the Transition Support Programme and its wider work, please see [www3.hants.gov.uk/sen-hub](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/sen-hub).

## Getting A Life

The Getting A Life Programme is a national initiative which sets out to enable young people with learning disabilities to have a joined up and person centred transition which facilitates support and control in all areas of their life, with a particular focus on employment. There are project sites in each region of the country. In the south east, the two local sites are Kent and Medway. STAG is the only regional site in the country and one of its aims is to share learning from the projects in the south east across the region.

Kent and Medway are each working with 30 young people.

In Kent work has been progressing. Person centred review training has been offered through Getting A Life to schools and colleges and a number of projects are underway which support disabled young people to access employment. Research is being undertaken to look at critical success factors in getting people with learning disabilities into employment and an accessible pathway through the employment benefits maze is being developed.

For further information about Getting A Life in Kent please contact [sheelagh.smith@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sheelagh.smith@hotmail.co.uk).

## Valuing People Now (2009)

Valuing People Now (2009) places an even greater emphasis on local Learning Disability Partnership Boards (LDPB) to ensure the effective delivery of VP Now objectives. In addition for the first time, LDPBs are being asked to complete a self assessment annual report detailing progress in implementing the Valuing People strategy.

The Valuing People Team is committed to working with Learning Disability Partnership Boards to achieve the objectives for transition in Valuing People Now.

<b>Valuing People Now from progress to transformation The Vision for Transition Three Years From Now</b>	
<b>This will be different.....</b>	<b>We will know this because.....</b>
Every young person with a learning disability and with a "statement" will have person centred reviews from the age of 14 to 19.	Young people will tell us that they are feeling more supported and are having a real say about their future.
The Year 9 Review will produce a person centred transition plan that will	Evaluation of the Transition Support Programme will tell us this is

<p>inform the commissioning and provision of future services and supports, be reviewed each year, and be at the core of a smooth transition to adult services.</p> <p>Young people will leave school and enter paid work and education in far greater numbers than at present.</p> <p>A substantial increase in the number of young people taking up individual budgets and direct payments.</p>	<p>happening.</p> <p>The number of young people recorded as “not in education, employment or training” will show this reduction.</p> <p>Nationally collected and analysed data will tell us this.</p>
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Transition is very high profile at this time and the National Transition Support Programme are offering support in a number of ways to local authorities, it is the VPT intention to complement all of the existing initiatives.

The VP Team are currently visiting each Partnership Board to raise awareness of all the key elements of current transition related initiatives and offer practical support and advice to LDPBs in achieving the VP Now objectives for transition, including the annual report requirements.

The VP team also hold two SE Region Transition/PCP Network forums a year that focus on specific area of the wider VP Now agenda. The next forum meeting on 24 March 2010 will be focussing on the Valuing People Health agenda, e.g. health action transition plans, protocols and pathways.

### **Action for Inclusion**

Action for Inclusion is an initiative established in the south east in 2006, which aims to develop inclusive approaches within the Further Education Sector. It includes most FE providers, 6<sup>th</sup> forms and independent providers in the region together with some training providers. Action for Inclusion has recently launched its website which can be found at [www.actionforinclusion.net](http://www.actionforinclusion.net). On 17<sup>th</sup> March 2010 there will be an event, which will bring together Action for Inclusion, local authorities and the LSC to showcase and develop good practice. Plans for the event are being finalised and numbers will be limited so, if you are interested in going, please note the date and let [Joanne.cooke@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:Joanne.cooke@lsc.gov.uk) know that you would like further information when it is available.

### **National developments**

**The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act** was passed in November 2009. This Act dissolves the LSC – funding for securing further education and training for all 16-19 year olds, and young people up to the age of 25 with LDD who have a Section 139A learning difficulty assessment, will pass to local authorities. Local authorities will be supported by the Young

People's Learning Agency. Another new body, The Skills Funding Agency, will have responsibility for funding adult learners.

The Act gives an entitlement to all suitably qualified 16-18 year olds to an apprenticeship. Disabled young people will be able to use alternative methods to the qualifications usually required to demonstrate their competence and the National Apprenticeship Service will encourage the participation of young disabled people.

Under the Act, local authorities will also have to consider the transport needs of young disabled people aged 19-25 when providing education and training.

