Assistive Technology
Transitions Project

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Transitions

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Assistive Technology
Background

• Initially identified small cohort of 5 users who did not meet the Fair Access to Care Services eligibility thresholds but could do in the future without some form of intervention
• Most young people identified for the project had needs regarding Autism and behavioural problems
• Young people identified were not accessing Education/Training or Employment
• Needed support regarding independent living skills and access to employment, both of which are key government outcomes
• Small project was established Spring 2013 to determine if a cognitive support technology intervention could lead to increased independent living skills and reduce the likelihood of requiring future services
Service Delivery

- Joint Project Steering Group identified between Children and Adult Services, Connexions, Occupational Therapy, Bucks New University and Halliday James
- Connexions identify potential users
- Cases discussed at Project Steering Group and then discussed between OT and family
- If all parties in agreement, OT conducts joint assessment with technology provider
- Occupational Therapy provides up to six follow up sessions and Connexions deliver on-going support
- OT re-assesses at end to see what progress has been made regarding increased independence
- Bucks New University conducting evaluation to provide evidence base
Initial findings

- 17 users identified to date, with target of 30 by year end
- 10 young people are now receiving this intervention and have relevant equipment
- 4 have been referred onto occupational therapy for further support and then will receive the technology
- 2 families have already identified a significant reduction in stress at home and improvement in family relationships
- Increased independence for user
- 2 users have been re-assessed by OT (AMPS assessment) and findings demonstrate an increase in independence and confidence
- Efficiencies achieved through cost avoidance in areas of not requiring supported living, improvement in health (nutrition), paid employment reducing likelihood of requiring benefits
- Positive reception on project findings from Children’s Joint Executive Team and Children’s Board
Outcomes

• Short term Occupational Therapy support has proven to be very effective for families
• Use of the technology has upskilled the cohort in several areas of independent living and paid employment. This includes:
  – 3 users can now cook independently of the technology
  – 1 user is in paid employment
  – 1 user is about to attend an interview with the local university
  – 2 can now travel independently
• All have improved independent living skills, especially around travelling alone and cooking
• Positive media coverage via local papers and TV
Lessons learnt

• Technology alone is not sufficient, wrap around support is essential
• Multi-agency approach is essential
• OT have fed back that some users have only engaged with technology when they are present - Family engagement is essential from the start
• Technology needs to be versatile and robust
• Potential future development could consider technology provision for users with sensory loss
• Good project management
Future

• Project group are looking into other potential groups that are currently in college or sixth form
• Investigating potential transferability of cognitive support technology to other groups e.g. users with a Dementia, Neuro-Rehab, CAMHS, Children’s OT
• Recognised that the earlier the intervention, the more likely users will be prepared for move in adulthood and less likely need for traditional, higher cost provision
• Extension of project into 15/16 – funding?
• Part of wider discussion in relation to Adult, Children and NHS Services approach to future joint commissioning of AT. Future possibilities for technology are inherent in the wider legislative changes through the Children and Families Act and Care Act