



# Promoting Inclusion Transforming Lives

International Conference 2017

14 -16 June 2017, Dundee, Scotland

## Parallel Sessions

We have some fantastic papers, workshops and transformative practice sessions that will stimulate discussion and debate; provide an opportunity to explore practice; and to support the development of relationships and networks that will support inclusive practice and communities.

We've grouped papers into common areas of interest, but we've also grouped those with workshops and Transformative Practice Sessions with similar areas of interest too – so each time slot has a broadly related theme.

The time slots for the parallel sessions are:

- Thursday, 11.45am
- Thursday, 2.30pm
- Friday, 11.15am
- Friday, 2.15pm

**Posters** can be viewed throughout the conference but there will be an opportunity to meet the presenters at refreshment breaks and within open space sessions. Watch the notice board for specific times.

### Key:

<b>Papers</b>
<b>Workshops</b>
<b>Transformative Practice Session</b>
<b>Posters</b>

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June**  
**11.45 am**  
**Room LT3**

**Impact of the Bigger Picture**

*Neil MacLeod*

Bigger Picture provides person centred planning for young people in an empowering process assisting them and their families/carers plan and actively move forward in their lives.

This innovative and entrepreneurial approach to exploring "support solutions", while accessing a wide range of activities within communities, presents real opportunities for a sustainable community based approach to transitions..

Feedback shows that 100% of participants benefitted from their community based core support team and that the approach worked well. This means that significant numbers of people from within the young people's communities are engaged and involved. The feedback also shows that 100% also felt that the person was listened to and that the whole family had a clearer direction for after school.

The personal meeting is generally attended by between 8 – 16 people, all personally invited by the person themselves. Generally these are people who live in their local communities and not paid professionals. This year we expect to work with 53 young autistic people covering all 32 secondary schools across Highlands. This means more than 500 people in communities supporting people to live a higher quality of life and meeting ambitions in their own communities.

There is extensive engagement in the community, based around the persons' participation in activities focussed on successfully showing their capabilities and skills. These vary extensively but to date they include activities such as fitness classes, cookery classes, bike maintenance, independent travel, art classes, pool, Zumba classes, Cadets, song writing lessons, music, breakout games, writing groups, animation and Photoshop and graphics groups, dance groups, driving range, Roller-bowl, acting groups and Anthropology and publishing groups. As a result people in the communities see active people of talent and ability.

75% of participants have also started a hobby outside school, again highlighting the inclusive and sustainability of the approach.

We feel that we are just opening a new chapter in person centred community based support in the Highlands, which is innovative, energising and exciting. We are working with young people in a way that genuinely engages them and allows them to grow and develop.

**Young people leading social and political transformations in their communities: creating inclusive spaces**

*Dr Victoria Jupp Kina, Julia Cancia*

Despite the range of terminology to describe participation there remains confusion

over what constitutes truly empowering participatory practices. Issues of power and control are complex and theoretical frameworks often fail to capture the challenge of transforming participatory principles into genuinely empowering and protagonist practices. This paper will provide an example of a project in which multiple layers of youth participation combine together to provide space for protagonist actions to emerge. Working in a school with the highest rates of interpersonal violence and exclusion rates in the neighbourhood of Diadema, São Paulo, the Youth in Action project employed young people (between 15 and 17 years old) as workshop facilitators who, with support and training, provided a series of workshops to younger students (between 13 and 14 years old) on local economic development, sustainability and well-being. The youth led workshops culminated in the younger students developing their own ideas for activities that impact positively on their own lives and the lives of those around them. A second stage of the project then provided the necessary support to enable the students to realise their projects through a programme of coaching. This ongoing support proved to be crucial in creating an inclusive space that enabled young people to develop protagonist actions. This paper will highlight the importance of understanding the adult's role, focusing on the need to know when and how to offer support.

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June**

**11.45 am**

**Room 2F11**

**Meccano-Meccanoid Project – a competition promoting inclusion and cross-circular working**

*E. Gray, S. Clark, C Ellis, R. Camili, G. Carslaw, K. Donnelly*

Development of cross-curricular activities is key to the Curriculum for Excellence. The aim of our project was to examine how a science-based competition could be used to demonstrate cross-curricular links, whilst promoting inclusion. In December 2015, all secondary schools in Highlands and Islands and Argyll and Bute were invited to participate in the University of the Highlands ISF Meccano Meccanoid competition. Over the next two months a member of the STEM team visited the registered schools, demonstrating the equipment and discussing with students and teachers the use of the robot. Teachers were encouraged to create teams consisting of students of mixed ability who would complement each other. This approach was designed to encourage pupils to develop their own skill set. At the same time pupils developed team working skills through a collaborative approach to learning. The aim of the Inverness Science Festival competition was to promote 'Science for All', regardless of back ground, socio-economic status and ethnicity of the pupils. Each school was required to investigate the use of a robot as a teaching tool that could also support learning for pupils with ASN. Each team of pupils was required to prepare and provide an 8 minute presentation and answer questions on their project and the outcome of their experiences.

**Objectives:**

- 1) To develop a mechanism whereby a competitive competition included in a Science festival can be incorporated into the school curriculum.
- 2) To explore the impact of the science competition on inclusion within a secondary school.

- 3) To monitor pupils' attitudes, levels of engagement, skills development and identify implications for pupils with ASN.
- 4) To provide evidence to support further funding applications for instigation and development of competitions in future science festivals across the region.

The competition was completed in May 2016 with 12 schools delivering a presentation. Evidence of methodology used, results and implications for the project as a basis for promoting inclusion in an educational setting will be presented in the form of a poster.

### **Inclusive school library in regular schools for children with complex needs**

*Clarisse Nunes, Teresa Miguel, Rita Nobre*

Since 2008, Portuguese legislation requires that children with disabilities, like children with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD) attend regular schools. It should be noted that this legislation creates the possibility for schools to organize educational responses suitable to their needs, like specific classrooms called Specialized Support Units (SSU). Consequently, children with complex needs do not always attend regular classrooms, or other educational spaces, such as the school library.

Focusing on the participation and involvement of these children in storytelling activities carried out in the regular classrooms or in school libraries, it is observed that most of them do not have access to this type of activities.

In order to reverse this situation, some Portuguese special education teachers and librarians teachers have developed projects that aim to make school libraries more inclusive, not only in physical terms, but also in cultural issues.

Two research projects carried out in Portugal by special education teachers involved the use of multi-sensory storytelling (MST) for children with PIMD in regular schools. These stories are made by the teachers and the non-SEN peers, and used in the contexts of the SSU and in the schools libraries. The librarian teachers have also been involved, implying the changes of these spaces in order to be accessible to children with PIMD. These practices also led to the design of specific spaces for MST that became an integral part of the collection of these libraries.

In the paper we will share the main results of the research developed by special education teachers in order to promote an inclusive educational community, especially focused on making the school library an inclusive and accessible space for children with PIMD and other complex needs. The school library was organized in such a way as to provide a physical space for MST as well as adapted stories. In short, we want to share evidences and good practices developed in these educational contexts in order to promote inclusive school spaces for children with PIMD and others complex needs.

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June  
11.45 am**

## Room 1F06

### **Aromatherapy: a person-centred approach to promoting the voice of individuals with PMLD, comfort for learning and improved wellbeing**

*Annie Ferguson, Sage Savage*

A quality assurance initiative in one special school setting reviewed activity options to ascertain opportunities:-

- were truly inclusive to individuals with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) within their school community
- created authentically learner-led, interactive and responsive learning environments
- led to observable learning, progress or other (worthwhile) outcomes.

Aromatherapy is the current focus.

This therapeutic approach was established in school to promote the general wellbeing of learners with PMLD, but in particular, to ensure their comfort for learning. This review explored and extended some key influences afforded by aromatherapy to enhance the learner's voice, their progress and their engagement in learning. Elements of practice were developed and improved and as a consequence aromatherapy became a more person-centred and learner-led approach which resulted in more positive and wide-ranging outcomes for these individuals in this school setting.

Following consent from families and approval from GPs to participate two individuals with PMLD, new to aromatherapy-massage, were monitored for three months from commencing weekly sessions.

A new, more detailed, personal profile was developed together with families. Closer working with families (as experts by experience) led to a more holistic picture of each learner with PMLD revealing valuable insights (e.g. about their communication styles, preferences and interests). Families from their unique perspectives at home highlighted key priorities most were health related (e.g. stiff muscles/ limbs, poor circulation, digestive issues, weight loss, sleep issues). Essential-oil blends were made by the highly qualified aromatherapist to address priorities; bespoke blends were used in weekly aromatherapy sessions.

Families and classroom staff were routinely involved in feedback using personalised and user-friendly records (newly introduced), capturing evidence of change following weekly aromatherapy -both at home and school. Ongoing review of feedback and detailed session observations led to the structure of sessions and elements of practice being further developed to be more enabling and responsive to each individual with PMLD.

Reflection after three months showed clear progress in levels of communication, engagement and learning, improvement in family priorities and significant change in the health/ wellbeing of individuals with PMLD.

Participants will experience aromatherapy blends first-hand, consider practice and structure to enable communication and control by individuals (PMLD), personalise user-friendly recording systems.

