

Talking points

The NNPCF is a membership organisation and our mission states that “we aim to empower our members to ensure that their voice is heard at a local, regional and national level.”

Working with our membership we have identified a number of key “talking points” - these are topics and themes that are the most important to our membership and the ones that have been prioritised by the NNPCF.

Based on feedback from our membership and from other partners and stakeholders, the “talking point” summarise:

- The lived experience of our members about each topic,
- What is working and what is not working, and
- What we would like to see changed.

The talking points have been created using a range of feedback which includes:

- Surveys (including the SEND surveys)
- Feedback from our annual conferences
- The topics raised at regional meetings
- Themes and topics raised by our membership on social media
- Face to face conversations with our membership

Joint Commissioning

Joint Commissioning is a strategic approach to planning and delivering services in a holistic, joined-up way. It is a means for the different partners **commissioning** education, health and care provision, to deliver positive outcomes for children and young people with **SEND**.

However, to achieve the Preparing for Adulthood outcomes of employment, independent living, community life and good health, approaches to joint commissioning need to engage not only the education, social care, health and public health sectors but also wider ‘whole system’ partners such as those concerned with employment and housing.

Approaches to joint commissioning also need to take place across children’s and adult services.

Forums tell us that progress in joint commissioning is slow and difficult; there is widespread lack of understanding of personalisation and what it can achieve and individuals and leaders across the system are not yet committed to it as a new way of working.

The Legal Framework

Section 25 of the Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on local authorities that should ensure integration between educational/training provision and health and social care provision, where this would promote wellbeing and improve the quality of support for disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

The Care Act 2014 requires local authorities to ensure co-operation between children's and adults' services to promote the integration of care and support with health services, so that young adults are not left without care and support as they make the transition from children's to adult social care.

Local authorities and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) must make joint commissioning arrangements for education, health and care provision for children and young people with SEN or disabilities (Section 26 of the Act). The local authority and its partner commissioning bodies includes clinicians' commissioning arrangements, and NHS England for specialist health provision.

“At a strategic level, partners must engage children and young people with SEN and disabilities and children’s parents in commissioning decisions, to give useful insights into how to improve services and outcomes. This ensures that commissioning decisions on services for those with SEN and disabilities are shaped by users’ experiences, ambitions and expectations. To do this, local authorities and CCGs should engage with local organisations including Parent Carer Forums.”

*SEND Code of Practice
2015 3.18 & 3.29*

In addition local authorities must review their educational, training and social care provision, consulting a range of partners and taking into consideration the experiences of children, young people and families (including through representative groups such as Parent Carer Forums). Feedback from these reviews should inform the development and review of the Local Offer and the inform effectiveness of local joint working.

SEND Code of Practice
2015 3.16

Joint Planning

Partners from across the local area should identify the **outcomes** that matter to children and young people with SEN or disabilities to inform the planning and delivery of services and the monitoring of how well services have secured those outcomes at three levels:

- Individual
- Service
- Strategic

'Outcomes refer to the benefit or difference made to an individual as a result of an intervention.'

The NNPCF have seen an increase in concerns from forums that their local areas cannot deliver the legal requirements of the Children and Families Act with constrained resources. The demand and scope of services for SEND is increasing at a time when local authority finances are under ever increasing pressure. In addition, the failure of many areas to make meaningful progress with joint commissioning has amplified this situation. What resources there are have not necessarily been deployed in the most effective ways.

To make the best use of resources, partners should consider how an integrated approach can best support:

- Early identification of needs
- Resilience of families and local services to enable children and young people with more complex needs to participate actively in their local community

- Better access to services
- Development of good language, communication and mental health through universal services so that effective use is made of specialist speech and language therapy services and CAMHS
- Better transitions between key stages and settings, including from early years to primary education, primary to secondary and secondary to further education (FE), and for adult life.

Joint commissioning should be informed by a clear assessment of local needs. **Health and Wellbeing Boards** are required to develop **Joint Strategic Needs Assessments** and **Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies**, to support prevention, identification, assessment and early intervention and a joined-up approach.

Joint commissioning arrangements should enable partners to make best use of all the resources available in an area to improve outcomes for children and young people in the most efficient, effective, equitable and sustainable way.

Good commissioning: principles and practice, Commissioning Support Programme, (Rev) September 2010.

SEND Local Area Inspections

SEND Local Area Inspections to date have identified that there has not been enough progress in implementing a coordinated 0– 25 service for children and young people who have SEND. In particular, joint commissioning of services for up to 25 is inconsistent. In some areas is a lack of coordinated planning as young people moved into adult services. Consequently, too many young people who have SEND do not get the support and resources they were entitled to once they reached the age of 19.

Area SEND inspections: one year on October 2017

Themes from written statement of actions (WSOA) relating to Joint Commissioning includes:

- The lack of joint commissioning arrangements / strategy across education, health and social care
- Fragmented approach to joint commissioning
- Defective arrangements for joint commissioning
- The lack of joint commissioning of services to support young people's health needs post-19
- There are no coordinated priorities, strategies or accountabilities between the services to ensure that joint commissioning is undertaken effectively
- Weak joint commissioning arrangements that are not well developed or evaluated

Things for forums to consider in respect of Joint Commissioning include:

- **Co-production** with parents and CYP underpins Joint Commissioning. PCFs have an important role to play in robust joint commissioning arrangements
- Are 'health' and 'social care' issues appropriately reflected in the local area SEND strategy and action plan?
- PCFs can assist with providing an evidence base for commissioning
- Does the JSNA reflect CYP with SEND?
- 0-25 years or whole life pathways

A greater focus on Joint Commissioning

On Thursday the 5th July 2018, the Secretary of State for Education, Damian Hinds spoke to the Association of Directors of Children's Services Conference.

In what was one of the first speeches outlining his priorities since his appointment, the Secretary of State highlighted SEND as a priority for him and his Department. In this he referenced the importance of joint commissioning

"I want to look at how my department, working with the Department for Health and Social Care and NHS England, can support local authorities and NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups to more effectively plan and commission SEND provision."

This echoes some of the calls from the NNPCF that joint working is a key tenant of the Code of Practice and the NNPCF has been urging Ministers to take a lead in ensuring their departments work together more effectively. The NNPCF have

raised this in meetings with Nadhim Zahawi and in our conversations with Caroline Dinenage at the Department of Health and Sarah Newton at the Department for Work and Pensions.

Notes:

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-sendinspections-one-year-on>
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0to-25>
3. <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/helpresources/resources/updated-joint-commissioning-bulletins>
4. <https://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/SiteAssets/Downloads/ointsd1i636420114813141468.pdf>