

Transitions Back

It is very hard to plan for a transition back to normal life. We don't know how long we will be in this phase, or whether there will be a gradual return to normal life or whether we will move in and out of more/less restrictions being placed on us.

We can't plan for the transition in terms of an exact date or an exact path but there are probably some key areas where we can make plans.

1. Looking after everyone

It is clear that for many family carers, they will have been supporting their relative a great deal throughout this time and so it is reasonable to expect family carers to be feeling more tired than usual. For some, it might not be until life begins to return to normal that they may be aware of just how tired they are feeling. What can you do to look after yourself as other options for support for your relative become available?

2. Taking the learning forward

We did not really get time to plan for the transition in to lockdown but we do know that life will return to normal at some point and so it is important to think about what was particularly hard about the sudden change and whether there is anything that can be done differently as life returns to normality.

What was particularly difficult for your relative and how might you be able to prepare differently for the transition back? This might be about

a gradual reintroduction or thinking about changing one thing at a time. Remember that for many people, the transition back might be just as hard (it might feel like a return to normality for some people but for others they may have really settled into the new patterns of the day and be expecting that to continue.)

3. Is there anything that is particularly working about the current situation and how can we use this information?

You may have started some new routines that are working or gained even more expert knowledge about your relative. How can this information be shared?

If your relative is to return to a setting, (school, day service, respite) it can be helpful to share this new information with others who support them there.

"During lockdown I have been doing some home-school with my daughter. I am told at school her concentration and focus is limited, however she had been able to work for 40 minutes at a time with me on reading and maths. I think this clearly shows that she needs a quiet environment and 1:1 focused support for learning. I have fed this back to her school and will request some 1:1 support in a quiet room for her every day."

4. Communicating with your relative

It is hard enough to understand when things will change and how they will change even if you do not have a learning disability. Here you can use all of your EXPERT knowledge about your relative. What is the best way to communicate changes? Who is the best person to communicate this and when? Are visual timetables helpful? Can you use these to help explain what is happening? (Even if you are not sure how much these help, it is worth using at least some way of visually representing what is happening. That might be 'now and next' or 'today and tomorrow' (e.g. a picture of 'home' on today and a picture of 'school' on tomorrow. Often people only learn that these visual timetables have meaning by these being regularly used.