### **Learning Difficulty Assessments.**

Under the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act, a Section 139A learning difficulty assessment will determine whether a local authority or the Skills Funding Agency is responsible for funding learners with LDD aged 19-25.

Guidance on these assessments was also published in November. It is current to March 2010, when new guidance will be published to reflect changes brought about by the ASCL Act.

Local authorities now have the legal duty to make arrangements for these assessments to be carried out. Some of the points particularly relevant to local authorities include:

- An expectation of multi-agency approaches and a holistic multi-agency assessment process
- That the process is supported by senior leadership teams monitoring the quality and sufficiency of the assessments produced through robust quality assurance systems
- A recognition that those young people who will benefit most from an assessment will be those whose needs are around the level where they would be considered for statementing in a school setting but whose needs have been met without the need for a statement
- That, for young people with statements, it is the LA that is maintaining a statement of SEN that is responsible for the assessment even if the young person is educated in a different LA area
- Clear expectations about the level of training required by professionals carrying out the assessments and their access to supervision and support
- That the report of the assessment should be clear where and how the learner's needs can be met and identify appropriate provision.

The above are only some of the points included in the guidance, which is available at <http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-01111-2009.pdf>.

## **The National Commissioning Framework**

Guidance on the process for planning and commissioning learning provision is contained in a draft Framework open for public consultation until 5<sup>th</sup> February 2012. It is available at [www.dcs.gov.uk](http://www.dcs.gov.uk)

The Framework is guided by a set of principles which include:

- The system will operate in the interests of the learner, addressing learner choice and diversity and will ensure access to learner entitlement and curriculum pathways
- The system will take into account the needs of employers and employability
- The system will seek the involvement of providers as key strategic partners
- Provision should be sustainable, impartial and provider neutral, securing high quality provision from the most appropriate quality assured providers
- Funding – based upon the national funding formula and applied at the level of the provider – will follow the learner
- The process will provide and encourage flexibility for local authorities and other partners to respond to needs.
- The system will ensure consistency in key features such as the timing of stakeholder involvement, timing of allocations, outcomes, data submission and flows and the funding formula/rates
- The system must be transparent and equitable and compliant with the principles in the Third Sector Compact
- The system must deliver value for money.

A separate annex deals with provision for learners with LDD. It is however anticipated that this process will be informed by the outcomes of the Ofsted review, which is due to report in 2010.

## **Keeping Young People in Mind**

On 7<sup>th</sup> January the Government published its response to the recommendations made in last year's independent review of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. "Keeping Children and Young People In Mind" sets out the Government's commitment to support local areas to deliver effective and high quality mental health services for children and young people, drawing upon existing evidence and good practice. It can be found at [http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/news/content.cfm?landing=government\\_sets\\_out\\_vision\\_for\\_highquality\\_child\\_mental\\_health\\_services&type=1](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/news/content.cfm?landing=government_sets_out_vision_for_highquality_child_mental_health_services&type=1).

## **The work of STAG**

STAG is in the process of developing its terms of reference and updating its membership to take account of changing structures in local authorities and organisations that support transition. These will be published on the SEN Regional Hub website - [www3.hants.gov.uk/sen-hub](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/sen-hub) - along with the revised

membership list. Along with the newsletter, this website will be a mechanism to communicate with you about issues relating to transition and share the work the group is doing.

The chart below shows the current membership. If you want to discuss anything about the work of STAG, to share good practice or raise an issue that you would like to address through the newsletter, or if you have any feedback on the newsletter, please contact a member on the email addresses in the chart.

Deborah Bagnall	Chichester College	Deborah.bagnall@chichester.ac.uk
Kate Brennan	Newbury College	k-brennan@newbury-college.ac.uk
Sally Brooks	Surrey County Council, Partnership with Parents	Sally.brooks@surreycc.gov.uk
Steve Cochrane	National Strategies	Steve.cochrane@nationalstrategies.co.uk
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Phil Dickinson	SEN Regional Hub	Phil.Dickinson@hants.gov.uk
Jonathan Gardam	West Sussex County Council	Jonathan.gardam@westsussex.gov.uk
Margaret Palmer	Consultant for LSC	margaret@palmerconsulting.net
Jo Poynter	Valuing People Support Team	<a href="mailto:jo@vpst.co.uk">jo@vpst.co.uk</a> (joint chair of STAG)
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	Children's Services, Slough Borough Council	
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