

## DISABILITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS

### Parent's and Carer's Views

Underpinning all assessments should be the consideration that families are the experts on their own lives. Professionals should work in a strengths-based and collaborative way with families. To properly achieve partnership with parents, it is essential to keep them involved and informed throughout the work with their family. Consent should not be assumed to have been given or understood.

### **THE PROCESS**

The process should start by ensuring that the communication needs of both the family, and the child/young person being assessed, are considered, and supported

### **Communication Needs**

Do you have communication difficulties such as

- Visual or hearing impairment
- Difficulties understanding/retaining information
- Difficulties making decisions/understanding their impact
- Needing extra time and/or an alternative format (e.g., Easy Read) to help you to understand
- Experiencing difficulties in being actively involved in their assessment
- Communicating in a language other than English
- What would help you?

### **About Me**

The process should involve learning about the child's views and, before visiting should involve being prepared – if there are notes and/or information already provided, the assessor should read these

### Child's Views

The child's voice should, where possible, be captured using their methods of communication. If this is not possible, then the family are the experts and should be relied upon to give the child's views or express preferences that are in the child's best interests.

Be respectful of their needs, especially of any anxiety and their need to maintain a safe space. Consider

- Areas of my life I most enjoy/value
- Main interests
- What is most important/What does a good life look like to me
- Describe yourself
- What changes could improve my quality of life
- What would you like to be able to do but cannot
- If there has been a previous assessment has the disability changed since then
- Is there an EHCP

Use the child's day as a template for assessing needs in a consistent, systematic, way. For each activity within the day consider the areas and types of need listed below. Consider how much support the child or young person needs and whether this is additional to that needed by their peers of the same age who do not have additional needs.

Be aware that the family may have adapted their life to make support as easy as possible and may not be aware just how much support they are giving. Consider whether a diary of support will help identify needs and the extend and type of support needed.

The questions asking what happens/would happen without this support, and what happens when things go wrong may be key to all understanding exactly how significant the support is in keeping the child or young person safe, happy and as well as possible.

### Child's day

- What does the child's day look like?
- Is it different on school days/non-school days/time spent in other family member's homes?
- What are the child's routines – who helps them and with what
- What happens without this help?
- How do they get to/from school/other activities?
- What activities do they enjoy, who do they enjoy doing them with and where?
- What is the evening/bedtime like?
- What is their sleep like?
- What happens when things go well?
- What happens when things go wrong?

Whilst working through each step of the day consider each area of need, as listed below.

For example,

A child or young person starts their day, they need to wake up, manage continence needs, get dressed, eat and drink – look at the prompts for each of the areas of need to assess the impact of the disability and how much support is needed for each of these tasks:

### Areas of need

#### **Toileting**

ability to access and use toileting facilities/ Suitable toileting facilities& equipment/access to suitable and sufficient continence advice & products/ catheter/stoma care/skin integrity and maintenance/menstruation/leakages/dignity/ suitable and sufficient trained adult(s)

#### **Personal hygiene**

Access to suitable and sufficient washing &/or drying facilities (e.g., wet room)/ability to access facilities/understanding & accepting need for, and process of, washing &/or drying/ability to participate/suitable equipment/suitable and sufficient trained adult(s)/dignity

#### **Clothing**

Sensory needs/ability to participate/choice of clothing (e.g., for weather conditions/cleanliness)/adaptive clothing/fastenings/suitable equipment/suitable and sufficient trained adult(s)/dignity

#### **Manage and Maintain Nutrition**

Maintain a healthy diet/eating unsafe items/(pica)/menu planning/shopping/cooking/feeding themselves (TPN/NG tube/PEG)/fluid intake/interaction with medical conditions (e.g., Diabetes)/interaction with medication (e.g., timings)/ suitable and sufficient trained adult(s)

Once the child or young person is ready to start their day the next stage may be leaving the house to participate in education, work, or activities in their local community. They may have needs for transport and accompanying adult(s) in order to even arrive at the setting. The support there may differ from that provided in the home.

#### **Access, and engaging with, early years settings, education, training, volunteering, and work**

Suitable provision/reasonable adjustments/ suitable and sufficient trained adult(s) or staff/transport/Plans including EHCP (especially hours of provision)/choice

## **Local community**

Transport/recreational facilities/services/socialising/independence/accessibility/medical needs (GP, dentist etc.)

## **Connecting**

What can we do to connect them to places/things that are important to them

When looking at the parent carers who are providing support, consider their needs, whether they have additional needs themselves, their rights to have a carer assessment, to spend time with other family members, their friends, to go to work, to look after their own health.

How do the needs of the child or young person being assessed impact on other family members, including siblings, consider whether they are young carers and also entitled to some support.

Also consider the capacity of the family to keep providing support. For example, a parent or carer may manage to cope and still provide care despite missing a few nights sleep to support their child or young person, but this is not a sustainable situation. If a family has more than one child with additional needs, consider how effective the support can be if more than one needs support at the same time, how differing needs can be met and whether the parent carers end up supporting for too long each day.

## **Developing and maintaining family and other relationships**

Play and play dates/access to suitable and safe clubs and hobbies/opportunities for independence

Other family members' needs and or disabilities/carers assessments/ /family members' (or informal carers') suitability, capability, and willingness to support/frequency and availability of family or informal carers/impact of separated and/or blended families

## **Parental capacity and needs**

Health/other children/relationship with partner/work/socialising

The young person themselves may have their own child and caring responsibilities.

When considering the areas of need, the environment in which the child and young person lives, is already starting to be assessed for how easy it is to support them – e.g., accessible toileting and washing facilities.

## **Safe and Habitable home**

Safe access to toileting/washing facilities and to main areas of the home and garden

Suitable and safe play equipment and areas (e.g., sensory)

Awareness and understanding of danger/Running away/climbing and or falls/Fire safety (raising alarm/evacuation plan)/Access to medication

Destructive behaviour/ Health risks due to home itself (damp/mould etc)

Protective measures (locks/fencing /alarms/safe space/electrical safety)/supervision/second home or second family

Infection control

## **Types of need**

In each of the areas above, consider how these types of need may create support needs

Needs which arise from

Physical/Developmental/Sensory/Cognitive/Neurological/Psychological

impairment or illness

Do they have

Challenging behaviour/pain/mobility difficulties?

Have they had/are they due any medical interventions, if yes, what is the likely impact?

Do needs change in different settings (school/socialising/second homes)?

What is the impact of each need/Is there a cumulative effect/Do needs impact on other areas?

How can dignity be maintained?

### **Evaluation**

When considering all that you have assessed:

What works well? Does this apply to all settings that the child or young person spends time in/wants to spend time in?

Does this lead to periods of stability for the family - How does that help?

What can make this more challenging? What can trigger difficulties - What is the impact on the child/family

Are there any unmet needs

What are the risks/potential consequences of not meeting needs?

What would be the impact for the child/family if the risks remain/increase?

### **Provision**

What support can be provided? By whom, by when?

If delays are likely, what support can be provided quickly – even if this is then replaced by longer term provision?

Do other services need to be involved? If multiple services are involved who will take the lead/keep the family updated?

### **Outcomes**

- What did you try
- Any other interventions from this service or other professionals
- What worked – if any periods of stability, how was this achieved, strengths
- What did not work – if periods of instability/increased needs, what triggered this
- What next
- Are there transitions soon– such as to adult services
- Has Disability status changed