



Principles into Practice Learning Exchange Event Wednesday 15 September 2021

The third Learning Exchange event for the Principles into Practice universal and enhanced trial areas took place online on Wednesday 15 September.

Representatives from all 10 trial areas attended the event, which focused on the life changing impact of effective person-centred planning and how to engage positively with young people and their families and carers.

Through collective discussions and breakout rooms, participants had the chance to share with and learn from each other in response to the opportunities and challenges arising as a result of the trial programme.

They were also invited to consider in depth **Principle 1: Planning and decision making should be carried out in a person-centred way** from the Principles of Good Transitions, and to evaluate their own local area's practice against the relevant indicators within the Principles into Practice Framework.

The session included hearing a family's experience of person-centred planning, and how one trial area reached out to parents and carers in a new way as part of their programme of review and change.

Morning session – person-centred approaches and planning

Attendees heard how a truly “person-centred” approach to planning depends on listening to the individual at the centre and focusing on their goals and dreams, rather than allowing planning conversations to be shaped by what services believe they can deliver.

Alexander Warren and his parents Dave and Elizabeth described how person-centred planning contributed to him achieving his life goals and aspirations, including succeeding in a mainstream college course and running his own business.

Embracing and encouraging dreaming allowed others to understand what was important to Alexander, and to provide support over an extended period to progress his objectives.

Following a time for questions and discussion, attendees were moved into breakout rooms to discuss how far a shared understanding and commitment to person-centred approaches exists across all services in their area, and to identify actions that move them forward within the **Assessing: Improving: Delivering** descriptors within the Principles into Practice Framework.

Breakout rooms

Person-centred planning – reflections

- **Positive personal experiences are inspirational**
Practitioners need to hear the stories of young people and families with positive stories of person-centred planning, particularly where this is still having an impact further down the line
- **Benefits of person-centred planning must be better communicated**
Poor uptake of person-centred planning among young people and families may be based on a lack of understanding of what underpins the approach and what it can achieve
- **Change of mindset required within services**
Services tend to feel responsible for support, and think in terms of what they can deliver. It should be more widely understood that systems should be in the background, and support and resources can come from a much wider range of sources – including family and/or informal structures
- **Must be seen as part of an ongoing approach**
Plans need to be revisited and revised as necessary to ensure they remain relevant and on course. This should continue into (or even throughout) adulthood

Progress in relation to Principle 1

- **Most attendees felt they were within the “Assessing” descriptor, with some placing themselves within “Improving”**
Groups are feeling the need to “get things started again” following the summer
- **There is still a lack of coordination**
Training in person-centred approaches is needed at all levels to enable practitioners to separate person-centred planning from outcomes focused assessments. A fully shared, embedded and sustainable understanding of person-centred approaches is challenging to establish and maintain
- **Planning must start earlier if it is to be truly person-centred**
More time is needed to explore thoughts and ideas, and listen to the young person and those who know them best. Transitions are not currently long enough
- **Poverty of aspiration needs to be challenged**
Young people and families tend to aspire to what they know or are told about, so communication and individual engagement becomes significant in identifying aims and goals

Actions identified

- **Revisit/relaunch person-centred planning**
Explore using this more holistically rather than only implementing elements
- **Think about accessibility**
Consider different presentations and the use of technology to make this accessible for people with communication difficulties
- **Explore external facilitation**
Research availability of external facilitators, and how and when to include them within services. Use ILF Scotland and the person-centred planning grant to widen availability
- **Communicating with young people, families and service providers**
Most families will never have heard of person-centred planning. Communicating the positives to be gained from the approach is crucial in raising awareness and improving engagement
- **Raise awareness of person-centred planning approaches**
Use your Principles into Practice steering group to share and promote the benefits of person-centred approaches. Awareness raising could be a designated part of someone's role

Afternoon session – engaging positively with young people and families

Learning and reflection

Attendees were reminded of the commitments made by all the trial areas to sharing learning and reflection from their areas, for the benefit of others and of the trial as a whole. As the Principles into Practice programme moves into its second year, the Learning and Reflection logs (previously Flash Reports) will be important in helping review progress and plan for the next stage of the trial.

Falkirk Council – Hackathon

Kerry Drinnan, Service Manager ASN (Inclusion)

A Hackathon is a structured, collaborative approach to tackling challenges in partnership with those who have an investment in, or are affected by, a particular problem.

Falkirk Council’s Hackathon for ASN parents and carers, in February 2020, was an innovative approach to explore issues around provision and services for young people with additional support needs, particularly the best use of resources.