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June**

**11.45 am  
Room 2F15**

**SMART: Facilitating inclusive transitions of young people to employment using a strengths based approach**

*Anna Reuscher, Rasmus Pechuel, Balla Istvan Peter, Stephania Kokkosi, Marc Beutener, Divya Jindal-Snape*

This interactive workshop will focus on our research and development project, Skill Matching Assistance and Reporting Tool (SMART), which has been funded by Erasmus+. Led by Pro Educatione (Romania), partners include University of Paderborn (Germany), YEU (Cyprus), Ingenious Knowledge (Germany) and University of Dundee (Scotland). The aim of SMART is "to match the skills and interests of young people with job and apprenticeship profiles, making a point of not relying on qualifications." It also aims to raise awareness of employers and counsellors about the needs of this group of young people, an understanding of their strengths and skills acquired in informal ways and their potential contribution to enterprises. This inclusive strengths based approach will ensure that young people who have left school prior to gaining formal qualifications can get a chance to highlight their strengths and abilities better than in a qualification-oriented approach for successful transition to employment. In this workshop we will present our journey towards creating SMART, namely literature review, interviews and questionnaires with potential employers, creation of a conceptual framework, creation of test prototypes and young people's views about these steps.

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June  
11.45 am  
Room 1S01**

**Tayberry Tales – Learning and Development through storytelling**

*Lorna Strachan, Anne Everett Ogston, Maureen Phillip and the Tayberry Tales Apprentices*

This workshop will demonstrate how inclusive multi-sensory storytelling helps support people with learning disabilities and their facilitators to access stories as a learning tool. Storytelling enables the development of communication, confidence, self-esteem, friendships and understanding of each other and the wider communities. Tayberry Tales is a Scottish Government funded initiative awarded to Tayberry Enterprise and supported by PAMIS. The multi-sensory storytelling project offers storytelling apprentices an inclusive space in communities for people with learning disabilities and their facilitators to train together to explore and develop their storytelling skills. The apprenticeship storytelling course introduces people to multi-sensory storytelling, promotes co-production and offers the opportunity to develop skills within a variety of educational and community settings. The course is flexible but is usually undertaken two days a week over five weeks, followed by a two year practice placement where the apprentices can practice their craft and improve their skills. The course material enhances the learning and development of the apprentices by providing storytelling skills that ensures an understanding of storytelling, including the use of multi-sensory storytelling for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities. The course considers the skills and abilities of individual story apprentices within an improvement methodology framework. Using this framework enables the course to

be flexible, accessible and responsive to individual needs and geographical location. This enables the apprentices to achieve the course outcomes while ensuring the course is adapted to suit the needs of individual apprentices.

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June**

**11.45 am**

**Room 2G14**

**Future Skills College**

*Laurie O'Donnell*

The Future Skills College (FSC) represents an innovation in transitions between school and sustained employment for young people and will be a test bed of inclusive growth.

With future skills simply defined as those required for the future economy. FSC has been designed to completely close the gap between education and sustained employment, transforming the Scottish Government's aspiration of Developing Scotland's Young Workforce into a practical reality.

The initial focus of FSC will be young people living in Dundee and Angus. Over a six-year period plans are to engage with and support 240 local employers placing 800 school leavers into secure jobs as apprentices or trainees.

The FSC model is unique, innovative, high-impact, relatively low risk, highly scalable (up and down) as well as being extendable to other areas.

FSC has grown out of a unique cross-sector partnership of equals across public, private and 3rd sectors comprised of: Dundee & Angus College; Dundee City Council; Angus Council, Skills Development Scotland; Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce; Dundee & Angus Developing Scotland's Young Workforce; University of Dundee; Helm Training; Northwood Trust/DC Thomson; and 4J Studios.

FSC will be employment demand led, with students recruited exclusively on the basis of actual vacancies identified by local employers for apprentices or trainees. Opening in May 2017 with 40 students the intention is that by 2021/22 FSC will achieve its initial target capacity of 200 places per year, i.e. 200 real jobs identified and 200 students spending a year being supported in the transition from full-time education into sustainable employment.

In the FSC model students continue in the senior phase of secondary education for one year, remaining on fully-funded local authority school rolls. Initially coming together from 10 secondary schools at a new dedicated facility within D&A College the students will complete their school qualifications and be supported through an intensive programme to enhance their employability for two days per week. They will also study bespoke job specific pre-apprenticeship college courses for two days and spend one day per week on work placement with what should be their future employers.

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June**

**11.45 am  
Room 1F01**

**“CamOnWheels” : Increasing narrative skills and participation for young people with complex communication needs**

*Masha Legel, Annalu Waller*

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) attempts to augment natural speech, or to provide alternative ways to communicate for people with limited or no speech. Although some people who use AAC do develop good narrative skills, many do not. This presentation will explore the idea of Film as a vehicle for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (FaOC) as a method to support more effective conversation. Young people with complex communication needs (CCN) are trained to film and edit their own material. These films are then used as context prompts within conversations.

Cameras are adapted to enable participants to have independent access. For example, an iPad might be mounted to a wheelchair allowing the filmmaker to shoot their own material. Editing consists of selecting images, implicitly making a strategic plan about what will be shown to tell a story (a narrative). The filmmaker then tells a story or participates in a conversation using the selected images as a communication support by both the storyteller and the communication partners.

FaOC has evolved into CamOnWheels, a multidisciplinary project in The Netherlands which aims to provide young people with CCN with opportunities for interaction. Adolescents and young adults with CCN are often misunderstood and become socially isolated. "CamOnWheels" aims to help young people in increasing their confidence and independence through participation. The project achieves this by offering training in film making and creating a meeting place where students can integrate and study with their peer group.

Disabled students attend courses and projects at the CamOnWheels Studios along with mainstream film students. CamOnWheels" staff and AAC experts deliver training on filming and editing, developing student's creative talent and enhancing their skills and knowledge in various fields. "CamOnWheels provides the equipment, space, training and guidance and arranges internships and work experience placements.

The presentation will discuss the early work of the project together with the underlying research. Participants will be invited to reflect on the opportunities and challenges of the CamOnWheels project discussing the potential to initiate similar projects in other locations.

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June  
2.30 pm  
Room LT3**

**Lack of Inclusiveness in Socio-cultural and Educational Spaces and Female Students Dropout from High Schools in Nepal: Stake Holders Perspectives**

*Tanka Dahal*

The study of the ninety six respondents' interviews conducted in six different districts from three different ecological zones, Himalayas, hills and plains, reveal a



wide range of issues in the educational policy and its implementation in Nepal. These interviews were transcribed and translated from Nepali language into English. The inter-rater reliability was checked before they were analysed using NVivo.

Although positive elements in the policy and school system have worked a little towards improving the situation, the problems are experienced both in social and educational spaces because of poor implementation of the policy and inadequate resources. Likewise, the problems existing in the Nepalese educational scenario together with the socio-economic and cultural background constantly discourage inclusiveness. The females have to suffer because of the biased social assumptions that consider education for girls as unimportant. This paper captures the socio cultural and educational issues that the stakeholders raised during interviews in regard to female students drop out from the public schools in Nepal.

### **Inclusivity, integration and international distance education: Evidence of best practice form a South African context**

*Jenna Mittelmeier, Jekaterina Rogaten, Ashley Gunter, Clare Madge, Paul Prinsloo, Parvati Raghuram, Ketherine Reedy, Bart Rienties*

The proportion of students studying in international distance education programmes has risen dramatically in the last decade, particularly in developing countries (UNESCO, 2012). One such example is South Africa, which has become a regional hub for international students with over one-third now studying distantly. Previous research demonstrates that distance students show low degree attainment (Prinsloo et al, 2015) and learning design affects their retention and satisfaction (Rienties and Toetenel, 2016). However, relatively little is known about international distance learners educational transitions, including academic and social integrations. Although there is a wide body of literature on international student adjustment and integration, this research often makes the assumption that students are physically located at the host institution, and there is a scarcity of research on distance education experiences.

The International Distance Education with African Students (IDEAS) project aims to address these gaps in knowledge through a research collaboration between the Open University in the UK and the University of South Africa. The project explores international distance student experiences in Africa, including their educational transitions through HE and the role of learning design or university support systems in academic and social inclusion. At the Promoting Inclusion, Transforming Lives conference, we will present the initial findings from a cross-cultural comparison of learning analytics data from 70,000 domestic and international distance students. We will also describe the academic and social adjustment patterns of 500 international distance students across Africa. Evidence for learning designs and practices that best support international distance learners, effectiveness of support services for promoting successful transitions and wellbeing, and the current barriers to inclusive distance education practices in a developing world context will be discussed

### **Kamma, Shame (Lajja-Baya) and Disability in Sri Lanka**

*Dr Fiona Kumari Campbell*

In Sri Lanka social status plays a heightened role in social relations. The inverse of status is shaming or humiliation (lajja) enduring as an undercurrent of social interactions complete with the anxiety of being shamed publically (lajja-bhaya). There is a fear of social disapproval in transgressing the norms of sexual, 'proper'

behaviour expected of the category of person. In a study by Samarasekare, Davies & Siribaddana the jeopardising of social status due to mental illness was identified as being a proclivity of 'high society' urban Colombo families. Lajja-bhaya is magnified by populist interpretations of Buddhist notions of kamma and cultural beliefs about demonic possession especially when the impairment is assumed to be 'mental' in orientation.

