

# **PE2148/B: Improve Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services to Adult Mental Health Services transition**

## **Sarah Boyack MSP written submission, 14 May 2025**

One of my constituents submitted this petition after a poor experience with the local Health Board which left their child uncertain about their future, and with deteriorating mental and physical health, when Adult Mental Health Services declined to accept a referral from CAMHS. That experience is currently the subject of a complaint with the health board and the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

The petition calls on the Scottish Government to ‘improve transitions by ensuring national referral guidelines and criteria are adhered to.’ In her submission to the committee, the Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport, Maree Todd MSP mentions the published guidance and service standards that ‘support services to plan for transitions in care, and help young people and their families navigate transitions between services.’

Reading the guidance and service standards, along with the Transition Care Plan Guidance, developed with the Scottish Youth Parliament, it is clear that young people should know what to expect, should be involved in the process and that it should be managed in a way that is appropriate to each individual. Words such as ‘holistic’, ‘continuity’ and ‘flexibility’ are used.

But how does the Scottish Government monitor adherence to the guidelines and service standards? How do they know if there are issues within Health Boards that impact on smooth transitions? My constituents have spoken to me about their experience; how many others throughout Scotland are in a similar position? This is the key aim of this petition – to ensure that the guidelines are followed, and every young person gets the support they need.

My constituent also raises the prospect of a ‘lost generation’.

At an age when young people are experiencing lots of transitions – to adulthood – and perhaps wrestling with their sense of identity, leaving school, moving into further education, training or employment, it’s critical that where ongoing support is required, it is managed well. Without appropriate support or treatment, there is a risk that some young people will be unable to work or contribute to their communities. Young people and their families must not feel abandoned or ‘in limbo’.