

Members of the Education, Children and Young People Committee  
By email

29 June 2023

## **Disabled Children and Young People (Transitions to Adulthood) Bill**

Dear Members,

At the ALLIANCE, the Children and Young People Programme are involved in a range of policy and practice issues across Scotland. Some of our most recent work includes ongoing engagement in key representation platforms, such as the Children's Sector Strategic and Policy Forum (CSSPF), the GIRFEC Advisory Group, the Disabled Children and Young People Advisory Group (DCYPAG) and the National Transitions into Adulthood Strategy Working Group.

Through the ALLIANCE membership, we maintain strong relationships with key stakeholders working in the children and young people's sector. Our Senior Development Officer has sought member's views on transitions through a Members Networking Event and additional engagement activities. I wanted to take this opportunity to share some of the feedback received related to the Disabled Children and Young People (Transitions to Adulthood) Bill.

The Bill, introduced to improve opportunities for disabled children and young people as they grow up has been generally well received. However, concerns have been raised about the current legislative landscape, with many unsure that legislation will lead to meaningful change. Investment in culture change is more than legislation. The ALLIANCE, along with members agree that any legislation must be back up by adequate funding for it to be successful. Much of the feedback gathered also expressed that transitions have been a huge challenge for a number of years, presenting the same issues but with little change to date.

You will be aware that transitions can bring about a huge amount of stress for families. Members are concerned about the lack of suitable services that exist for those transitioning with some describing it like "falling off a cliff edge". This lack of services has the potential to leave families feeling abandoned and uncertain about the future. Much of the work to navigate services falls on the family which can be stressful and challenging.

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people at the centre

The appointment of key transitions workers in some local authority areas has received success with families, although this appears to be a postcode lottery as not all local authorities currently house this role. There must be equality of access. This role has been seen as an asset to families during the time of transitions however, the role still faces challenges as services do not exist to support young adults at time of transitions. There has also been feedback that this role requires specialist training. Members feel that there needs to be more funding to increase spread of the role nationally. In addition, the ALLIANCE along with members have highlighted the need for easy to access avenues for redress when and if families feel that a good transition has not been realised.

In summary, some of our members are concerned that although the Bill is well intentioned, it can only be successful with a full commitment from the Scottish Government to deliver the wider funding and cultural change necessary. The ALLIANCE looks forward to continuing work to deliver on this priority and would be happy to arrange a meeting between members and the relevant team members at the ALLIANCE to discuss any of these issues in more detail. To arrange a meeting, please contact Susan Brooks at [susan.brooks@alliance-scotland.org.uk](mailto:susan.brooks@alliance-scotland.org.uk)

Yours sincerely,

Sara Redmond  
Chief Officer of Development

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