Biographical disruption by virtue of disability (either at birth or later in life), impacts on the performance of kinship and lajja relations. The personal experiences of the disabled person and their family interfolds into this context; even when they 'do not have the words' (*mama vacana nā*) to communicate the depth and incomprehensibility of pain caused by lajja-baya. Compounding these experiences are diverse, often inaccurate understandings (folkloric and doctrinal) of the concept of kamma which shapes social welfare policy and the social inclusion of disabled people. This paper outlines contested notions of kamma attributed to Theravadan Buddhism, its application to disabled people and social policy and legal responses in Sri Lanka. The presentation points to preliminary research into the operation of Lajja-Baya (Shame) by disabled people and implications for citizenship and civil society activism.

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June**

**2.30 pm**

**Room 2F11**

**Multiple and Multi-dimensional Transitions in the context of life-limiting health conditions: Perspectives of Young Adult, Families and Professionals**

*Divya Jindal-Snape, Bridget Johnston, Jan Pringle, Libby Gold*

**Introduction**

The needs of young adults with life-limiting conditions are different from younger children and adults in the context of their physical and psychological development (ACT, 2007), as they experience multiple transitions related to their clinical trajectory as well as those from adolescence to adulthood, educational transitions, change in identity, and change in the nature and type of relationships with significant others (Jindal-Snape, 2016). Although there is evidence in literature that the process of transition from child to adult services leads to a deterioration in health of young adults with gaps in health care, a recent Cochrane Review found limited evidence of the effectiveness of the transition interventions that were used. Our own review highlighted the need for further research where the unique life transitions and experiences of young adults with life-limiting conditions are prioritised, alongside the transitions of significant others.

**Objectives**

1. To understand the impact of clinical problems and health care experience on the young adults and their educational and life transitions, including their aspirations and unique destinations.
2. To understand the impact of the young adult's life transitions and choices on significant others (namely families, professionals) and vice versa.

**Methodology**

The study adopted a mixed methods approach, using methodological and source triangulation. Data were collected through interviews and case notes reviews. It

was carried out over a 6 month period and involved serial data, gathered over 3 time points, each approximately 2 months apart.

#### Findings

The clinical conditions had an impact on other aspects of their lives such as aspirations and plans for the future. Some of their aspirations and choices were seen to be unsafe or unrealistic by the families and professionals. On the whole there was an uncertainty about the future and limited planning as parents and professionals had not expected some to survive beyond childhood. There seemed to be a significant impact of the young adult's life transitions and choices on their families and professionals.

Implications for policy and practice will be discussed.

#### **Life transitions and qualifications? It's a matter of social justice...**

*Margaret Tierney, Patricia McDonald*

Our message is clear: we want to make a difference. We want to make a difference in the identity capital and educational success of learners, particularly those who may experience stigma and stereotyping at a time of changing status from childhood to emerging adulthood. It's a matter of social justice that we want every learner using SQA qualifications to have the best chance of showing what they can do, make, say or write and to have their achievements recognised and celebrated. It is widely recognised that attainment in qualifications has an important role in shaping individual identity and in creating pathways to aspects of adulthood, particularly to feelings of personal success/failure and to post compulsory education/employment. We also recognise that Scotland may have systems that produce and reproduce educational inequalities for disadvantaged groups. We aim to make a difference through systemic change and in turn, to improve the transitional life chances of individuals.

This paper discusses two distinct processes that the authors have undertaken in pursuit of aspects of social justice in SQAs external examinations. It considers steps taken to remove potential barriers for two specific cohorts of learners: disabled learners and care experienced learners. It shows how the authors collaborated with colleagues and with learner representatives as co-educators to (i) improve fairness in assessment and (ii) promote social justice as a role in question paper design. It raises questions about the interplay between systemic change and learner agency in qualification development and assessment design for the future. While this contribution draws on appropriate literature, its primary concern is not academic; rather it is to consider how we might improve our thinking and ways of working towards greater social justice.

#### **Transitioning from sheltered to open employment: the Austrian context**

*Sarah Hofmayer*

This paper focuses on the transition from segregated to inclusive employment, using the Austrian context and more specifically the City of Vienna as an example. While there is a need to develop systems to facilitate transition from school to inclusive employment and training, different approaches are needed for persons who are already in a form of segregated employment, namely sheltered workshops. The skills obtained in sheltered workshops are not easily transferrable to other contexts, people cannot show any previous work experience in the traditional sense and are often not aware of the broad variety of job opportunities

available and feel disillusioned because of previous experiences.

Several projects and services exist by now, both to provide for a less stressful training or work experience, situated between sheltered workshops and the open labour market, such as work integration social enterprises or professional qualification projects; and work assistance and job coaching programmes, offering assistance in employment. These different projects have different priorities and goals, some are set up for younger persons with disabilities some for a specific type of disability. It will be shown how important it is, that these services work together in order for the person with a disability to find the job that can fully accommodate them. Sometimes it is necessary for a person to take part in more than just one project before finding employment, as the services competencies are limited due to funding requirements.

It will be illustrated how important it is to provide further assistance at a job, if required, by job-coaches. This service is focused both on the employee and mentors or employers, who might feel insecure in the beginning, working with a person with a disability. Different forms of accommodations might be necessary for persons coming from segregated employment, which require a deeper understanding of this system by the job-coach.

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June**  
**2.30 pm**  
**Room 1F06**

### **Empowering Disabled Educators**

*Annalu Waller, Kathleen Cummins, Alan McGregor*

Attitudes of healthcare professionals can be a barrier for people with severe communication and/or learning difficulties in accessing adequate healthcare. The University of Dundee's Medical School, in collaboration with the Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Research Group within the School of Science and Engineering, developed and evaluated a pilot workshop on AAC for medical students in 2012 [1, 2]. This type of training in medical education is now an integral part of undergraduate medical training. The material is also delivered to undergraduate dental students as part of their diversity training while computing undergraduate and postgraduate students engage with AAC within a research unit on Assistive Technology.

Members of the StraightTalking AAC User Group play a central part in the AAC training. They initially engaging with students in small groups after a tutor delivered an academic lecture on AAC. However, as a result of a focus group held to discuss their views of the workshop, the volunteers are now actively involved in both the design and delivery of the entire training. The feedback from students is consistently high and the disabled educators have gained self-confidence as experts in communication.

This workshop (co-presented by people who use AAC) explore the strategies and techniques which have been developed to support volunteers with severe speech and physical impairments to prepare and deliver AAC awareness training. The benefits and challenges will be discussed and presenters and participants will be encouraged to mutually share their own experiences of good practice and discuss

the value of the training model across other disciplines.

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June**  
**2.30 pm**  
**Room 2F15**

**Network TranSition 2017 - interdisciplinary transitional research**

*Eckart Diezemann, Daniel Mays, Daniel Pittich*

In the relevant literature on transition research open questions about the fit with respect to two interrelated planes are sketched: 1) normative-institutional transitions and 2) individual-related aspects of transitions. Regarding 1): Open questions of normative-institutional transitions can be observed both within the education system, as well as in the transition from education to the training and employment system (Jindal-Snape 2016; Mays 2017). Regarding 2): The aspects of transitions described above are supplemented by facets directly affecting the individual where, besides the pedagogical and didactic, questions of inclusiveness are also brought into play (Buchmann & Diezemann 2014). In addition, both perspectives are worked on in different scientific disciplines, so that - as the preparatory work of the research group suggests, and subordinate (disciplinary) subcontexts of the subject of "transition" are developed.

This is the place where the scientific and consortial network of Vocational Education (Science), Technical Training and Learning and Special Needs Education is set up. Thus, within the framework of the workshop a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches will be addressed and discussed in a thematised manner by means of the integration of different participant's experience of (sub-) questions of (inclusion-related) transitional research. Stemming from theoretical and empirical assessments a participant-active classification and assessment of the balanced approaches of the participants will be carried out. In this way, the workshop will not only investigate (further) discursive developments of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches and concepts related to the theme of transition from a normative, institutional and individual perspective, but also opportunities and possibilities for the construction and strengthening of international personal networks.

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June**  
**2.30 pm**  
**Room 1S01**

**All in the same direction**

*Dreenagh Lyle*

The population of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) is as diverse as any. We are all unique individuals. However the one criterion that all people with PMLD share is a level of intellectual impairment, which impacts on their ability to self-report. This makes these people extremely vulnerable as they depend on the assumptions of others, who know them well, to have their needs identified and met. People with PMLD are also likely to have input from various health professionals. This often means there are specific guidelines prepared by these professionals to be carried out by regular support workers.

The workshop is intended to share the presenters experience and develop attendees practice by promoting the benefits of incremental working and innovative holistic bodywork in an atmosphere of reflexivity. The approaches used and monitored by our team over the last 10 years, incorporate Intensive Interaction, Active Support and the SPELL framework, all within the overarching perspective of a (truly) person-centred framework.

Attendees will initially break into four groups in order to resolve devised scenarios based on the following topics.

- Food and eating, including digestion and elimination.
- Behavioural support needs; where does the challenge lie?
- Reflexive practice and why it is necessary for good support.
- Medical tests, including AHC, blood pressure/blood tests and dental.
- 

These smaller groups will work on their allotted scenario for 10 minutes as the presenter moves from group to group, prompting if necessary. The group will then reassemble and feed back to the full room one scenario at a time. There will be 10 minutes allocated to each scenario for a longer discussion, in order to include ideas from all attendees. These comments and points will be recorded on a white board and later compared to my Power Point notes in a final 5 minute wrap up.

