



connexions

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Working with young people on your caseload

What is this guide for?

It provides all Personal Advisers (PAs) with guidance on what is expected of them when working with clients on their caseload. It will support PA's in working to required standards. It may also help to identify other training needs.

There are a number of reasons that having standards is desirable. The primary reason is to encourage PAs to reflect on and develop their practice with young people. Other reasons include:

- It provides a useful tool for PAs to plan their work in a way that will produce the most positive outcomes for young people.
- It helps us to know that we are providing consistent, equitable high quality services to young people.
- It helps to structure the induction and training of new staff.
- It will be used in supervision when reviewing cases.
- It can be used to identify the training and development needs of existing staff.

What's in it?

This guide talks about how to plan, manage and carry out your work with clients. The guide covers:

1. Casework.
2. Advocacy and Brokerage.

To enable young people to move forward there will usually be a need to engage in a combination of these. This may be an unfamiliar distinction to make but it is useful in developing reflective practice.

Casework is that work which brings about change in the young person, or improves the young person's capacity to change. It is the work a PA does that helps a young person learn and achieve and leaves them in a different (and "better") place than they were before.

For example, working with:

- a young person to help them solve problems related to occupational, educational or life choices (careers guidance)
- a young person to review the impact that drug taking has on their lives and to examine the possibility of change
- a young parent to help them learn about the opportunities and support available to help them to continue in learning

Advocacy and Brokerage are the activities that a PA undertakes that bring about change in the world around the young person.

For example:

- referring to E2E
- submitting to opportunities
- helping them to get somewhere to live
- brokering and arranging support from other agencies
- helping them to find childcare

The standards are organised under the headings of:

1. Underpinning Processes
2. Assessment
3. Planning
4. Implementation
5. Review

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UNDERPINNING PROCESSES

Outcomes¹ for the young person are...

- views the work of the partnership positively.
- respects other people's differences, particularly their feelings, values and beliefs.
- understands how working with their PA through the APIR process can aid their successful progression.

The Personal Adviser will	For example by
Have a secure knowledge and understanding of the purpose and process of APIR.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attending APIR training. - Referring to guidance notes on APIR e.g. in the APIR manual and "A Guide to Defining the Role" Version 1, 2004. - Taking responsibility for applying skills and knowledge gained in training. - Reviewing practice through supervision.
Have a secure knowledge and understanding of how the principles of equality and equity are applied in practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attending training on; Equal Opportunities, Disability Awareness, Sexuality Awareness. - Practising and developing the skills and knowledge gained in training.
Have the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to carry out one to one interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participating fully in induction procedures. - Attending all compulsory training. - Taking responsibility for applying learning gained through training and development activities. - Reviewing their own practice against the Company standards for one to one interventions. - Participating in Observation of Practice. - Identifying development needs and devising, with their manager, strategies to address these.

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<p>Respect and be receptive to the young person's views.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observing the Connexions Northamptonshire Youth Charter. - Remaining open and non-judgemental.
<p>Establish and sustain a positive working relationship with the young person.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using questioning and listening skills and non-verbal behaviour effectively. - Being approachable and supportive but professional. - Being consistent in approach. - Delivering on PA tasks agreed in the action plan. - Suitably challenge stereotypical or discriminatory attitudes and behaviour. - Ensuring that the client understands the purpose and value of working through a process of assessment, planning, implementation and review with their Personal Adviser.
<p>Devise², implement and review a plan of work. See Guidelines on producing a plan of work in "A framework for Professional Practice".</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following the guidance on plans of work.
<p>Follow the necessary protocols, procedures and legislation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following procedures for; recording work on Insight, information sharing protocols, Data Protection, Confidentiality & Consent, Equal Opportunities, etc

¹ Both the outcomes and the standards in column 1 are derived from: Connexions Partnerships, A Framework for Inspection, Ofsted, April 2002.

² See Guidelines on producing a plan of work in "A Framework for Professional Practice".

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ASSESSMENT

Outcomes for the young person are...

The young person:

- has developed in the knowledge and understanding needed to raise their aspirations and achievement;
- has an improved understanding of their own strengths, weaknesses, personal qualities and preferences; and
- recognises potential barriers to learning and social inclusion.

The Personal Adviser will	For example by
Have a secure knowledge and understanding of the purpose and process of assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Attending relevant training in APIR and associated assessment methods and processes, for example, Basic Skills Assessment, Common Assessment Framework.- Referring to guidance notes and supporting materials.- Applying skills learned in training.- Reviewing practice through supervision.
Plan effectively for assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reviewing the information on the referral form.- Checking information available on Insight.- Following any guidance notes from Team Manager- Contacting the young person within five working days of receiving the referral form.- Arranging a time to meet the young person.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selecting and preparing assessment methods appropriate to the age, stage and level of engagement of the client, e.g. Questioning & Listening, Rickter Scale, Strength Cards, APIR Booklet, Basic Skills Assessment (Fast Track), Computer programs, Questionnaires Develop an initial plan of work.
Work effectively with parents, carers and other professionals working with the young person.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gathering further information from partners involved. - Reading reports from partners, for example, school reports, Individual Learning Plans, statement reviews, etc. - Negotiating the role of others in the assessment process with the young person.
Develop a positive working relationship with the young person.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using questioning and listening skills and non-verbal behaviour effectively. - Being approachable, supportive and professional. - Being consistent in approach. - Ensuring that the young person understands the purpose and value of assessment and what will happen to the information gathered.
Assess the young person's needs accurately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summarise with the young person the outcomes of assessment. - Record the assessment on the APIR profile on Insight. - Review the young person's level of need and record on Insight. - First meeting / intervention should result in an initial assessment of the presenting needs, at least. Subsequent contacts should develop assessment across the range of APIR factors - For Active Intensive (and selected Active Enhanced) young people, APIR Profile should be recorded within six weeks.

