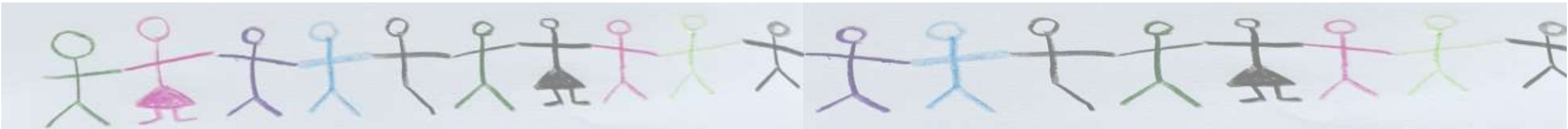


SEND Strategic Manager Parent Carer Network In-Person Meeting

Social Care Thematic Meeting



17th October 2024



Improving approaches to SEND and Social Care

The Council for Disabled Children

- Strategic Reform Partner for SEND to the DfE
- Lead the RISE partnership including the What Works in SEND Programme
- Part of the REACH consortium working with CPPs on the SEND and AP change programme
- Committed to co-production with parent carers and disabled children and young people across our projects:
 - FLARE
 - Children and Young People Social Care Advisory Boards
 - Seldom heard parent carer network (over 500 parents)

The challenges in the system

Lack of joint working
at a strategic level

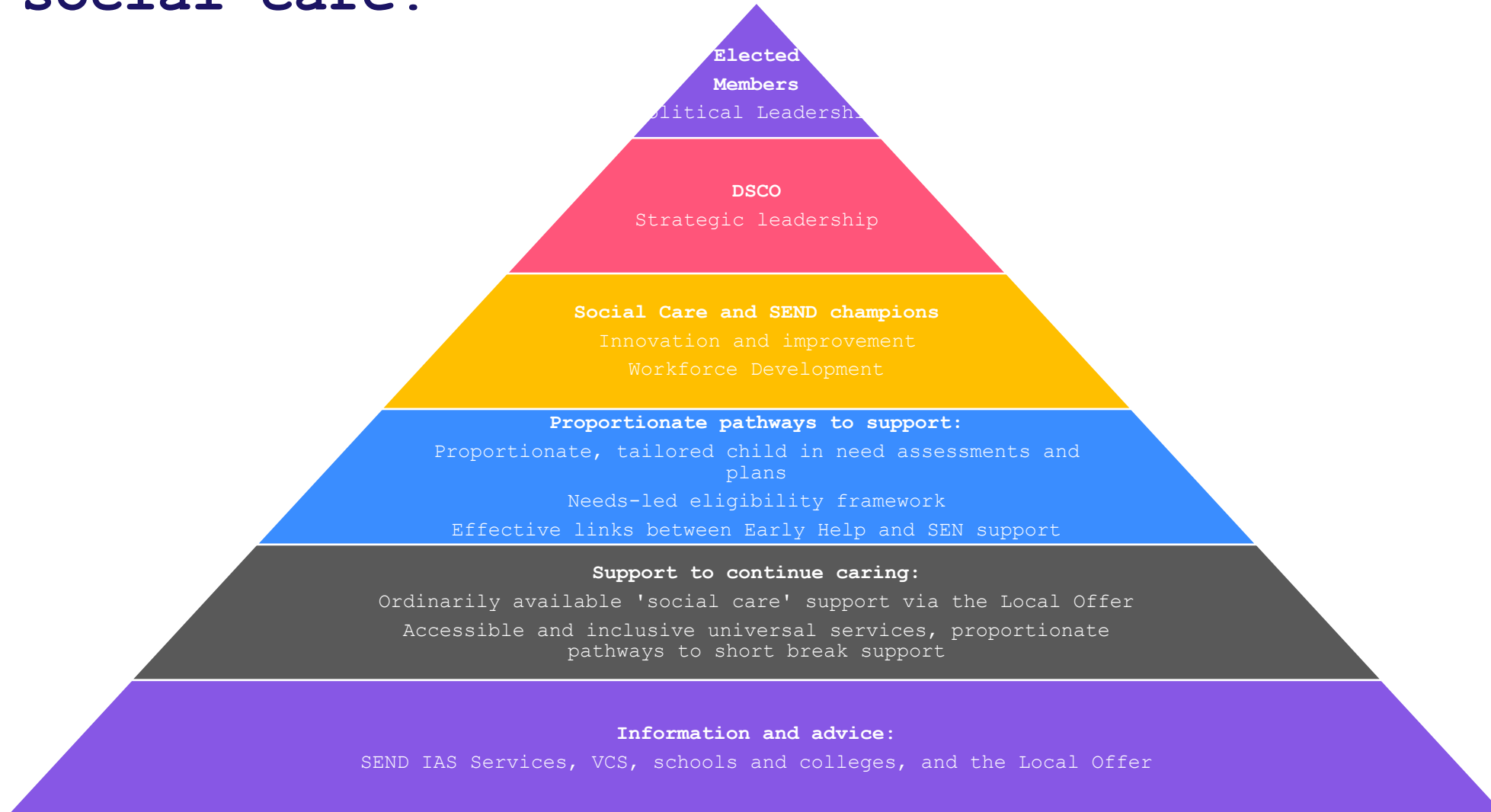
Variable practice and
quality of social care
input and engagement
with the SEND system