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June**  
**2.30 pm**  
**Room 2G14**

**Air chall ann an eadar-ghluasaid - Lost in Transition**  
*ARC Scotland - Scottish Transitions Forum*

The workshop proposal explores the work of the Scottish Transitions Forum (STF) and it's supporting Publication Principles of Good Transitions 3 (POGT3).

The STF is a member organisation that explores effective practice for supporting young people with additional support needs. This is done through exploring effective coproduction within a multidisciplinary environment with young people at the heart of what we do.

POGT3 explores seven key principles to ensure young people with additional support needs (ASN) are supported through the transition into young adult life. These principles provide a framework and an approach to transitions that can be shared by all professionals at strategic practitioner and operational level.

The workshop proposed would explore the 7 principles and would be a distillation of the training we have been providing to multiple professionals across a number of Local Authorities and to Colleges in Scotland. We would introduce transitions concepts, examples of good practice and barriers and demonstrate how the principles can be put into practice. This will then be related to Scottish Legislative duties and Policy. The workshop will be interactive involving discussion, case study consideration and film.

The transitions process will be summarised exploring a flowchart that covers legislation relating to education, health and social care and equality to enable individuals to link the thinking from the workshop to outcomes. This flowchart will be provided to delegates as part of their attendance.

**Thursday 15th June**  
**2.30 pm**  
**Room 2F11**

**Quality Checking**  
*Liz Callaghan*

Liz is the Quality Coordinator for VIAS and has been with the organisation since November 2014. Liz has a varied background from group work, training and counselling, to working with People First Scotland, Direct Payments Scotland and a period running her own business.

Drawing on her lifelong personal experience of learning disability, her work is driven by a passion and commitment towards everyone having meaningful opportunities to live full and valued lives.

David Ross is a Quality Checker who has been employed by VIAS to ensure the

highest standards of quality in the work we deliver. David is committed to finding out what works and doesn't work in people's lives and using the information gained to ensure that people receive the best supports and services possible.

This session, focussing on Quality Checking, will be informative but also explore how we best engage with people to ensure that the person has a voice and is central to all choice and decision making. We will look at all aspects of quality that we feel is crucial in everyone's life. This session will be both informative and interactive.

Liz and the Quality Checker team will bring real extracts of a personal journey to this session, reflecting on good and not so good examples of people receiving the right support to enable them to exercise choice and control in their life.

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June**  
**11.30 am**  
**Room LT3**

**Developing a sense of belonging**  
*Lesley McKay*

Students at Stirling University who take a concurrent degree that includes completing a Professional Education qualification, do not begin the professional aspect of their program until the second year; their first year program being focused on a broader view of Education. Previous students having made the transition from first into second year identified several common issues. These include: anxiety about and isolation from the Professional Education program, not knowing other Professional Education students, concern about progression pathways, school placements and doubt about their chosen career path.

This presentation explores the different opportunities developed by the Biology ITE program to address their concerns. These innovative approaches are varied:

- Increased formal contact with the Biology Teacher Fellow from two to four seminars per academic year.
- Moving seminar from general seminar room to Biology lab for delivery of focussed seminars.
- Providing opportunities for first year Biology Education students to get to know each other, as well as the second, third and fourth year Biology Education students.
- Ongoing less formal support is available through social networking media, set up and run by and for students.
- Biology students already active within the Professional program providing peer support in the subject seminars, including discussion of course structure and progression, sharing placement experience and providing essay support workshops.
- Providing opportunities for skill development through designing and taking part in practical work.

These different engagement strategies have been informally evaluated initially, to understand if and how they contribute to a more positive transition from the first year general Education program to the Professional Education aspect of these



students degree. Increasing opportunities for students to understand the nature and content of their chosen course, while generating peer relationships, should reduce feelings of isolation and anxiety, leading to an increased confidence in their chosen degree.

It is also being explored how this strategy can enhance other transitions within the university and in Education Policy especially in the development of Nurturing Schools.

### **A model of inclusion through science**

*M. Ritchie, R. Fitzpatrick, E. Gray, A. McGrath, D. Ritchie, B. Crabbie, M. Scullion, S. Day, A. Mackay*

Inclusion is a key feature within Scottish Education that influences approaches to teaching practice and classroom management. Promoting inclusion within teacher training may also benefit teachers and pupils. The focus of this project was to identify ways of promoting inclusion within teacher training, assess the impact on student teachers and identify opportunities for further development and implementation in future teacher training programmes.

At present student Primary and Secondary teachers experience Science education within their distinct groups. Furthermore, a majority of student Primary teachers do not have a Science background which may affect their confidence in teaching Science and engaging with scientific concepts. University Outreach programmes provide an excellent opportunity to support student Primary teachers and promote inclusion in teacher training where student Primary teachers and academic experts work together.

Student Primary teachers from UWS participated in a one day workshop in Astrobiology based at the UK Centre for Astrobiology, Edinburgh University. Student teachers worked with undergraduates and senior University staff while undertaking a range of practical experiments. These was also an opportunity to further develop ideas and activities for primary schools. As far as we are aware, this model was the first in Scotland to engage student Primary teachers in Astrobiology training delivered by Science students and senior academics at the UK Centre for Astrobiology, Edinburgh University. Student teachers experienced Astrobiology in a way that supported contextualisation of many of the scientific concepts they had learned through practical work during their course.

For student Primary teachers the learning within a Centre of Excellence supported by academic experts whilst also experiencing current research was significant. For undergraduate Science students and academic staff the experience of working with Student teachers helped in development of communication skills, an understanding of the curriculum and challenges faced by primary teachers. A key outcome of the event was the development of concepts, ideas and activities to support and promote more confident Science teaching in primary schools and raise awareness of Astrobiology across Scottish schools. Future plans:-

- 1) To explore ways in which this model can be further developed to promote inclusion within Primary teacher training
- 2) To identify key outreach activities and Centres of excellence that allow Universities to support Primary Science
- 3) To assess the impact of the programme on confidence of student teachers, probationers, qualified teachers in Science

- 4) To monitor the impact of the programme on development of Leadership opportunities
- 5) To explore opportunities for inclusion in teacher education to support the Improving Primary Science Education programme in Scotland.
- 6) To monitor the impact of the inclusion programme on numbers of STEM graduates applying for teacher training.

### **Inclusions as ethics, equity and/or human right? Spotighting school mathematics principles**

*Dalene Swanson, Hong-Lin Yu and Stella Mourouston*

In 1994, 92 countries and 25 international organisations signed up to the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, heralding in a new era of policy-driven mandates worldwide that placed emphasis on inclusion within schools and societal institutions at large. For the most part, inclusion policies became prescriptive and mandatory within schools, and Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) has taken on the principle of inclusion with fervour, applying it to its progressive branding. A move from Special Educational Needs (SEN) to Additional Support Needs (ASN) shifted the emphasis away from integration and equity, to one of increased participation and the removal of barriers to inclusion (Allan, 2003). This latter emphasis meant compensation for any disadvantage a learner's disability might create within mainstream schooling by offering additional resources while also shifting the culture of schools and societal institutions to more inclusive orientations. This meant normalising disabilities as measures of natural diversity within society at large. While the 'medical model' approach to inclusion remains dominant, a more 'social model' emerged, which began to shift the burden of representation of disability from the 'disabled' individual to becoming the responsibility of society as a whole.

Mathematics education has been notoriously slow at interpreting inclusion in a non-divisive way through the prevalence of practices of exclusion built around an indelible, assumptive, socially-constructed notion of ability. Constructions of ability emanate from the epistemic structures of mathematics education as prevalently practiced worldwide, the procedural nature of those practices, and the assumptions about 'ability' as a truth to mathematical aptitude held by mathematics teachers in schools (Tytler, Swanson, and Appelbaum, 2015), including those across Scotland.

In Scotland, the government owes the 'included pupil' a legal obligation to provide additional support for learning under s 1(1) of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004. However, classroom practices deployed around socially-constructed notions of ability have seen schools' moving away from an emphasis of 'additional' to an expansive interpretation of 'different from' in the language of s 1(3) (a) of the Act, thus reinstalling exclusionary effects to the practices by creating the conditions for some pupils constructed in terms of disabilities or low ability to be afforded a more inferior education than others. While philosophical conversations around whether these practices are ethical, egalitarian or democratic might ensue, there is also the human rights angle, which asks whether these practices are even lawful.

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June  
11.30 am**

## Room 1F01

### **Highland Transitions Project: a pilot study promoting inclusion through science**

*M. Ritchie, A. Mackay, E. Gray, J. Harley, C. Small, A Macphie, S. Stoddart, K. Donnelly, D. Jindal-Snape*

Inclusion is a key feature of the Highland Transitions Project (HTP) involving transitions of current P7, S5 and S6 pupils. The aim of the project is to undertake a case study of the Portree High School cluster with the experiences and learning from it to be implemented across other schools in the future. The HTP research will focus on transition experiences of young people in general, and with a specific focus on a current science programme and activities that promote inclusive educational transition and wellbeing. The research study has two strands; one focussing on primary school pupils moving to secondary school and the other on transitions of secondary school pupils. Opportunities that promote inclusion during the transition process will be highlighted and used to promote good practice.

