

Review of Allied Health Professions' (AHP) support for children/young people with a statement of special educational needs in Northern Ireland

Phase 2: Mainstream Schools

Questionnaire for Parents/Carers

What is this review about?

Depending on a child/young person's needs, he or she may be receiving services from the Allied Health Professions (AHPs) listed below. The purpose of this review is to look at AHP services for children/young people with a statement of special educational needs and to agree the best way of meeting their AHP assessed needs. We want to ensure that we are working in the best way to help improve outcomes for these children/young people.

Which AHP services will be included in this review?

The review will focus mainly on services for children from:

- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Dietetics
- Podiatry
- Orthoptics

For further information on the role of these Allied Health Professions above, please find the definition appendix on page 17

If other AHP professionals work with your children we are also interested in your views regarding these. The other AHP services are:

- Radiography
- Orthotics
- Prosthetics
- Art Therapy
- Drama Therapy
- Music Therapy

How will this review be carried out?

We plan to carry out this review in three stages. It is difficult to say exactly how long each stage will take, as it will depend on the issues raised, but we have included approximate dates.

- **Stage 1**, which took place until April 2014, looked at AHP support for children in special schools. This stage has been completed and an interim summary report has been developed outlining the service principles agreed by the Project Board and the themes identified throughout engagement and information gathering
- **Stage 2**, until April 2015, will look at AHP support for children with a statement of special educational needs enrolled in mainstream schools.
- **Stage 3**, from April 2015 to August 2016, will agree any changes needed and how to put these into practice.

There is further information regarding this review on the Public Health Agency website: [Public Health Agency](#)

Hearing your views

We want to know what you think about the AHP services for your child. We will also seek views of AHPs and Teachers who work with your children and we will use them all to inform our decisions.

After we have received completed questionnaires, we intend to have further discussions regarding the views captured. Please let us know if you would be interested in further discussion. Contact details are on the next page.

Hearing views from children/young people

We are also keen to get views from children/young people with a statement of special educational needs enrolled in mainstream schools. However, we feel that questionnaires are not an appropriate method of seeking their views and also recognise that direct engagement can be difficult to fit into the school day.

If you have any ideas on how we can best hear the views of these children/young people then we would be very grateful if you would share your ideas in the space below.

If you would like more information or a hard copy of this form please contact:

James McAuley
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Public Health Agency
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Telephone: 028 9536 3513

Questions

1. Does your child/children have a statement of special educational needs and attend a mainstream school or learning support centre/unit attached to a mainstream school?

Yes Please complete the rest of these questions

No This phase of the review is focusing on AHP services for children/young people with a statement of special educational needs enrolled in mainstream schools and learning support centres/units attached to a mainstream school and so these questions will not be relevant to your child

2. Is your child currently receiving any of the AHP services listed on page 1?

Yes Please complete the rest of these questions

No This questionnaire will not be relevant to your child as it is focusing on children who are currently receiving an AHP service.

3. Name of school/s your child/children with a statement of special educational needs attends:

(Please include the town where the school/s is located. If you have more than one child with a statement of special educational needs, please specify which school(s) they attend)

4. What age is/are your child/children:

(If you have more than one child with a statement of special educational needs at a mainstream school please list the ages of your children)

5. Is your child/children currently receiving any of the following AHP services? Please tick for each of your children

| | Child 1 | Child 2 | Child 3 | Child 4 | Child 5 | Child 6 |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Occupational Therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Physiotherapy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Speech and Language Therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Dietetics | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Podiatry | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Orthoptics | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Common points arising from listening to views to date

The following points have been raised during the first stage of this review. As the review is still on-going, these may change or be added to, depending on people's views. We would like to know if you agree with these or have any others to be considered. In the last question you will have the opportunity to add any further comments regarding AHP provision for these children/young people which you feel are not covered in these points.

1. Effective and efficient use of current AHP resource:

There is a need to ensure that AHP services for children with a statement of special educational needs are being used in the most effective and efficient way.

Throughout the years services have developed without a regional plan and so currently there is no regional consistency in how services are used and delivered to these children/young people.

There is a need to standardise care pathways and ensure that children with a similar level of need receive a similar level of service regardless of where they live and where they go to school.

Would you agree with this?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly Disagree

What is your experience to date in relation to this particular point? *We are interested both in what has worked well and any difficulties or issues.*

2. Collaborative/partnership working between Health & Education:

It is vital that AHP and teaching staff working with children/young people with a statement of special educational needs work together in partnership in order to help improve outcomes for children/young people.

Health and Education already work in partnership but it is recognised that there are challenges faced by professionals in Education and Health in working together. Many of these challenges are related to communication, systems and processes when operating in different organisations.

Would you agree with this?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly Disagree

What is your experience to date in relation to this particular point? *We are interested both in what has worked well and any difficulties or issues.*

3. Strengthened joint working between AHPs and Parents/Carers:

Parents/Carers spend most time with their children and the care they provide is invaluable.

