

Evaluation of transition between Children's and Adult services for young people
with severe to profound hearing impairment and cerebral palsy.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the lived experience of Deaf young adults, with disabilities, arising from cerebral palsy, as they make the transition between children's and adult services. A number of longitudinal studies have been undertaken in order to understand the needs of young people who are either Deaf, or disabled, and a wealth of advice and support materials is available to support them. However, there is a dearth of information and advice for young adults who are both Deaf *and* disabled.

A small sample of severely to profoundly Deaf young adults, each with disabilities, arising from cerebral palsy, was identified and a multi-case study undertaken. Data was obtained from relevant documentation, through direct observations, and in structured interviews with the participants, and their parents. Giorgi's phenomenological methodology was employed, in order to gain insight into the lived experience of these young people as they moved through transition.

The results suggest that young adults access the services that they need more effectively when they have support from proactive, and well-informed, parents. However, these parents may find it especially difficult to accept their offspring's adulthood, especially where questions around mental capacity arise. The participants, themselves, wanted a greater level of independence than they currently achieved. However, they were unsure how to attain this.

It is, therefore, recommended, that Deaf young adults, with additional disabilities be assigned a skilled and appropriately trained mentor who can support these young adults to self-advocate effectively.