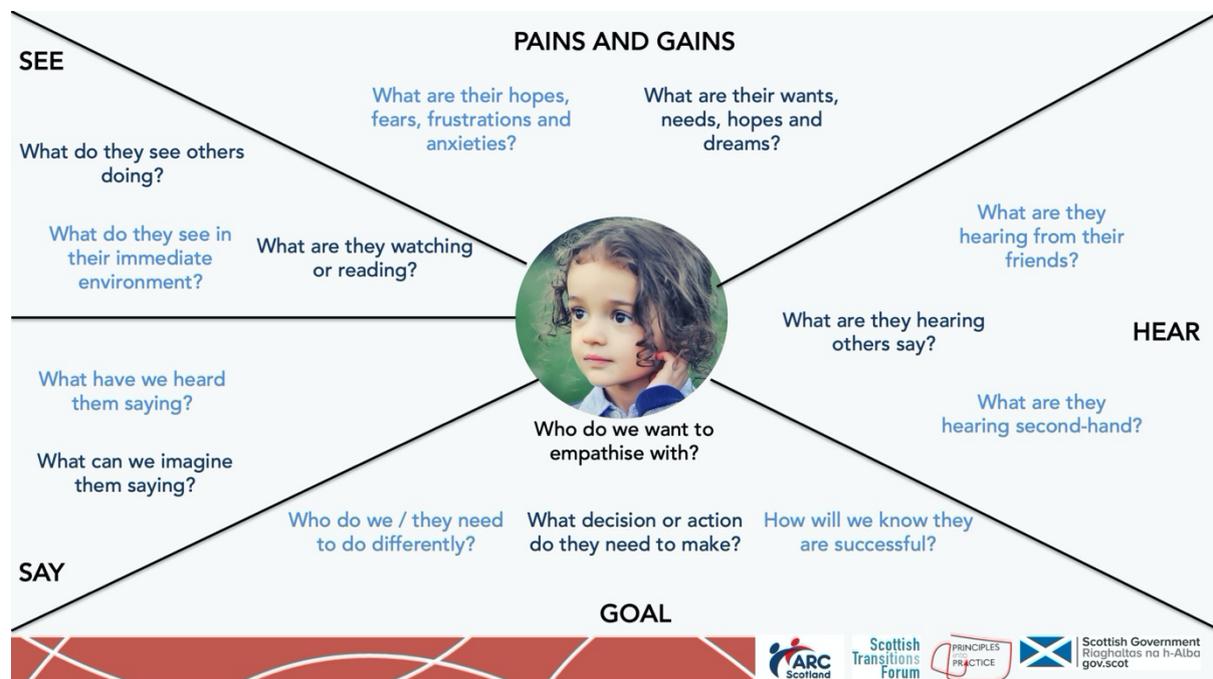
Through presentations, group activities and discussions the Hackathon explored topics including a young person’s ideal journey from pre-birth to 26+; priorities for support; and how to manage the main drivers/barriers to providing services in the future.

Connecting with young people, parents and carers

Attendees were reminded of the questions within each section of the Principles into Practice Framework, which can be used as the basis for surveys, questionnaires and focus groups among young people, parents and carers. These questions were developed in consultation with young people and their families, and support exploration and feedback on progress relating to specific principles and Framework indicators. The Principles into Practice Framework can be downloaded at www.pn2p.scot/trial-programme/

Empathy mapping

Empathy mapping provides a useful tool to underpin a person-centred approach by encouraging practitioners to view the environment surrounding a young person through their eyes. This was then linked to the driver diagram that forms a core component of the Principles into Practice Quality Improvement methodology.



Attendees were placed in breakout rooms to consider two questions:

- In your context, how are you measuring success? What is contributing to this?
- How might you use empathy mapping to improve transitions for young people?

Breakout rooms

How do we measure success?

- **Need to consider how we define and measure “success” in transitions**
What young people, families and professionals mean by “successful transition” may be very different. Positive destinations alone are not necessarily a good measure – we need to listen to young people and families
- **It’s how families and young people feel that matters**
Relying on SEEMIS data and feedback from service providers does not give the whole picture around whether a transition has been successful

How might empathy mapping help to improve transitions?

- **Essential to see things through the young person’s eyes**
This approach is routinely used but having the tool is a useful reminder
- **Empathy mapping is useful to separate our feelings from those of young people**
This can help in determining how best to improve someone’s experiences and feelings around transitions

Next steps

The next Learning Exchange event will take place in December, by which time we will be one year into the trial programme.

We want these events to be useful to you in engaging with Principles into Practice and improving transitions for young people and families in your area. We would welcome any thoughts, ideas or suggestions for how we can make sure the Learning Exchange events are relevant and supportive in your work within the trial.

The Ask!

We are looking for people willing to share their learning at future events to support each other in developing new approaches and ways of working.

Whatever aspect of transitions your area is focusing on, you will be gaining insights that will benefit others – things that have gone well or not so well, new ideas and ways of working. If you have something you’d like to share with others, please let your ARC contact know.