It is vital that Parents/Carers and AHPs have a common, shared understanding of the child/young person's needs in order to agree likely outcomes and best hopes for the child and how to work together to help the child/young person.

Would you agree with this?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly Disagree

What is your experience to date in relation to this particular point? *We are interested both in what has worked well and any difficulties or issues.*

4. How a child is referred to AHP services:

Children/Young people with a statement of special educational needs are currently being referred to AHP services in a variety of ways

Regional consistency in referral pathways is needed so that they are referred in the same way, regardless of where they live and which school they attend.

If they are referred in the same way this will help facilitate monitoring which helps with planning and flexibility, for example it is easier to monitor if treatment begins within an appropriate timeframe

Would you agree with this?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly Disagree

What is your experience to date in relation to this particular point? *We are interested both in what has worked well and any difficulties or issues.*

5. AHP input to statutory assessment and review of the statement:

Phase 1 of the review identified variations in how AHPs are involved in the statutory assessment which may lead to a statement of special educational needs.

There were also variations in how AHPs are involved in the reviewing and updating of the statement.

There is a need for regional consistency in how AHPs are involved and clear communication throughout between AHPs and others involved in reviewing the statement.

Would you agree with this?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly Disagree

What is your experience to date in relation to this particular point? *We are interested both in what has worked well and any difficulties or issues.*

6. Delivery of AHP services in the best environment for the child/young person:

Children/Young people should receive their AHP services in the best place for them. Where the best place is will depend on the child's/young person's needs.

Would you agree with this?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly Disagree

What is your experience to date in relation to this particular point? *We are interested both in what has worked well and any difficulties or issues.*

7. Strengthened communication between AHPs and children/young people with a statement of special educational needs:

In phase 1 it was reported by children/young people with a statement of special educational needs that they would like to be more involved in decisions regarding their treatment, including when it is appropriate for treatment to end.

Would you agree with this?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly Disagree

What is your experience to date in relation to this particular point? *We are interested both in what has worked well and any difficulties or issues.*

8. Competency framework for AHPs working with these children/young people-agree knowledge and experience:

There is a need to agree the knowledge and experience an AHP must have in order to work with these children/young people.

These children/young people often have complex needs and AHPs working with them should be supported in developing and maintaining the appropriate level of competency in order to meet their AHP assessed needs.

For example, this would include disability awareness training for AHPs, as requested by children/young people in stage 1 of the review.

Would you agree with this?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly Disagree

What is your experience to date in relation to this particular point? *We are interested both in what has worked well and any difficulties or issues.*

9. Accommodation and equipment:

Sometimes it is appropriate for therapy to take place in school. When this is appropriate Health and Education should work together to agree the treatment space/area which these children need for therapy so that their assessed needs are being met.

Health and Education also need to work together to ensure that children/young people receive the equipment they require when and where they require it.

Would you agree with this?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly Disagree

What is your experience to date in relation to this particular point? *We are interested both in what has worked well and any difficulties or issues.*

10. Data and monitoring:

Currently there are many different data systems and many different ways in which information is being gathered in relation to AHP services for children/young people with a statement of special educational needs. This makes it difficult to establish what level of service there is and how it is being used.

We need to ensure that the number of referrals is known and length of time from referral to treatment can be monitored

Accurate data and monitoring will allow better planning and flexibility to meet demands.

Would you agree with this?

Strongly Agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree Strongly Disagree

What is your experience to date in relation to this particular point? *We are interested both in what has worked well and any difficulties or issues.*

Appendix: Definitions

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occupational Therapy | <p>Occupational Therapists specialise in the assessment of a child and young person's abilities in relation to activities they do every day such as self-care, school work and play.</p> <p>An Occupational Therapist will offer advice, deliver treatment, and recommend equipment or adaptations to overcome or help with any difficulties your child may have to help maximise their potential.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physiotherapy | <p>Physiotherapists work with children/young people who have problems with movement, e.g. learning to roll, sit, crawl, stand and walk.</p> <p>The Physiotherapist will look at how your child is moving and if required will give you advice and information on how to help your child.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speech and Language Therapy | <p>Speech and language therapists work with children/young people who need help with their communication skills. This may include difficulties with understanding others; using words and sentences; saying sounds correctly; stammering; voice and interacting with others. Speech and language therapists also work with children/young people who have eating and swallowing difficulties</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dietetics | <p>Dietitians give practical information about food. They promote nutritional well-being, prevent food related problems and treat disease.</p> <p>Your child's doctor or health professional may ask</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | you to bring your child to see a Dietitian for dietary advice for conditions such as faltering growth, food allergy, obesity, diabetes mellitus or other conditions that can be affected by nutrition |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Podiatry | Podiatrists provide specialist care and treatment of disorders and conditions that could affect your child's feet or lower limbs. You may need a Podiatrist for advice on how your child's foot is developing, what shoes to wear or an assessment of how they are walking. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orthoptics | An Orthoptist's role is to assess and treat babies, young children/young people and those with special needs who have a suspected eye problem such as a squint, reduced vision, lazy eye, droopy eyelid or eye movement problem. |