

**Response to the Inquiry into post Special Educational Need Provision in education, employment and training for those with Learning Disabilities.**

Summary.

This response has been sent on behalf of the Physiotherapy Service BHSCT. The service delivers to children with special educational need across 6 schools sites across the Trust; young adults from schools are referred to the Adult Learning Disability ALD service following Transition.

Physiotherapy is one of the AHP services that has not received funding for any dedicated transition role to date, hence the challenge of managing transition referrals (many with complex needs) being received into a service ALD that has had an increase in referral rate by 36% since 20 11/2012 with no additional staffing.

The individuals who have contributed to the response have many years of experience working in Schools and ALD Services and have expert knowledge in this area.

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## **Response to terms of reference.**

1.1 - The choices and opportunities available for those with Learning Difficulties are;

Further Education through Belfast Metropolitan College,

1.2 Voluntary sector;

1.21 Orchardville Society and NOW source work experience/places for young people in a range of settings. They also provide a range of training schemes to prepare train young people to function in the work experience/place. The schemes have to be funded from different sources e.g. Big Lottery, Children in Need. (The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust BHSCT contracted out the role of Transition Officer to the voluntary sector)

1.3 Day Centre and Community Day Services

1.4 The Employment range for all of the above .... Bottling plants, catering initiatives, gardening centres, LOAF catering, riding centres, various employment opportunities e.g. Ikea, Coke, Bombardier,

2.1 To seek the views of young people, family carers and groups representing children and young people with learning disabilities through;

2.11 Focus groups – young people on their own, family and carers, educational representatives, Allied Health Professionals (AHP) and Voluntary groups

2.12 Face to face meetings with the young person-

2.13 Multi-disciplinary meeting including the young person it must be remembered that with freedom of choice the young person can accept or reject the attendance of the AHP at meetings. This will impact on the dissemination of information that is required to manage the young person's care.

2.14 "Open day information exchange" where parents and young people can meet the interviewing team in school or through adult services

2.15 Stake holder involvement- voluntary sectors, and other statutory agencies including AHP's

2.16 Parent forum

2.17 Service users' forums- run by BHSCT for all users

3.1 Evaluation of the current provision and its effectiveness for the full range of young people with learning disabilities should be sought.

4.1 There needs to be the difficult conversation about the realistic outcomes and learning abilities of the young person with their carers.

4.12 A personalised and specific set of learning and practical skills for the young person needs to be developed during the Transition phase or even prior to this time.

4.13 There needs to be training to parents to promote independence of their young child from an early stage in;

- Self care, personal care, cooking, looking after clothes, managing money, healthy life style, managing transportation, etc

5.1 There needs to be a holistic, joined up and standardised approach for the management and support for young people with Learning Disabilities.

5.2 There should be a Physiotherapy Transition Officer based in adult services working into the schools to support the transition of these young people. (Other AHP services have funded posts dealing with Transition specific issues)

6 f. If physical education is to be included in the definition of further education in this student population Physiotherapy needs to be included in the early planning stages to provide liaison and support to roll out the service setting SMART goals.