Stigma for families and
delayed access to
support due to parent
carers understanding
of/lack of information
about the broader
social care family
support offer

Misleading or incorrect
interpretation of
social care advice in
EHCPs or in some
circumstances no advice
received/included

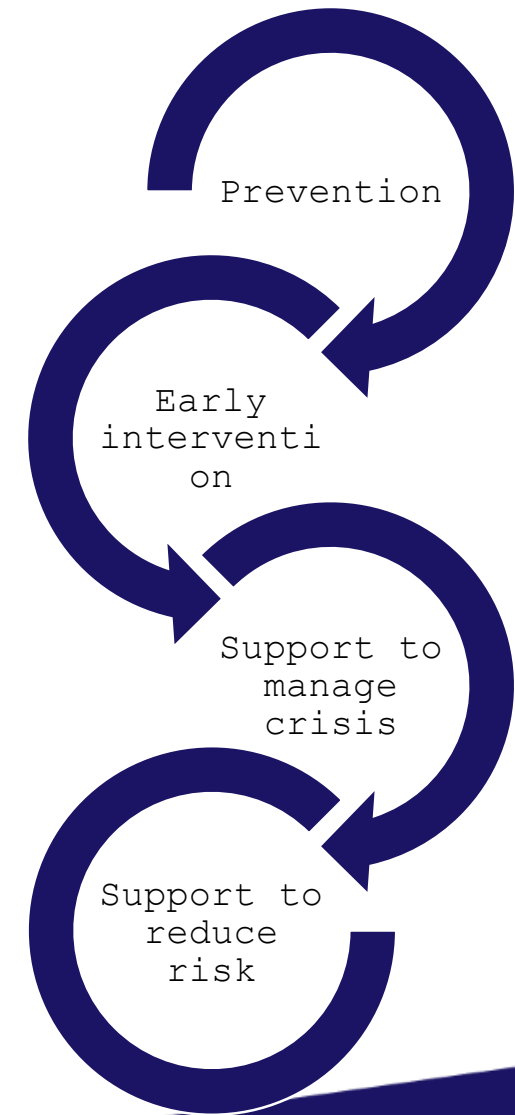
Lack of understanding
across agencies of the
role of social care in
the SEND system which
leads to confusion and
non-compliance with
duties

What do we know about what works in SEND and social care?



The need to rebalance the system

- Increasing complexity of need
- Lack of early identification
- Limited prevention resource
- Increasing specialist placements
- sometimes with poorer outcomes
- often far from home



The opportunity

- SEND and AP improvement plan
- Law commission review of disabled children's social care
 - Assessment
 - Eligibility
 - Provision including Short Breaks
 - Transition to adulthood
- Social care outcomes framework
- Family Help and Families First for Children pathfinders
- Regional Care Cooperative pilots

Developing a new model of care for London

The proposals set out in the pan-London business case demonstrate how London can achieve its ambition that:

- wherever possible children and young people avoid crisis and remain safely with their families;
- where they need specialist intervention it is available at the earliest possible time and if residential support is needed children and young people are enabled to return safely to their families and communities with the right support to thrive;
- children and young people who need long term residential or inpatient support receive the right specialist support, close to their family and



Thank you!

