

Transition to where and to what? Mapping the experiences of the transition to adulthood for young disabled people in Scotland.

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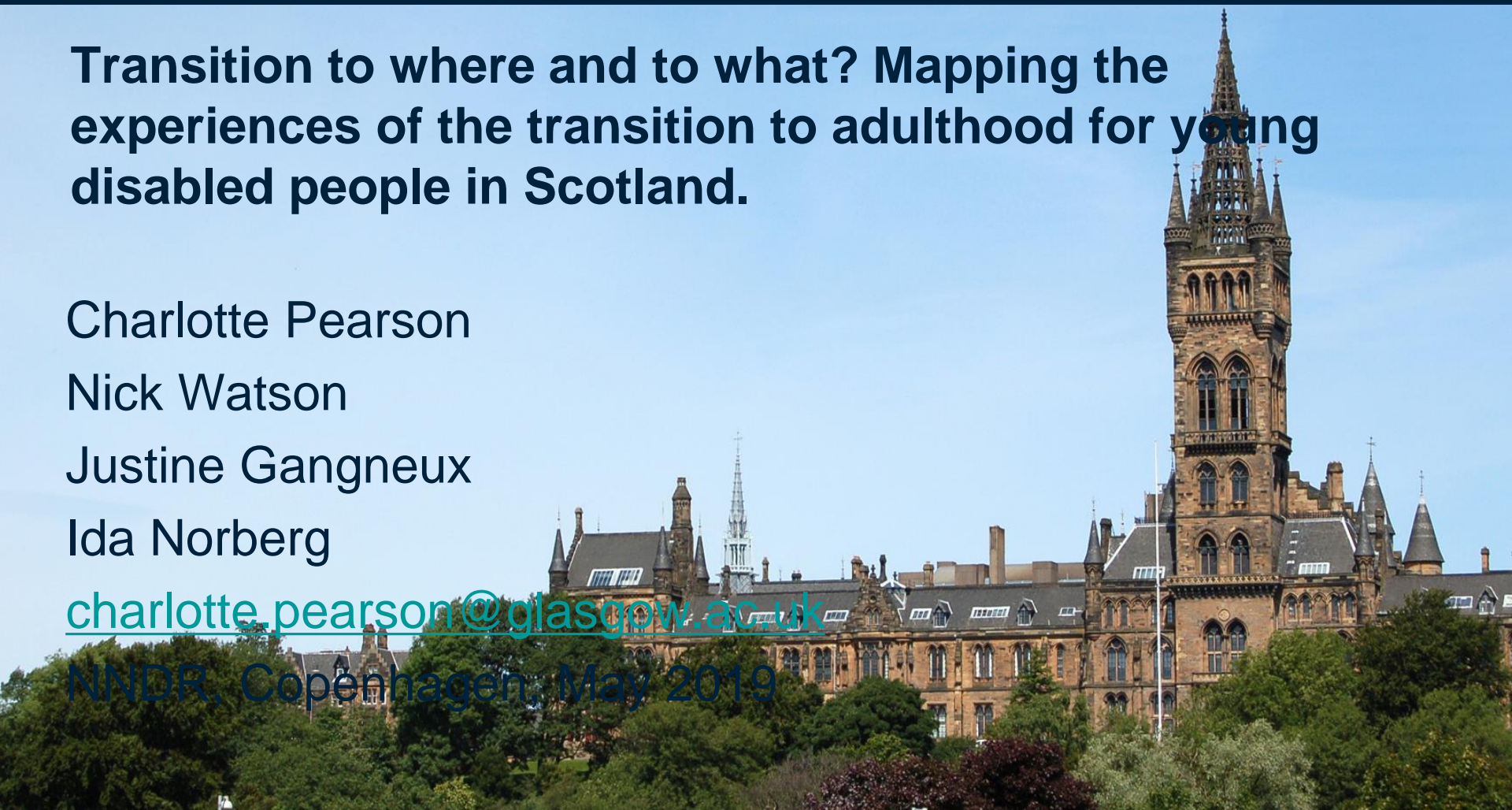
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Issues around transitions & young disabled people

- Long-term acknowledgement of difficulties faced by young disabled people as they move into adulthood.
- But gap in literature focusing on youth transition and disability – focus on service transition *not* experiences of younger disabled people.
- Transition arrangements are uncoordinated: young people get lost to services, failure to involve them in decisions about their transition and offer a limited range of services.

- Gradual *not* transformative change - searching and building long-term goals – ‘emerging adulthood’ – **Arnett (2004)**.
- Youth transitions as *non-linear, fragmented, multi-dimensional & extended* (**Furlong et al, 2003**).

Transition meanings and roles

- ‘relatively meaningless as a conceptual tool because of the increasing lack of synchrony of transitions across life domains’ (**Furlong et al 2011: 361**).
- Research on disability and transition for disability remains wedded to more traditional approaches.

