

# Highland Children's Forum

April 2017



## Highland Children's Forum Consultation Work

**Highland Children's Forum (HCF) had its TV debut** as a follow on from involvement in the eCap Northern Periphery Conference at the Centre for Health Science. Three young people represented HCF at this conference about their experience of accessing child and adolescent mental health services to delegates from Scotland, Norway, Sweden and Finland. The response was extremely positive and the University of Aberdeen are keen to work in partnership with HCF in the future while delegates from Sweden would like HCF to do a focus group and compare with the results of a similar group in Sweden around young people and health services. As a result of the conference, Rachael (one of the young people who spoke), Emma Thomas (Consultation Lead) and Prof Phil Wilson from the University of Aberdeen were part of major media coverage of the event on STV, BBC Alba, The Herald, The Press and Journal and The Courier.

The transitions report, *Moving On - My Life After School*, was presented to the Education, Children and Adult Service committee at the same time as a transitions options appraisal from the Joint Transitions Project Board, see page 3. The full and summary reports will be available on the website shortly.

The "Not in Full Time Education" consultation is well under way, with most participants identified and consultation having commenced. HCF is delighted to have Maggie Hume, our Project Worker, working with Emma Thomas on this project.

The Sexual Health and Relationships consultation is still in the development stages. This project is going to involve Peer Consultants. The Peer Consultants have now been identified and will receive training prior to carrying out supervised consultations with their peers. The Peer Consultants and a range of other stakeholders (such as young people on a LGBT support group along with education, health and wellbeing professionals) have been involved in the development of the research design and methodology for this project.

Crocus Group - CL met with staff and young people from the Inverness Crocus group to help them explore the issues around using direct personal testimonies on film and DVD.

At the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee (ECAS) meeting in March, HCF report "Moving on – life after school" was presented by some young people and the Consultation Lead. Immediately following this item on the agenda, was a proposal for joint transitions planning for young people with complex additional support needs as they cross from children's services under the Highland Council to adult services under NHS Highland. Please see the explanation of the proposed options on the next page. Highland Children's Forum is keen to hear views from young people and their parents about these options.

Each of the 9 Community Partnerships is hosting a workshop to hear community and third sector views on the following themes:

- Transport
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Poverty
- Engagement and Empowerment
- Safer, resilient communities

To find out when your local workshop is happening, contact: [info@highlandtsi.org.uk](mailto:info@highlandtsi.org.uk)

Mums and Babies Survey: the deadline for the survey has been extended until the end of May. It is now available in [hard copy](#) or in [SurveyMonkey](#)

Policy Lead attended the first of four [Together Scotland](#) seminars on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The first seminar focused on UNCRC in law. There is recognition of the progress Scotland is making towards implementation of UNCRC, with the duty on Scottish Government and public bodies to keep UNCRC "under consideration" and to report 3 yearly on improvements made (Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014). This still falls short of complete incorporation of UNCRC, which would ensure a premise for legal challenge. Internationally, where full incorporation of UNCRC has been realised, the process of incorporation is instrumental in bringing about culture change. HCF will continue to support the incorporation of UNCRC.

Tech4Good: In summer of 2015, HCF benefitted from having a Digital Intern who registered HCF with [Technology Trust](#), which allows access to software to charities for free or much reduced rates. There was recently a free training event on "Tech4Good" to support charities in keeping up to date digitally. HCF has benefited from this service and would recommend it to other charities.

**[For Highland's Children 4](#)** Improvement Group updates:

**[Play Highland](#)**: A 'pop up' play event was held in Inverness on 12<sup>th</sup> March to promote outdoor, free play. There are resources from this event available to schools, after school clubs or other community groups to borrow for up to two months at a time, to explore their own promotion of outdoor free play. With the emphasis of community engagement of the new Community Partnerships, Play Highland wants to ensure that the voices of children and young people, including children and young people with additional support needs, helps shape community plans. Community Guidance has been drafted and will be available soon to support Community Partnerships in this process.

**Mental Health**: One of the priorities for the mental health IG is mental health support for Looked After or Care Experienced young people. Training is being offered to residential home workers and foster carers and there is a triage system in place to allow individuals who require a service to receive timely help. Work continues to support young people with complex mental health needs, who might otherwise require to be inpatients in Dundee, to remain at home. A second young person consultation event will happen in April.

**CHAMPS**: The Policy Lead attended the recent CHAMPS board meeting. CHAMPS board has an "Asks and Action plan" for Care Experienced young people and service managers are called to report progress at the board meeting. One focus is that of support for bereavement, a theme recognised by HCF in its ["Ideas about Sadness"](#) report.

## Joint Transitions Project Board Option Appraisal

HCF has produced its third report on transitions: "Moving on – life after school" (HCF 2016). This report follows "It's My Journey" HCF 2007 and "How's your journey?" 2012.