#### **Objectives:**

1. To explore the multiple and multi-dimensional transitions of young people as they move from one educational stage to another (P7-S1, S5-S6, S6 to post-school destination)
2. To explore the impact of the science programme on primary school pupils' transition experience and interaction with pupils from secondary school
3. To explore the impact of the science programme on secondary school pupils' transition experience, especially their interaction with pupils from primary school, and University staff
4. To identify and assess the impact of opportunities that promote inclusion throughout the HTP. These include:-
  - i. Non Scientists mentoring primary pupils
  - ii. Activities that engage pupils taking into account ASN and language barriers
  - iii. Participation by whole communities
  - iv. Multi-disciplinary approach to learning that engages learners regardless of age, gender and ability
  - v. Skills development across a variety of disciplines and abilities.
  - vi. Recognition of achievement based on effort and personal achievement.

To meet the research objectives, data will be collected from all key stakeholders in the community.

#### **Methodology**

The study will use a longitudinal design and follow young people as they move to their next destinations. Data will be collected at four stages.

#### **Primary to Secondary School Transitions and Results**

The science programme is being implemented with P7 pupils from December 2016 to June 2017. Data collected from the study will be presented at the conference.

#### **Perspectives of children with autism spectrum disorder and parents of the transition from primary to secondary school**

*Elizabeth Hannah*

Internationally, most education systems involve a move between primary and post-primary stages. This transition can be viewed as a significant life event for children, parents/carers and other family members, offering both opportunities and challenges. For children with additional support needs the move from primary to secondary school may be a time of potential risk. Therefore, it is important to understand the risk and protective factors, at the levels of the child, family and environment, during this period of transition. The international drive towards more inclusive educational practices has led to greater interest in listening to the views of key stakeholders and developing appropriate methodologies. Furthermore, listening to the views of a range of stakeholders provides a more holistic picture. This paper presents the findings from a small-scale study in one local authority in Scotland into the perspectives of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their parents during the transition from primary to secondary school. The findings drew on data from a larger study that involved the development, implementation and evaluation of a transition programme that complemented the local authority's transition arrangements.

The study employed a longitudinal design with the aim of exploring children's and parents' perspectives of transition. A sample (n=9) of children was purposively selected from the population of all pupils with a diagnosis of ASD, attending the last year of a mainstream primary in two quadrants of the city, and eligible to transfer to a mainstream secondary school. Children's and parents' perspectives on the move from primary to secondary school were gathered at three time-points using different methods. Aspects of transition explored included expectations and experiences; feelings associated with the move; and the support provided. Pre-transfer, children and parents completed questionnaires; two months following the transfer they participated in a group activity; and six months following the transfer they participated in semi-structured interviews.

Findings are discussed in the context of previous transitions research and theoretical perspectives (resilience and ecological systems). Implications for educational policy and practice are considered.

### **Primary to Secondary School Transitions for Children with Additional Support Needs: what the literature is telling us**

*Dianne Cantali*

This paper will present findings from a systematic literature review, following the EPPI-Centre model (Davies et al. 2012), of educational transitions research which has primarily focused on the school transition undertaken by children at around 11 years of age. The review is part of a two-year longitudinal study investigating the experiences and opinions of children, parents, and educators making the transition into a Scottish secondary school from 14 different primary schools.

The paper will focus on the literature identified in the systematic review which focuses on children with additional support needs (ASN) who are making the transition to secondary school. This includes a small number of papers which focus on the experiences of children with autism who are making this transition.

The following themes will be reflected upon in the paper: firstly, what does the existing literature tell us about the transition experiences of children with ASN as they move to secondary school? Is it similar to the transition experiences of their peers or do children with ASN have a different experience? It will then look at

what the literature suggests is best practice in primary to secondary school transition for children with additional support needs, and why.

Lastly, what more could be done, from the recommendations found in the literature, to support children with ASN making educational transitions, particularly from primary to secondary school? The question of whether educational transitions in themselves are an additional support need for some children, as suggested by Hoey (2014), will also be considered. Implications for policy and practice arising from the reflections on the existing literature will also be discussed, including the need for professionals to receive awareness raising and training to ensure that they have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the various additional support needs that children coming into their care may have.

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June**  
**11.30 am**  
**Room 1F06**

**Identification of the expressions of self-awareness in children with PLMD: a first step towards a better understanding of its development**

*Juliane Dind*

**Introduction:** The development of self-awareness (S-A) plays an important role in the well-being and the construction of the child's identity. In spite of the large number of current research on this topic in many fields, it is rarely investigated in research on people with PLMD. DSPs face therefore problems in observing S-A expressions for lack of knowledge and instruments.

**Objective:** Empirical validation of two theoretical models\* on S-A development, testing their predictions on a sample of children with PLMD

**Method:** We have developed a situation-based list of 35 inducing and 25 natural situations (items) on ecological S-A\*\* expressions. These items are inspired by those used in research in infancy and have been adapted to children with PLMD. The expected critical and non-critical behaviours are described in each item and are scored on a three-level score. 23 children with PLMD aged from 4 to 12 years old participated to our study. The list has been tested and stabilized during a pre-experimental phase (N=5) and then administrated during an experimental phase (N=18). The natural situations were observed in classrooms by DSPs; the inducing situations were administrated by the researcher during videotaped sessions. All the items were presented three times, resulting on 180 measures per child. The analysis of the psychometrics qualities of the list shows a good internal consistency ( $\alpha=.897$ ) and interobserver agreement (81 % of agreement on 50% of the data) and a high fidelity test-retest (the average measure ICC is .950).

**Results:** We have conducted a cluster analysis which results show the manifestation of three different forms of S-A. A part of the children manifested expressions of ecological S-A, another part manifested expressions of some more basic forms of S-A.

**Discussion:** The first analysis conducted seem to confirm the predictions of the two theoretical models: ecological S-A manifests itself in a multidimensional way and on different levels in children with PLMD. It seems that the sense of self-

agency plays an important role in its development.

**"We Communicate" Step by step communication**

*Agnes Sterk*

Assistants who support people with a (intellectual) disability use communication to achieve being connected. Being connected is the foundation of inclusion. Because of the difference in level of abilities, culture and tempo of communication the quality of cooperation between assistants and clients is vulnerable. The instruction "We communicate" is based on the results of observations during assisting moments, interviews with clients and literature. The step by step instruction is a result of my study at the university of applied science. The results show that communication is not always easy. Assistants using the steps will have more tools to get connected with their clients. The result will be an improvement of quality of the clients' life. The Step by step communication instruction offers assistants the opportunity to a higher awareness of their possibilities to influence and improve the quality of their communication with clients. The foundation of the steps is the contact circle. The contact circle works in every contact with one another. To be able to include people, we need to tune in and to structure the time we spend together. We need to be aware of the influence of each other's communication in any way. The instruction is easy to use and suitable for any assistant and relative. The starting point is: you are doing fine! When you feel the need to improve the relationship the steps will show you the way. Each step consists several questions which give an insight in the aspects of communication. "To achieve connection with another, you need to be connected to yourself"

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June**

**11.30 am**

**Room 2F15**

**Supported decision-making as an alternative to Guardianship**

*Steve Robertson*

People First (Scotland) is a Disabled People's User led Organisation for people with learning disabilities (intellectual impairment). In 2009 the United Kingdom ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Our main policy focus has been Article 12; **'Equal Recognition before the law'**.

This Article requires that **"States Parties shall recognise that persons with disabilities enjoy legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life"**, calling on states parties to abolish practices such as Guardianships replace them with systems of 'supported decision-making'.

Supported decision-making starts with the idea that everyone has the right to make their own decisions. People with intellectual impairments are supported, usually by people that know them well and they trust, to make all decisions, via change in the expectation of others, development of the person's own skills and experience, provision of support to express will and preference and, occasionally, through the interpretation of their will and preferences.

In Scotland, the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 is the legislation that provides for interventions like Guardianship. Under the Act, Guardianship orders

for adults with intellectual impairments are rising, particularly as a result of Self-directed Support provisions, resulting in more and more people having their right to make decisions about their own lives taken away from them.

People First (Scotland) entirely supports the idea of supported decision-making. We recognise that there are challenges in the process, especially where the degree of intellectual impairment is particularly profound. Nevertheless, we believe it will be possible to construct a system where all people have the right to decide about their own lives and not have those rights removed from them.

This workshop will discuss People First's approach to supported decision-making and how Supported decision-making can work for people with intellectual impairments.

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June**

**11.30 am**

**Room 1S01**

**RNIB's Vision/Awareness Champion Programme. How this is helping to change practice and improve outcomes for people with learning disabilities and complex needs**

*Linda Cruickshank*

This workshop aims to give health and social care professionals an improved awareness of visual behaviours and potential "hidden sight loss" and identified sight loss to assist in supporting inclusive life transition and well-being by providing improved outcomes for people with, learning disabilities and complex needs.

Supporting someone with a dual diagnosis can be challenging. Behaviours thought to be associated with complex needs are actually associated with sight loss at some level. Diagnostic overshadowing "hidden sight loss" may lead to ineffective/compromised assessment processes. People with learning disabilities are 10 times more likely to have serious sight problems and may not know or be able to tell people they have sight problems (Emerson & Robertson, 2011). Research has demonstrated that early detection of sight loss, prevention; treatment rehabilitation can positively influence independent living skills, communication and social skills (UK Vision Strategy, 2023).

We are asking professionals to think "hidden sight loss" as best practice when they start assessment processes. Thinking about the above information and statistics and the people that you work with who have a learning disability and complex needs we pose the question - If you don't know if someone has a sight problem how effective is the support in providing inclusive life transitions and wellbeing. In a study undertaken in conjunction with Glasgow Caledonia University and the NHS the conclusion was that "Vision awareness training addresses a recognised barrier (lack of awareness/knowledge) to effective vision health care delivery, to ensure the vision health needs of their clients with intellectual disabilities are being met."