- <https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/children/publications/2024/june/using-a-needs-led-eligibility-framework-to-provide-services-to-disabled-children-and-their-families-strategic-briefing-2024/>
- <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/>

The role of the Designated Social Care officer for SEND (DSCO)



Rodney Gray – Head of Service & DSCO, Disabled Childrens Service 17th October 2024

Implementation of the DSCO role in Islington

- 2021 - DSCO role implemented, jointly held by the AD and Disabled Childrens SM
- Strategic CSC SEND oversight and quality assurance of EHCPs
- DSCO role not included in job descriptions
- No DSCO statement of purpose or strategic action plan
- DSCO not recognised as an official role across the SEND partnership
- DSCO not joined up and aligned with SEND Lead, DCO and DMO roles
- 2023 - DSCO role was reviewed and transferred to Head of Service role and added to their job description during a service redesign

The DSCO Statement

- July 2023 - DSCO statement drafted
- Informed by the DCSO handbook (Implementing the role of the Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) for SEND, CDC 2021)
- DSCO Statement has 4 sections:
 1. Introduction – (WHY?) purpose
 2. Aspirations of the DSCO Role - (WHAT?) achieve for our CYP and workforce)
 3. Core Values – (HOW?) DSCO working across SEND partnership and functions)
 4. Responsibilities – (WHEN?) strategic oversight and panels/forums
- Consultation with parent carers at Islington SEND Co-Production Steering Group and SEND Lead, DMO and DCO
- DSCO statement was uploaded into SEND local offer webpages

The DSCO Action Plan

- Drafted in August 2024
- Consultation with parent carers at Islington SEND Co-Production Steering Group and SEND Lead, DMO and DCO
- Included CSC strategic lead in the following SEND areas
 1. Quality Assurance of social care information for EHC Assessments and Plans
 2. Undertaking a CSC SEND Practice Audit
 3. CSC SEND Practice Guidance
 4. Deprivation of Liberty and Mental Capacity task and finish group
 5. Disability awareness training programme for the workforce
 6. SEND champions practitioner group
 7. Progression to Adulthood outcomes framework across CSC
 8. Implementing Phase 2 recommendations (Safeguarding children with disabilities and complex health needs in residential settings 2023)
 9. Supporting the SEND SEF, Local Area Inclusion Plan, SEND Partnership Board Plan and inspection engagement meetings

DSCO Action Plan - progress so far!

- CSC SEND/EHCP practice guidance rolled out
- SEND Lead/DCO/DMO/DSCO quarterly partnership meeting and TOR
- Creation of an advocate role for CWD in residential schools and social care placements
- Implementation of Progression to Adulthood Outcomes Framework for CWD aged 14+ years across CSC
- Implementation of CSC EHC front door protocol
- Creation of CSC DOLS & MCA screening tool, practice guidance and training (AI lite bites)
- Roll out of a mandatory one-day CSC Disability Awareness training programme
- Review of CWD Personal Budgets (currently in progress)
- The development of a London region DSCO forum (in partnership with Camden)

London DSCO Regional Network: stronger outcomes in partnership

Crina Popa, Head of Children and Young People's Disability Service and Designated Social Care Officer for SEND (DSCO), London Borough of Camden

Rodney Gray, Head of Service for Disabled Children's Service and Provider Services and Designated Social Care Officer for SEND (DSCO), London Borough of Islington

Background:

- Variable practice and approach across Local Authorities
- Quality of social care input and engagement with SEND not consistent
- Better joint working between social care and education needed
- Lack of understanding by carers/ families about the social care offer and delays in accessing support
- Confusion about the social care role in EHC process and quality of advice and social care provision not consistent
- The need to be able to influence policy and Government recommendations i.e see Quality and Safety reviews, Law Commission consultation, strengthening the support for carers

The London DSCO Regional Network:

- A reflective space for DSCOs, a source of advice and peer support to one another
- An opportunity to discuss, share good practice/ barriers to practice and learning
- To support DSCOs in their role regarding the SEND Area Inspection framework and in their role with the implementation of the DfE SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan
- Challenging inequalities and disproportionality themes that impacts upon Children, Young People or Young Adults aged 0 – 25 years with SEND
- We aim to cover wide-reaching issues by taking a broad strategic look over the different areas, to help develop and implement the DSCO role in social care
- The network will as and when needed to connect with DfE, LIIA and ALDCS and provide feedback on the purpose of the role and the development of this role.