Overview

- Aim is to examine this period of young disabled people's lives by drawing on data collected as part of an evaluation of the Scottish ILF Transitions scheme.
- Structure of presentation:
 - Policy background.
 - Methods.
 - Themes from data.
 - Conclusions.

Policy background

- Transition identified by Scottish Government as an action area to (1) **ensure access to labour market** (2) **to enable equal participation.**
- Independent Living Fund (ILF) Transitions set up to offer cash payments for support to young disabled people (aged 16-21) in transition to adulthood and help them live independently.
- **Intended outcomes:**
 - To be involved in planning their future.
 - To be able to articulate & communicate what is important to them.
 - To be able to develop their skills in planning & decision-making.

The study

- Commissioned by ILF Scotland for Scottish Government.
- Evaluation of the first 2 years of ILF Transitions.
- Analysis of application data.
- Semi-structured interviews with ILF recipients and/or parents & follow-ups 6 months later ($n=30$).
- Semi-structured telephone interviews with 3rd sector & local authority/health & social care partnerships ($n=10$).

What's being funded?

Payment use	1	2	SIMD 3	4	5	Total	% Applicants
Driving lessons	39	24	20	24	17	124	56
Leisure and sport	15	16	11	7	15	64	29
Computers	10	12	5	8	10	45	20
Travel	10	8	5	3	11	37	17
Education/training	9	7	3	8	11	38	14
Assistive technology and ADL	4	6	6	4	8	28	13
Inclusion/support	3	5	6	1	7	22	11
Smart phone	3	1	3	0	1	8	4
Accommodation	0	2	3	0	3	8	4
Transition	0	0	3	3	2	8	4
Treatment/therapy	0	0	2	1	3	6	3
Misc	0	1	0	1	1	3	2

Who is applying and how much are they getting?

SIMD	Average award
1	2159
2	2390
3	2292
4	2485
5	2926
Total	2392

Interview findings

(1) Perceptions of the ILF Transition Fund

'It's just something that I wouldn't be able to afford or probably wouldn't have started without it'.

(Natalie, aged 20 - driving lessons)

'It's just brought me on tons confidence wise, mentally, everything. It's just improved'.

(James, aged 16 – music lessons and equipment)

(2) Transition and austerity

'I've just actually discovered that a bit of our budget's gone partly because we're getting ILF. They've said well, 'Olivia's getting that so she doesn't need to go out with her friends at the weekend', and I'm thinking she's working, I didn't realise it was an either/or, and I thought they were separate budgets...So I have to admit that feels a bit hard. From my point of view it's just constantly having to make Olivia's life happen'.

(Parent of Olivia, aged 17 – funding for PA for voluntary placements)

(3) A shift from poor transition services and experiences?:

‘So the idea of this being a transition fund is going to give her the opportunity to go out and try working with these people, try making peer relationships in the resource, accessing the building and maybe in the future, build up that knowledge of her likes and dislikes and things like that so that when she does leave home, we’ve got that clear path of what’s going to work for her on a daily basis’.

(Parent of Sophie, aged 18 - one-to-one language support classes)

(4) Personalisation and the role of the ‘social entrepreneur’

‘I think it’s the flexibility that we can apply for whatever it is that that person needs. I mean that was something that was very specific that Jane needed but I can see how it can be used in lots of different ways...like mobility things like independent travel or communication aids and things like that, whereas what we needed was specific support to help Jane access things. So I think it’s the flexibility of it that you can use it for something that meets that individual’s needs’.

(Parent of Jane, aged 17 – music therapy, ski license and lessons, therapy trike)

‘Olivia’s social worker retired in January and apparently another two workers left...they just haven’t got the workers there. But we just get on with it, I’ve got direct payments, so we pay the services. But eventually, they’ll have to get somebody back in, but they should really be planning with us now...They’re the key people, ‘cause they’re the ones who are going to come up with a budget...So that’s a bit of anxiety, and I think that’s the same for a lot of people. Really, they should have everything in place at least a year before the young person leaves school’.

(Parent of Olivia, aged 17 – funding for PA to support voluntary work placements)

Personalisation and market failure

‘The main barrier would be finding somewhere that was just right for her, because her needs are quite complex and staff need a good working knowledge of people on the spectrum.....Adult services are pretty grim, there is not very much out there’.

(Parent of Sophie, aged 18 - one-to-one language support classes)

What does ILF Transitions tell us about transition in Scotland?

- Absence of good transition planning – young people and their families are unready and unprepared.
- Absence of long term goals – securing markers of adulthood through learning and education but not extended to leaving home.
- Process is *reactive* not *proactive*.
- Austerity is having an impact but not the whole story.
- SG response to give individuals/families money – ‘social entrepreneurs’ but ignores wider structural barriers.



- Responsibility for transition lies with individuals and/or their families.