This workshop will discuss how professionals can use natural observations to inform them of the likelihood of vision loss in adults and different assessments available through Optometrists Through observation; examine the impact of the environment and how we can support people to provide more inclusive spaces for

education, work and social activities. Recently after an RNIB Vision awareness session in a special needs school in Fife, the teaching staff changed the classroom environments, through de-cluttering and using more contrast to create a visually inclusive space classroom and school environment.

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June**  
**11.30 am**  
**Room 2G14**

### **Involvement for All**

*Lynette Linton, Brian Robertson, National Involvement Network supported by ARC Scotland*

**Involvement for All** uses Peer Support to improve the ability of people with communication difficulties to form relationships, live their lives independently and be involved in their local communities. It is a project of the National Involvement Network, whose members wrote the Charter for Involvement <http://arcuk.org.uk/scotland/charter-for-involvement/>

The 3 objectives are to support people with learning disabilities to:

- develop a Talking Mats framework for 2 Statements from the Charter which address improving independence and social connectedness
- pilot the Talking Mats framework by consulting other people with learning disabilities about their experience
- share the findings, evaluate the effectiveness, and identify further action to improve independence and social connectedness.

The topics chosen include cinema/theatre, shops, clubs and organisations, which some people struggle with. Other topics were more challenging - money, staff, or learning new things. We created a set of 20 images, printed onto cards to open up conversations.

The Working Group used the 20 images in practice sessions to test their effectiveness, and drew up a set of 10 images for another Mat using more abstract themes. The framework was then tested with 66 interviews, using forms to record what was being said, and the interviewee's ability to understand. The same format was used throughout. A photo was taken, with consent, of each person's Mat, to keep with the recording form and share with key staff.

The Charter Talking Mats made space for new conversations, and the discussion identified issues for people's quality of life, and sense of involvement in their community.

The Working Group presented their findings to other people with learning disabilities, senior staff and Board members in their organisations. We collated the overall responses, and the final report will arrange them into themes with Recommendations.

We will show the film made to highlight our findings.



**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June**

**11.30 am**

**Room 2F14**

**Supporting people with profound and multiple learning disabilities - Core essential service standards**

*Thomas Doukas, Ann Ferguson, Michael Fullerton, Joanna Grace*

People with profound and multiple learning disabilities are, like everyone else, unique individuals. But sometimes are excluded from the planning of their own support because their needs are often not understood. These service standards were developed by a group of families, carers, sector professionals and experts interested in improving the quality of support and life of people with profound and multiple disabilities.

The aim of the standards is to ensure people with profound and multiple learning disabilities, of any age, have access to consistent high quality support throughout their lives, when supported by any service provider in England. These standards are designed to be used by educational, health and social care providers and commissioners of these services to work together to ensure consistently good practice in all settings and respect the right of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities to be included.

Through regular assessment, monitoring and planning for continuous improvement, organisations will use the Standards to ensure people have enhanced life experiences and outcomes. Organisations are expected to assess themselves on an annual basis with a focus on the Organisational and Individuals Standards. The outcomes and subsequent action plans will be shared with relevant commissioners, families/advocates, and regulators.

The first part of the session will provide a brief overview of the standards and the rationale behind their creation. Following this, the participants will get a chance to test-drive the standards and inspect aspects of the self-assessment tool. We will also demonstrate to participants innovative ways to involve people with profound and multiple learning disabilities in a variety of decision and choice making activities. A general discussion and feedback will conclude the session.

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June**

**2.15 pm**

**Room LT3**

**What if special education teachers get burdened in their intermediary role of promoting inclusive school practices?**

*Janne Pietarinen, Kaisa Haverinen, Kirsi Pyhälto, Tiina Soini*

In many countries, including in Finland, the promoting inclusive school practices supporting pupils' equal rights for learning is at the foci of the school development. It has been shown that inclusive practices, such as studying together with other pupils and simultaneously receiving additional support, seem to promote the pupils school engagement by generating positive school experiences and reasserting the strengths of the individual pupil in terms of the sense of equality and being acknowledged (e.g. Matzenet al., 2010; Pitt & Curtin, 2004). The special education teachers play a central intermediary role in developing inclusive school

and classroom practices by providing support both for pupils and peer teachers. This may increase their risk for experiencing exhaustion, cynicism towards the teacher community and/or inadequacy in the pupil-teacher relationship (e.g. Pietarinen et al., 2013). However, the functional teacher working environment fit (i.e. received professional recognition and constructive work climate) may buffer the special education teachers risk for developing burnout, and hence, contributing the development of the inclusive practices in the school community.

The study aims to gain a better understanding on interrelation between and development of special education teachers experienced burnout symptoms and perceived teacher working environment fit across time. The longitudinal study included two measurements (in year 2010 n=761 and 2016 n=485). The measurements comprised of the socio-contextual teacher burnout scale (9 items) and the teacher working environment fit scale (6 items) (Pietarinen et al., 2013). The data were analysed using SEM.

The results showed that special education teachers experienced inadequacy in the pupil-teacher relationship predicted teacher exhaustion, cynicism towards the teacher community and inadequacy in the pupil-teacher relationship in the later career. Moreover, the perceived good teacher-working environment fit predicted the lower cynicism towards the teacher community in the later career.

These findings suggest that especially experienced inadequacy in teacher-student relationship increase special education teachers risk for developing burnout, and hence compromise teachers' ability engaging in developing inclusive classroom and school practices. At the same time, perceived good working environment fit provides a central resource for buffering cynicism towards colleagues and may thus increase collaborative efforts in building inclusive school practices.

### **Guidance Issues in Inclusive Basic Education of Visually Impaired Pupils in Nigeria and Scotland**

*Bamidele C Agbakuribe*

This paper discusses Nigeria's and Scotland's Inclusive education of pupils with visual impairments at the basic school level. It reviewed the following educational policies and legislations from which the guidance for the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular schools are drawn in both countries: Nigerian National Policy on Education; Scottish Curriculum for Excellence, Additional Support for Learning and Equality Act. In examining the academic, psychological and social benefits of inclusion at this level of Nigeria's and Scotland's educational sectors, the work also identified some breaches in these pillars of inclusive education (policies and legislations) as possible catalysts with the propensities of marring the academic, emotional and social wellbeing of the included disabled pupils in both countries.

The work further suggested various ways in which Guidance services such as: Research, Information, Appraisal, Orientation, Placement, Counselling, Referral and Follow-up functions can help in supporting the promotion of optimal inclusion of pupils with visual impairments into neighbourhood schools, especially in Nigeria where the scheme has suffered so much setback prior and in the face of the recently introduced 9 year Universal Basic Education primary – junior secondary school transition structure. In conclusion, it was noted that the flaws in the policies and legislations can retard the generic development and confidence of the Scottish visually challenged child. On the part of Nigeria, it was concluded that the absence

of legislation(s) in support of disability inclusion has been the bane of effective implementation of inclusive education in the country. It was thus, recommended that the policies and legislations 'Inclusion pillars' should be reviewed for comprehensiveness in Scotland and Nigeria as the case may be ; with advocacy groups and all Nigerians demanding for a law to protect the rights of all persons with disabilities for sustainable educational and social Inclusion.

### **Collaborative transition planning for young people with ASN**

*Thomas Richardson*

The school to post-school transition has been identified as a time when young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN) need extra support. This presentation focuses on the school to post-school transition planning and preparation process for young people with ASN in Scotland. In particular, it concerns the collaborative planning and preparation that takes place amongst professionals to support young people with ASN and their families during this transition. The influence of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 upon the process is also considered.

The presentation concerns a Doctorate of Education study carried out between 2010 and 2015. A mixed-methods research design was used to sample the views of young people, parents and professionals concerning the school to post-school transition. Participants (young people, parents and professionals) were interviewed. Visual resources were developed by the author to support the interviews with the young people. Data in all the studies were analysed using a thematic analysis approach.

In the presentation, the findings of the author's study will be presented and discussed. These include the perception that transition planning and preparation has become more young person centred since the Act was introduced. Implications for policy makers, practitioners, and future research will also be discussed.

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June**

**2.15 pm**

**Room 1F01**

**"I am not afraid of storms for I am learning how to sail my ship".  
A Participatory Action Research study that seeks to explore children's awareness of their coping strategies and enhance their resiliency skills.**

***Annette Moir***

This research explores children's awareness of their own coping strategies to enable their resiliency skills to develop to face adversities more readily. Resilience is a vital part of who we are and how we overcome difficulties. By encouraging children to become more resilient, they can become more confident with their individual life transitions, choices, and sense of wellbeing.

I developed an innovative two-day workshop for primary schools to examine ways of working with children to enhance their resilience and to help understand and interpret children's perspectives.

This research aims to develop and enhance resiliency coping strategies for children to ensure it is a fundamental part of the Scottish Educational Curriculum. Resilience is listed under the 4 Capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence

framework as a component for Effective Contributors, yet it is not addressed as a learning requirement. This study seeks to change these policies and advocates to embed resiliency awareness into the curriculum. I propose that this innovation is required to enhance all children's life skills within a safe classroom environment. Cochran-Smith et al (2009) claim that good social justice teaching "links teachers' classroom practices with larger social responsibilities" (p375). This study also aims to support children with their life choices and help them, using inclusive teaching methods, so that they too can become responsible citizens and successful learners in life.