The London DSCO Regional Network – reflections so far:

22 DSCOs from across London have joined the network & 3 network meetings in 2024

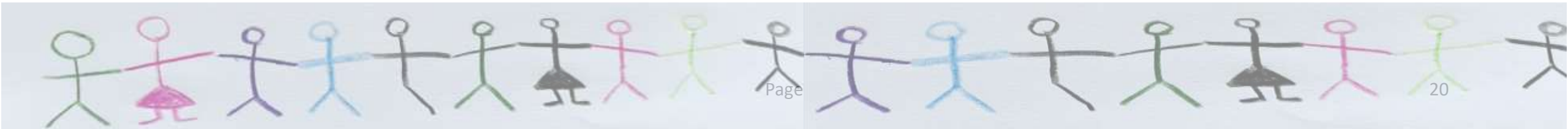
The initial thinking covered the following areas:

- The development of the role in each Local Authorities
- Better understanding of how short breaks and allocation of resources are structured, provided and reviewed in different Local Authorities
- What good practice looks like regarding social care advice in EHC need assessments
- Preparations for SEND inspections – learning from those who had inspections

Next topics: Preparing for Adulthood pathways, Phase 2 Hesley recommendations & implementation, support for parent carers across different LAs

Questions and Reflections

Q/A Session



Senior Intervenor & Senior Children's Intervenor

How they support discharge from mental health inpatient hospitals for children, young people & adults with a learning disability or who are autistic.



Objectives & Purpose of the Intervenors

- The objective is to provide support, influence and challenge to senior service leaders, primarily at system level, to ensure barriers are overcome for planning and managing the move out of hospital and meeting the needs of young people & adults with a Learning Disability and/or who are Autistic in the community, who have been subject to a lengthy inpatient stay.
- The SCIs and SIs have significant expertise working at senior levels across social care, health or education. Although commissioned by NHS England, the SCIs and SIs are external & independent to NHS England.
- The work is in support of, but not to replace or duplicate existing roles. The objective is to facilitate and influence, particularly at senior levels across organisations.
- ~~SCIs and SIs represent the needs of the person, and work with service leaders and key professionals across local systems, regional teams, and~~

Intervenorors in the context of the NHS England operating model

- Following the evaluation of the progress to date of the adult pilot and the progress made to roll-out keyworking, consideration needed to be made to the future of this work
- The Intervenor intervention was developed prior to the new NHS Operating Framework. Such direct nationally facilitated intervention into the care and treatment of individual people is not in line with the new NHS Operating Framework
- The key agreed principle of the current model is that work should be **locally commissioned/requested** and **independently facilitated**
- Children, young people and adults with the most complex needs and longest lengths of stay can be identified through local Dynamic Support Registers, C(E)TR panels, and/or local oversight processes.
- ~~The Intervenorors who supported the national pilots can be requested via~~
NHS IMAS – Danny Wood nhs.imas@nhs.net

Sharing Feedback

"Have felt very supported, colleagues have been able to navigate system leaders to enable change."

"Galvanising all the things that need to happen in a way that they haven't before."



" They were extremely knowledgeable and were able to provide focus that the discharge planning group had not previously had. With their leadership the group moved forward and for the first time in 5 years we

"Finally a full discharge plan was in place. A house was found, alterations took place, all professionals engaged and provider found."

"Without the SCI we would still be campaigning for help to get the systems in place. The group that the SCI led had absolute faith and respect for our young

"They were able to identify where barriers were and deal with them. They brought together all of the systems and ensured that progress was made "

24 person, listened, learned and took action. Thank you we will be forever grateful "

Senior Intervenor Evaluation Feedback

The Senior Intervenor brought clarity and challenge where sometimes this was lacking

The Senior Intervenor always brought the focus back onto the person, and whether they were happy.



'We have had a patient stuck in Long Term Segregation for more than four years. Since having a Senior Intervenor, the community team is collaboratively and actively looking for placements and offering additional support. We have not had that provision before, and delayed discharge affected their quality of life.'

The Chair of an IC(E)TR described the involvement of the Senior Intervenor as providing the discharge planning with 'more focus, sharper direction and enabling it to move at pace.'

Summary of key learning

- The Intervenors focus is on resolution & achieving a common understanding, rather than escalation of a complex situation.
- They are skilled advocates. The individual/family is the focus, and therefore they feel listened to and the system feels supported.
- Their independence allows for appropriate challenge to senior leaders with no agenda, they bring solutions with a non judgemental approach.
- Individual / family experience is that they have someone whose only interest is the best outcome for the individual.
- The intervenors leave behind more collaborative approaches.
- We now have a number of individuals that are thriving post mental health hospital admission, reduced from 5:1 and 6:1 staffing ratios to 2:1 or 1:1. With improved life choices and expectancy.