In these reports, young people have repeatedly said that what works is: *"people listening to you whatever your communication needs"* HCF 2007 p3; *"being supported by a key person who sees you through until you are sorted"* HCF 2007 p3; *"professionals who consulted with young people and listened to them"* HCF 2012 p7; *"staff with a role in transitions planning... are available and accessible to young people, listen to the views and wishes of the young people and actively involve them in decision making"* HCF 2016 p5. Concerns raised by young people include: *"lack of continuity with good staff"* HCF 2012 p7 and *"transitions planning is far from consistent and is precariously dependent on how well (or otherwise) key agencies and individuals engage with, and understand, the transitions process."* HCF 2007 p3.

The Highland Transitions Protocol and Guide (THC 2008) was developed from the initial consultation in 2007. The consultation in 2012 demonstrated that the protocol and guide were not followed consistently. The consultation in 2016 shows that young people still feel that they are not always listened to and that transitions works best when someone knows you, listens to you and supports you through the transition process.

Integration of health and social care in Highland (meaning The Highland Council deliver health and social care to children and young people, while NHS Highland deliver health and social care to adults) brought new concerns about transitions for those young people with complex additional support needs, requiring an ongoing support plan from children into adult services. There was an initial decision taken to hand the responsibility for the additional support of a young person from one service to the other on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. This meant a lot of change all at once, including change in key personnel. The Highland Council and NHS Highland are working together to find a better way of supporting these young people through transition. There are currently four options under consideration.

**Option one** is to continue with present pathway with a transfer of responsibility at age 18.

**Option two** is that there is a Joint Transitions Team between the ages of 14 and 25, jointly owned and funded by children and adult services providing a consistent Lead Professional to listen and work with the young person through the other changes in their life. The transitions team would consist of staff from both adult and children's services and so would have transitions expertise across both services.

**Option three** is to have two separate transitions teams, one from each service, who would have expertise of the transitions process, with a handover of Lead Professional and team at age 18.

**Option four** would be to have Specialist Transitions Workers in both children and adult services. These workers would be the Lead Professional during the transitions process, but the transition between children and adult services would still be at age 18 and involve a change in Lead Professional at that time.

A workshop is to be held with Elected Members of the Council and Non-executive NHS Board members in June to explore the four options. HCF hopes to be able hear the views of young people and their families to contribute to that process.

## Scottish News:

**Pupil Equity Funding:** This new fund will be provided from April 2017, providing Highland with £3,924,000 pounds in reflection of 3,270 eligible pupils (in receipt of free lunches), paid directly to the Head Teachers of the schools. There is a raft of information about appropriate interventions to enable schools to plan how to use this additional money to reduce the attainment gap due to inequality. The National Operational Guidance makes clear that parents, carers, children and young people should be involved in the planning process. The plans need to be focused on areas where poverty impacts attainment and be effective at raising attainment for these pupils. The [Northern Alliance Emerging Literacy Programme](#) (mentioned in the November Bulletin) is already working towards recognising and reducing the attainment gap in pre-school children. HCF has child poverty as a focus on this year's development plan and will follow with interest the use of the Pupil Equity Fund and its impact on attainment.

**Top tips for Healthcare Workers:** On the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child health (RCPCH), over 400 children, young people and their family members commented on what makes the best doctor or health worker. [21 Top Tips for Paediatricians and Healthcare Workers](#) was the result. (RCPCH & Us)

In light of the 21 top tips and mention of UNCRC above, check out the [Action for Sick Children Charter for Children's Health Services 2013](#).

## Regional News:

Highland Child Protection Conference 2017 "Neglecting the issues? Understanding and Working with Neglect" presented some excellent speakers and workshops looking at "[Adverse Childhood Experiences](#)" and [NSPCC Graded Care Profile](#). On the previous day, Paul Brannigan of "Angel's Share" fame told his own story and spoke about the voluntary work he does now in Polmont Prison and in the community. This is a very timely focus as austerity continues to bite and throws more children into poverty and the inequality that brings.

Check out St Clements [practical autism video resource pack](#)

---

*Mums and Babies Survey: the closing date for this consultation has been extended until the end of May to allow a wider range of contributions. The survey is available as Survey Monkey or in hard copy. Please encourage any young mothers (with children under the age of two) to take part to help services plan to improve support to new mothers.*

---

## Highland Children's Forum

New Start Highland Offices  
9 Carsegate Road North  
Inverness IV3 8DU

E Mail: [info@highlandchildrensforum.org](mailto:info@highlandchildrensforum.org)

To unsubscribe, please contact:  
[policy@highlandchildrensforum.org](mailto:policy@highlandchildrensforum.org)

To comment on these or other issues, please visit our [Facebook](#).



Listening to children and young people,  
speaking with policy makers