Being a Teaching Professional, I found a lot of students "gave up" when faced with difficult or challenging situation. There is a real necessity within educational systems to support students in overcoming these obstacles and equip them to face various transitions and choices throughout their lives. I want to highlight how children can help encourage each other too.

It is a qualitative study and incorporates the Capability Approach and the Ecological Systems Theory frameworks. Participatory action research was chosen as it allows for scope to make a difference and values individuals and diversities.

### **Developmental trends of depressive symptom in Japanese cochlear implanted students**

*Yusuke Saito*

The purpose of this study was to investigate the developmental trends of depressive symptom of cochlear implanted students in Japan. Participants were 81 students (male: 53, female: 28) and out of 55.7% students were going to special schools for the deaf and 44.3% students were studying at inclusive schools. 15% of participants were at elementary school level (Japanese) and 37.5% were at junior high school level (JHS). 32.1% of them were at high school level (HSL) and 15.0% were university, college or job training course in schools for the deaf (U/CL). The students' mean age at cochlear implantation was 4.0 years (standard deviation, SD: 1.8 years; Range: 1.7-11.4). Mean hearing acuity with CI was 24.6 decibels (dB) (SD: 5.6; Range: 14-45dB) and mean word intelligibility was 87.0% (SD: 14.2%; Range: 40-100). By using Birlson Depression Self-Rating Scale for Children (DSRS-C, Japanese version), depressive symptoms of participants were estimated. The score of ESL students were 6.2 (SD: 5.3; Range: 0-17), JHL' students were 9.1 (SD: 6.1; Range: 0-24). The score of HSL students were 10.4 (SD: 4.9; Range: 2-22), and the score of U/CL students were 14.0 (SD: 5.6; Range: 7-23). These results show that comparing with depressive symptom of ESL students, depressive symptom on HSL and U/CL students were remarkable.

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June**

**2.15 pm**

**Room 1F06**

### **Inclusive Therapeutics: Embodied and Relational**

*Hannah Young*

How are we to make sense of emotional wellbeing in people with the most profound communicative impairments? Although this group are distinct in many ways from their more able peers, their emotional wellbeing has not been of significant focus in this field. Unsurprisingly then, much less attention has been paid to the relevance of psychotherapy for this group, which is often perceived as challenged by their lack of verbal communication. However, if we shift our lens

away from the challenges and differences this group presents - to appreciating what is shared - then we may have a very different idea of what therapeutics can look like. My PhD aimed to reach beyond cognitivism, and this presentation is guided by three questions:

- 1) how is emotional wellbeing conceptualised around this group?
- 2) what additional perspectives can we explore in making sense of their emotional wellbeing?
- 3) what therapeutic directions can we find relevant?

I present a review of traditional approaches to mental health in people with profound learning disabilities. I explore their relevant contributions, and those from phenomenological and participatory research. There is a need to integrate these paths, to challenge approaches that may discourage therapeutic practice for this group. This was not primarily motivated by a theoretical interest, but rather the importance of meaningful and sensitive mental health support for those who have experience of being excluded from psychotherapeutic input.

### **Changing Together - Supporting learners with profound and multiple learning disabilities to manage change**

*Annie Fergusson*

Change is an inevitable part of life for everyone, but even small changes can have an enormous impact on the lives of people with profound and learning multiple disabilities (PMLD) and their families. Children and young people in particular encounter many changes through the course of their education. Some changes are planned but many occur unexpectedly without opportunity to respond in the best way. We know consistency is key to anyone with PMLD understanding the world and being able to meaningfully participate or experience any sense of control - whether faced with subtle, day to day changes in their classroom (maybe a different adult supporting them at lunchtime) through to some of the much bigger transitions, like starting school, swapping class or moving on into adult services. These changes can often seem very small in nature but may have a big impact and even cause distress if not well planned or handled sensitively.

This paper offers an overview and preliminary findings of a small scale project which aims to examine and collate some of the best ways of helping learners with PMLD prepare and respond positively to change (planned or not). By working in a small number of special school settings, the project intends to capture established practice and interesting/ innovative ideas that demonstrate what works well to support learners to cope with change across many aspects of their lives. The team are working with people who know these individuals best their families (as experts by experience) and familiar school staff in particular.

Early reflections on the introduction of new approaches will be explored (e.g. developing Digital Passports in collaboration with PAMIS). These new ideas are aimed at extending reflective and responsive practice within the project settings and ultimately, improve the lived experiences of change for learners with PMLD. The team will produce some practical guidance and resources as an outcome of the project; we hope to showcase sample case studies and exemplars illustrating, for example, differing approaches to information sharing and positive models to prepare for and support the transitions and smaller changes experienced by individuals with PMLD.

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June  
2.15 pm  
Room 2F15

**Madness and reality's excess**

*Murray Simpson*

The semiotics of madness are particularly problematic; madness breaches the bounds of language, and is excessively embodied.

In this presentation I draw upon Stein's (2007) 'rehabilitation' of the concept excess, linking the approaches of Freud, Laplanche and Lacan. Excess – of excitation, the other, and the forbidden object of desire – constantly evades incorporation into the symbolic order. Stein's focus is sexuality, but the same features of excess also appear in relation to madness. The generations and flows of excess are evident in the cinema of madness, or, more specifically, of psychiatry. Excess finds relevance in several ways in the cinema of madness. Firstly, it is constitutive of madness itself, as the excess of emotions and the ungraspable excess of reality. Secondly, we have the gendered ways in which cinema presents itself in narrative excess, trying, always without success, to incorporate madness into its symbolic order. Thirdly, we are presented with excess as a route to psychiatric cure. Fourthly, there is the excess of the ungraspable Other evident in psychiatrised characters.

These ideas will be discussed in relation to two films on the psychiatric subject: *The Snake Pit* (1948), and *Shutter Island* (2010).

**Creating Safe Spaces for reflexivity: using longitudinal audio-diaries during transitions**

*Lisi Gordon, Divya Jindal-Snape, Jill Morrison, Gillian Needham, Sabina Siebert, Charlotte Rees*

When collecting data about sensitive issues, it is important that the researcher creates a safe and inclusive space for participants to share their thoughts, experiences and feelings. Longitudinal audio-diaries are an emerging methodology in educational research. The use of audio-diaries in which participants are asked to record, stories, incidences and thoughts pertaining to an aspect of their lives and experiences, can elicit 'in the moment' reflections. These recordings can then be returned to in an interview, allowing participants to explore their thinking and any changes over time.

In a study about senior medical trainees' multiple transitions as they moved to trained status (for example into consultant or General Practitioner roles), audio-diaries were used to collect longitudinal data over a period of 8 to 10 months. These diaries were 'bookended' by initial and final interviews. Data included narratives about experiences and issues related to their professional and personal transitions in the context of interactions with significant others such as family and colleagues. The researcher kept in constant touch with the participants and they in turn sent recordings that were structured like conversations with the researcher. A trusting and respectful relationship was formed, with participants indicating that the method and process had helped them with reflecting on their journeys and was therapeutic. Creating this 'safe space' with someone at the other end touching base and asking non-judgmental questions, this data collection tool became the means by which participants could be reflexive and discuss their learning and future actions. This experience was seen as different from traditional diary-keeping or maintaining a professional development portfolio where it was conceptualised

that people are discussing things with themselves.

Within this oral presentation, we will share participants' responses when we asked them about their experiences of using an audio-diary. We will also explore the possibility and feasibility of using this research method as an educational tool.

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June**

**2.15 pm**

**Room 1S01**

**Traditional Childhood Games Adapted for Children with PMLD**

*Ailie Finlay*

The value of children playing is increasingly being recognised and valued. There is also recognition that all children should be able to access many, varied play opportunities regardless of their needs (The Scottish Executive report, Scotland's Play Strategy: Playing with quality and equality: a review of inclusive play in Scotland, 2015). However, attempts to make play opportunities more inclusive still often fail to be appropriate for children with PMLD.

Over the last year and a half Ailie Finlay of Flotsam and Jetsam Puppets and Stories has been researching traditional childhood group games and adapting these to make them suitable for children with PMLD. The games have been used with great success at the Fife PAMIS Friendship Club and in Special Schools.

The adapted games allow children with PMLD to:

- Access childhood culture. Every playground and playtime contains a rich broth of rhyme, rhythm and chant. This linguistic fun is part of childrens' heritage with some playground rhymes being handed down through many generations. The adapted games allow children with PMLD to access this.
- Access the excitement and pleasure that goes with childhood games. Everyone remembers the thrill of waiting for Mr. Wolf to turn and chase them, or the pleasure of being cheeky to an adult! Children with PMLD enjoy these feelings just as much as any other child.
- Strengthen peer-to-peer relationships. Children develop relationships through playing together. The more opportunities they have for playing together the stronger these relationships will become.

There will be a brief presentation at the beginning of the workshop explaining why the adapted games were developed and how they are being used. Participants will then join in with a selection of different inclusive games. There will then be a discussion of how the games could be adapted further to suit particular needs or contexts.

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June**

**2.15 pm**

**Room 2G14**

**Exploring parents and teachers conceptualisations of the development of children and young people with severe and profound learning needs; working towards a shared understanding of progress**

*Kirstie Rees*

This workshop will use the Transactional Model of Development (Sameroff and Feil, 1975) as a framework to explore parents and teachers conceptualisations of development of children with severe and profound learning needs. This will include an analysis of the relevant literature which highlights how individual and societal influences give rise to such beliefs (e.g. models of disability; cultural assumptions about typical development; the presentation of the individual child) and the ways in which these inform responses to the child.