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Disabled children's social care

Consultation

Connor Johnston and Efa Jones



The consultation

- Consultation on disabled children’s social care. Runs from **8 October 2024** to **20 January 2025**.
- [Terms of reference available here.](#)
- Consultation paper (in various formats) available at:
<https://lawcom.gov.uk/project/disabled-childrens-social-care/>.
- Respond using the same link.
- Views sought from anyone with an interest in, or experience of, disabled children’s social care. In particular, children and young people, parents and carers, social workers and other local authority professionals.



- We provisionally propose that the existing duty to assess the social care needs of a disabled child should be set out in legislation. What do you think?
- If this proposal is adopted, what should the threshold be? Should an assessment be carried out if:
 - the child appears to be disabled;
 - it appears the child may have needs for care and support;
 - it appears the child may be eligible for care and support;
 - the child is likely to be eligible for care and support; or
 - a different threshold is met?



- How (if at all) can we combine the different assessments a disabled child might need to reduce repetition and duplication?
- In adult social care there are requirements that assessments should:
 - be carried out by a person with appropriate training & expertise;
 - be proportionate.

We provisionally propose that the same should apply in relation to the assessment of disabled children. **What do you think?**

- Should it be possible for local authorities to delegate assessments to trusted third parties (eg specialist charities)? What safeguards might be needed for this to work?



- Carers are also entitled to have their needs assessed. But there are different thresholds depending on whether or not the carer has parental responsibility (PR).
- Carers with PR are entitled to have an assessment if it appears they may have needs for support.
- Carers without PR are entitled to an assessment if they provide a substantial amount of care on a regular basis.
- We provisionally propose that the same threshold should apply for all carers. They should be entitled to an assessment if it appears they may have needs for care and support. **What do you think?**



- Currently local authorities can adopt local eligibility criteria for disabled children's social care.
- We provisionally propose that this system should be replaced with standardised national criteria (as for adults), to be co-produced between central and local government.
- Under our provisional proposal local authorities would have a duty to meet a child's needs if they satisfy the eligibility criteria. If the child's needs do not satisfy the eligibility criteria, local authorities would retain a power to meet them if they think it would be appropriate.
- **What do you think?**



- We provisionally propose that local authorities should have freedom to provide the services they think are appropriate (providing they do not cross the line into health care). There should not be an exhaustive list of things they can or cannot provide.
- **What do you think? What are the most commonly needed services?**
- One way that services can be provided is by direct payments. Under the SEND system, direct payments must be “sufficient” to cover the cost of services, and must be kept under review. We provisionally propose that the same should apply to disabled children’s social care. **What do you think?**



- Should there be a statutory age when planning for a disabled child to make the transition to adult social care should start? If so, what?
- Does the law need to change to enable/ensure that local authorities can identify the extent of need in their local area and make sure they have the right services available to meet those needs?
- Does the law need to change to promote co-operation within and between local authorities, and between authorities and the NHS? Should every local authority have a DSCO?
- What are your experiences of remedies (eg complaints, tribunal, judicial review)? What would the ideal system be?



- **How do we define disability?** We provisionally propose to use the definition in the Equality Act 2010. But we think it needs adapted so that challenging behaviour and addiction are included.
- We provisionally propose that (subject to the point below) disabled children should have a right to make certain decisions/requests in relation to their social care needs. Eg they should be able to request an assessment and make representations during their assessment.

What do you think?

- We think this children over the age of 16 should have this right if they have capacity. We are seeking views on the approach that should apply where the child is under 16. **What do you think?**
- For those who would struggle to participate, we think advocacy should be available. **What do you think?**



A new legal framework?

- To make the law simpler and clearer, and to make our proposals effective, we provisionally propose that there should be a new legal framework for disabled children's social care.
- That would mean taking disabled children out of section 17 of the Children Act 1989. That would be a significant step.
- It may help ensure that disabled children are seen as children in need of *extra support* first and foremost, rather than children in need of *safeguarding*.
- But would it segregate disabled children from other children? Or make it harder for social workers to identify their wider needs or respond to child protection risks? **What do you think?**



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Thank you for participating!

Respond / get in touch:

<https://lawcom.gov.uk/project/disabled-childrens-social-care/>

dcsc@lawcommission.gov.uk

Q/A Session

