

NATIONAL SURVEY OF TRANSITION IN PAEDIATRIC SURGERY

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Aim: Transition is an important and rapidly developing area of care within paediatric surgery. This study gauges the state of transitional care currently being delivered within UK Paediatric surgery, identifies common difficulties in implementing this, and brings together ideas for improvement.

Methods: A questionnaire, following approval by the BAPS Research Committee, was distributed to all BAPS members via email, using an online survey tool (Survey Monkey© 2015). Returned metrics were reviewed and thematic analysis of the free text answers was undertaken.

Results: 38 responses were received from representatives of 18 of the 28 UK Paediatric Surgery Tertiary Units (64%). 11 (29%) surgeons have a formal joint transition clinic with an adult surgeon. 18 (47%) make arrangements 'ad hoc'. 3 (8%) have an established Adolescent Urologist. 18 (47%) had support from specialist nurses and 5 (13%) from youth workers or psychologists. Those units with specific funding were more likely (positive likelihood ratio 2.22) to have specialist nurse support (7 units all reporting input) compared to those without (29 units, 13 with support). Thematic analysis found 3 themes pertaining to the difficulties in providing transitional care. These were patient specific factors, systems and organisation, and staffing and clinician expertise.

Conclusion: There is much variation in practice around the UK, however there are many examples of excellent practice, demonstrating that the barriers can be overcome. Specific funding appears to enable specialist support. More work is needed locally to develop specific services, and nationally to develop pathways ensuring that young people continue to receive the care they need into adulthood.