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PLANNING

Outcomes for the young person are...

The young person:

- has developed in their understanding of the world of work and of the education, training and employment opportunities that are available;
- has developed in their understanding of social, voluntary and leisure-based opportunities for learning and development;
- is assuming increasing responsibility for their personal development,
- can set themselves realistic personal goals and develop plans of action to achieve them; and
- can make effective choices in relation to their future plans.

The Personal Adviser will	For example by
Have a secure knowledge and understanding of the purpose and process of planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading the guidance notes on action planning.³ - Attending APIR training. - Applying skills and knowledge gained in training. - Reviewing practice through supervision.
Encourage the young person to have high aspirations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring that the young person is aware of the full range of options open to them. - Working with the young person to consider the longer term implications of each option. - Helping the young person to consider the realism of their plans. <p>Setting shorter term goals, success in which is likely to increase the young person's confidence in their ability to succeed. (e.g. personal & social development opportunities).</p>
Support the young person to identify their goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helping the young person to identify their longer term goals and support them in identifying achievable steps to success.

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<p>Negotiate an individual action plan that the young person understands and helps prepare them for the next stage of education, training or employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete an action plan with the young person.
<p>Have up-to-date information about a wide range of support structures, specialist, services and opportunities to which they can refer the young person.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participating in training and briefing events. - Referring to supporting materials, for example, staff handbook, intranet, web sites, information from other agencies, prospectuses, Xplore, etc. - Using Generic Lead PA's as a source of information and support.
<p>Provide impartial information, advice and guidance appropriate to young people's needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Researching and using information resources (that help the young person make choices and set goals, for example, career, lifestyle, personal development, health etc). - Providing information in a format that the young person can understand. - Ensuring that the young person knows about all their options.
<p>Use the results of assessment to inform the planning process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring that the action plan and plan of work reflect the outcomes of assessment and set out ways of working to address issues.
<p>Agree with the young person their role and how they will work with parents, carers and other professionals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negotiating with the young person the role of others in the planning process. - Negotiating with partners and other professionals their role in supporting the planning process (e.g. how others are going to support the young person in developing their knowledge and understanding of their options.) - Agreeing with partners and other professionals who is to be the 'lead worker' for the young person. - Negotiating with parents and carers their role in supporting the implementation process (e.g. taking the young person to an open evening). Considering options for parents, e.g. support agencies.

³ See p.34 of "A Guide to Defining the Role" Version 1, 2004 or "A Framework for Professional Practice" 2005.

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IMPLEMENTATION

Outcomes for the young person are...

The young person:

- is better able to cope with their lives and new roles and situations, such as starting work, moving on to further education or living independently; and
- has improved in their ability to overcome barriers to learning and social inclusion.

The Personal Adviser will	For example by
Have a secure knowledge and understanding of the purpose and process of implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Attending APIR training.- Referring to guidance notes on review.- Applying skills and knowledge gained in training.- Reviewing practice through supervision.
Implement the plan agreed with the young person.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Undertaking activities that are the Personal Adviser's responsibility- Working with other people, for example, agencies, schools, parents or carers to ensure they are delivering their elements of the Action Plan.- Providing supportive interventions to the Company standard.- Selecting an approach from "A Framework for Professional Practice" (1:1 Skills for Intervention, Motivational Interviewing etc.)- Brokering services from other agencies.

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Support the young person in their progress through the action plan.

- Working with the young person to ensure they are taking the relevant steps to complete their actions.
- Helping the young person research information (supported use of information materials).
- Helping the young person to complete application forms, for example, E2E, job, FE, benefits, housing, care to learn.
- Supporting the young person with overcoming barriers, for example, arranging child care, referring to drug and alcohol services.
- Arranging interviews and appointments for the young person e.g. college interviews, E2E interviews, arranging visits to other services.
- Accompanying the young person (where appropriate/needed) to interviews, appointments and on visits. Maintaining contact with the young person as frequently as indicated on the plan of work. (Active intensive minimum weekly.)

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REVIEW

Outcomes for the young person are...

The young person:

- can increasingly identify how they need to develop in order to implement their plans successfully;
- forms and maintains constructive relationships in their lives; and
- understands how working with their PA through the APIR process can aid their successful progression.