Workshop participants both parents and professionals will also be asked to reflect upon their own beliefs about the development of the children and young people they support. What are the most important aspects of progress? To what extent do cultural factors and perceived norms of development influence their beliefs? How does the child inform the practices that they employ to promote his or her progress? Further emphasis will also be placed on establishing how different conceptualisations of development lead to developmental incongruence (Vygotsky, 1993); to a focus on different aspects of development in both school and home settings. Does this hinder rather than promote the progress of children? If so, how can parental and teacher beliefs be realigned, especially as children transition from nursery to school?

Sameroff and Fise (2000) suggest that interventions should focus on one or more of the three areas: re-education (teaching others how to respond to the child), redefinition (strategies directed towards more optimal interactions through an alteration in beliefs and behaviours) and remediation (interventions designed to occur changes within the child.) The workshop will explore the evidence for using these 3 different approaches to inform interventions with both parents and staff. Participants will be asked to contribute their own experiences of using such methods as a means of contributing to children's development. Is it always possible to achieve developmental congruence and ensure that both parents and staff are working together to promote meaningful progress?

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June**  
**2.15 pm**  
**Room 2F14**

**Storysharing®: Face to face interactive personal stories for people with PMLD®**

*Adam Varney*

How can people with severe/profound disabilities (S/PMLDs) actively tell their own stories? Storysharing® offers a radically transformative approach that engages individuals and groups who have severe communication impairments in face to face interactive telling. Based on observations of reminiscence between friends in real life, backed up by extensive research in narratology, the programme uses a range of simple and intuitive conversational techniques to support collaborative sharing of both every day and life-changing events. Conceptually, the approach is grounded in the principles of co-production (Banks, 2015; Bunning et. al., 2016) and partial participation (Baumgart et al. 1982) and a social constructionist narrative framework (Bamberg, 1997). Multi-sensory techniques (Grove and Park, 1997; Young et. al., 2011) are employed in telling, so that stories that are important can be made into books to be read and enjoyed.



Research has demonstrated that Storysharing® is effective both in developing the communication and narrative skills of individuals with S/PMLDs, and in changing the ways in which they are supported to tell stories, moving from a directive, interrogative stance to a fluid, dynamic style of co-narration that exploits all the communicative resources available (Bunning et al. 2016). We have also shown that the process depends on the creation and sharing of small meaningful experiences -as opposed to routines and exclusive conversations. The programme arose from the observation that staff in care homes told stories to each other about residents, but never with the residents themselves. Storysharing® breaks down barriers, builds friendships and communities, and has proved vital in giving voice to marginalised individuals in decision making processes that affect them, such as annual reviews, and community activism.

In this session we plan to:-

- Briefly describe the approach, and its relationship to person centred planning and inclusion
- Encourage reminiscence between participants, followed by discussion
- Use film to allow participants to identify and analyse the techniques
- Engage participants in a personal storytelling exercise explore the strategies
- Share case examples of people with S/PMLDs whose lives have changed as a result of implementing the programme.

## POSTERS

### **The Piper o' Dundee**

*Lorna Strachan*

"Where words fail, music speaks" Hans Christian Anderson. So it was for Piper, Ross

Inglis, who aspired to create a new inclusive model of Pipe Band, where there was a place for everyone and an ethos of support, nurturing and acceptance of difference. By reviewing Ross Inglis's unique case study, we uncover the value of adopting an asset based approach, and working to enable individual growth, development and improved health and wellbeing, whilst at the same time having a positive impact on the wider community. Ross's experience of the barriers he faced in accessing the world of Piping, due to his learning disability and Autism acts as a reminder of the importance of engaging with local communities and of embracing opportunities for individuals to connect with one another through a focus on a shared activity, interest or purpose.

Creative arts and music is one such shared focus, which allows disabled people to be considered not in terms of a 'condition' but rather to be known as an artist or musician. However, in the world of Pipe music, where there is such a strong sense of heritage, tradition and rigour, the ability to 'accommodate' difference is not easily realised. For this reason, the creation of the fully inclusive Dundee City Pipe Band, and Ross Youth Music Initiative is thought to be a first on the world stage.

It is bold in its aspirations, which include making use of new technologies and learning strategies to support young players with additional support needs, influencing vocational outcomes and employability skills development, through to performing at international Pipe Championships.

This study will generate discussion around the practice of collaborative working and the value of sharing knowledge, skills and resources across statutory, third sector and private agencies to create inclusive societies. We will consider the challenges that such an approach presents, and the absolute need for innovative practice to respond effectively to drivers for change, such as the Scottish Government 2013, Keys to Life policy, and local Health and Social Care Strategic and Commissioning Plans 2016 - 2021.

### **Supporting young people with profound and multiple learning disabilities to tell**

**their personal stories through implementing Storysharing®**

***Karen Bunning | LynseyGooch | Miranda Johnson (Abstract Id: 18)***

Through sharing our personal stories with others, we engage other people in our experiences and views of the world. This supports the development of relationships and concept of self.

A small group study was carried out to investigate the potential of Storysharing®. Storysharing® is an innovative communication method based on personal narrative, which has been developed to support conversations with people who have severe difficulties in communication. It encourages individuals with profound and multiple learning disabilities to co-narrate their personal stories to the people in their lives who matter to them. This poster will present a case series from the group study involving teachers and pupils.

The setting was a special school. Storysharing® was implemented over a 15-week period. It entailed induction for the teaching staff; and once weekly group sessions lasting one and a half hours, where teachers and pupils shared stories of the week and tried out Storysharing® strategies. There was also opportunities for each dyad to work on selected aspects of narration, as well as to develop and rehearse a chosen story of relevance and interest to the participant. Personal narratives were captured on video pre- and post-intervention. The data were analysed for discourse, pragmatics and narrative.

The poster will present the changes to each dyad's personal narratives by focusing on the distribution of conversational turns, discourse structure, communicative functions employed and narrative completeness.

### **Non-Cognitive Factors and the Pedagogy of Thriving in Transition**

***Dr. Patrick Akos***

There has been increased attention to helping students thrive in the transition to college over the last three decades. While first year programming has become somewhat ubiquitous, the presentation highlights published research on grit and emerging findings on non-cognitive factors (e.g., resilience, growth mind-set, optimism) in first year students. Also included is thriving content and pedagogy designed to promote engagement and success for 2nd and 3rd year students. Initial outcomes from pilot offerings are shared. Finally, the research and practice to support thriving in the transition through college is synthesized and summarized.

### **Step by Step Communication**

***Agnes Sterk (also presenting a paper)***

Assistants who support people with a (intellectual) disability use communication to achieve being connected. Being connected is the foundation of inclusion. Because of the difference in level of abilities, culture and tempo of communication the quality of cooperation between assistants and clients is vulnerable.

The instruction “We communicate” is based on the results of observations during assisting moments, interviews with clients and literature. The step by step instruction is a result of my study at the university of applied science.

The results show that communication is not always easy. Assistants using the steps will have more tools to get connected with their clients . The result will be an improvement of quality of the clients’ life.

The Step by step communication instruction offers assistants the opportunity to a higher awareness of their possibilities to influence and improve the quality of their communication with clients.

The foundation of the steps is the contactcircle. The contactcircle works in every contact with one another. To be able to include people, we need to tune in and to structure the time we spend together. We need to be aware of the influence of each others communication in any way.

The instruction is easy to use and suitable for any assistant and relative. The starting point is: you are doing fine! When you feel the need to improve the relationship the steps will show you the way. Each step consists several questions wich give an insight in the aspects of communication.

“To achieve connection with another, you need to be connected to yourself”

### **Deliberate use of Gibbs’ Reflective Cycle to Capture Transitional Issues and Strategies for International Students Joining a Full Time Medical Education Masters in Dundee –**

***Tanongson Tienthavorn, co-author***

#### **Background**

Ten doctors, from four countries experiencing multiple transitions, moving to full-time study, in Dundee, away from predominantly scientific and clinical practice to a social science education, were studied to understand the coping strategies in use.

#### **Summary of Work**

Nine weeks into the course, ten students, were invited to complete a reflective diary using Gibb’s reflective questions to explore their feeling and experiences during the three-month transition; to articulate the strategies used and share their action plan. A thematic analysis of 6/10 diaries was undertaken.

#### **Summary of Results**

The new learner-centred learning culture and English language were initially the most troublesome transition accompanied by emotions including sadness, fear and happiness followed by acceptance, optimism and experiencing positive peer and educator relationships. Coping mechanisms included self-talk, discussion with peers/tutors and access to an individual mentor.

**Discussion**

Even experienced postgraduate students found academic transition problematic and overwhelming. It was beneficial when educator provided both academic and social support structures. Deliberate use of reflective processes such as Gibbs' reflective cycle enabled students to recognise and evaluate the challenges and being faced and develop resilience by articulating the coping strategies in use. Building up strength and allowing students to see possible coping strategies that could be used during the transition period.

**Conclusions**

Both problem based and emotional coping strategies were used by individuals and encouragement to use self-reflective activities alongside social support enhanced adaptation to adapt during the transition period.

**Take-home Messages**

Encourage use Gibbs' reflective cycle to assess the transition cycle experienced.  
Optimise academic and social support during the transition process.  
Further study is needed.