The Personal Adviser will	For example by
Have a secure knowledge and understanding of the purpose and process of review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Attending APIR training.- Referring to guidance note on review.- Applying skills and knowledge gained in training.- Reviewing practice through supervision.
Work with the young person to assess their progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Maintaining regular contact with the young person (e.g. phone, email, letter, texting, Home Visits) to ensure they are carrying out their agreed action steps and 1:1 meetings to discuss progress towards achievement of their aims.- Measure progress made by a young person against any earlier action plan or assessment profile.
Use the results of review to inform future planning and support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Agreeing new outcomes to be delivered in a follow up personal action plan.- Review when young person has moved on sufficiently that they no longer need to be on a caseload and discuss this with line manager if appropriate for 'Intensive' clients.

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<p>Reflect on their practice with the young person and amend the approach as necessary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussing the case in supervision and with colleagues. - Reflecting on progress at each contact/intervention. - Monitoring the implementation of the work plan. - Discussing the progress/suitability of approach with referrer.
<p>Record the results of the review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify emerging new barriers to development and amend plan of work to be done on Insight. - Action Plan should be amended or renewed as further assessment is carried out.
<p>Involve others in reviewing the young person's progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participating in case conferences. - Following up on referrals. - Contacting family members or carers involved. - Following up on Section 140 Assessments - Sharing information with other service providers on progress - Collecting and referring to documentary information from partners e.g. school reports, SEN Statement, Individual Learning Plan, ASBO, Referral forms

Caseload Definitions

Active caseload

“Active caseload will indicate that the Personal Adviser is actively working with or on behalf of the young person. There should be frequent contacts recorded on Insight either with the young person or with agencies on behalf of the young person. A Plan of Work should be completed by the Personal Adviser and an Action Plan should be agreed with the young person.”

Intensive Support Level

“Integrated and specialist support – for those facing substantial multiple problems preventing them from engaging with learning who are likely to be involved with a number of different professionals engaged in education, social welfare, health and housing. Include here support for the especially gifted.

Young people in this category need Personal Advisers to take effective action on their behalf to help them gain access to a range of more specialist services, to ensure that barriers are addressed in a co-ordinated way and to maintain contact with progress being made.”

Enhanced Support Level

“In depth guidance and help for those at risk of not participating effectively in education and training. This group includes those whose aspirations do not relate to their abilities; who do not attend school regularly; who have learning difficulties and disabilities, who are unlikely to achieve as they should. Young people in these situations need in-depth guidance and support to help them address barriers to learning and enable them to fulfil their potential.”

Timescales

This summarises what you should do on being allocated a young person by your team manager. It represents the minimum expectation. The needs of some young people will mean that things need to happen more quickly or more frequently.

Active Intensive

Week One...

- Read the form.
- Develop an initial plan of work.
- Contact the YP to arrange the first appointment.
- Negotiate and arrange for any urgent support needed (housing, benefits etc).

Weeks One to Six...

- Gather further information from partners to inform assessment.
- Meet young person on a weekly basis to develop working relationship, agree how you are going to work together and to undertake assessment.
- Develop the Plan of Work and record on Insight.
- Record the assessment profile on Insight.
- Implement the Plan of Work.

On an ongoing basis...

- Maintain contact frequently with the young person or their parents/carers. In acute cases this may need to be more frequent.
- Carry out any actions that you have agreed to do.
- Work with the young person to monitor their progress.
- Monitor progress against the plan of work and amend as appropriate.
- Review with line manager at supervision where you need support, where there may be changes to level of support or if the young person may need to come off your caseload.
- Re-assess where appropriate and amend the assessment profile on Insight.

Leaving your caseload

Active intensive young people should not be taken off your caseload without discussion with your line manager.

Additionally if they leave the NEET group:

1. To E2E – they should remain on your active caseload for at least 2 weeks. You should then review their progress with the PA linked to the E2E provider. Depending on their progress decide (in discussion with your line manager) whether to keep on your active caseload, make them watching brief or take off caseload.

Or

2. To other positive outcome (work, training, college etc.) – they should stay on your caseload for at least one month during which you should contact them at least 2 times to check that they are settling in OK and providing support with any issues which may lead them to 'drop-out'. Once they are settled they can be removed from your caseload.

Active Enhanced

Week One...

- Read the form.
- Develop an initial plan of work.
- Contact the YP to arrange the first appointment.

Weeks One to Six...

- Gather further information from partners to inform assessment if necessary.
- Meet young person to develop working relationship, agree how you are going to work together and to undertake assessment.
- Develop the plan of work and record on Insight.
- Record the assessment profile on Insight if appropriate.
- Implement the plan.

On an ongoing basis...

- Maintain contact as frequently as appropriate for the client.
(This frequency should be indicated in the work plan)
- Carry out any actions that you have agreed to do.
- Work with the young person to monitor their progress.
- Monitor progress against the plan of work and amend as appropriate.
- Review progress and future involvement with line manager at supervision if necessary.

Watching Brief

The main function of watching brief is to enable a young person to remain on the caseload list of a Personal Adviser whilst active work by Connexions DES is not required. Young people on watching brief will be monitored and their progress recorded at least termly for young people in school and at least every three months for those not in school. This could be through direct contact with the young person or through a partner agency.

Notes

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“Committed to Equality”

