TRANSITION MONITORING TOOL

Better Care Network

Transforming Children's Care
COLLABORATIVE

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Introduction

BACKGROUND TO RESIDENTIAL CARE SERVICE TRANSITION

Global trends indicate a significant shift from the care of children in residential settings to family-based care. Young people with lived experience of care are *speaking out* about the harms of institutional care and advocating for governments and international donors to support children in families and communities. Decades of evidence support the crucial role that families and communities play in the healthy development and well-being of children and young people, and many countries have taken concrete steps to move away from residential care.

While the reasons for the shift to family and community-based care are well established, transition can present many challenges. These challenges are exacerbated in countries where the majority of residential care services are privately run and funded, and where governments have limited resources to effectively regulate these services.

> ### Defining Residential Care Service Transition
>
> Transition of residential care services refers to the process of changing the model of alternative care or services provided by an agency or organization from a residential to a family-based model of care or other community-based service that supports children to live in families.
>
> Transition involves change at all levels of the organization and includes, but is not limited to, the redesign of services, repurposing of resources, redeployment of personnel, and the individual assessment, preparation and reintegration of children and young people living in residential care facilities.
>
> Transition outcomes may include a full transition to other services, safe closure of the residential care service, and divestment of resources from residential services and reinvestment in community-based services that support family care.

As transition requires a paradigm shift in how children are cared for, it is understandable that many key stakeholders involved in residential care, such as directors and donors, may be slow to come onboard. They may worry about whether children will be safe in communities, they may fear how they will be impacted by the changes, and they may feel uncertainty about the outcomes for their organizations.

Left unaddressed, these concerns often surface during the transition process, and can lead to stalled, disrupted, or even derailed transition. In cases where there are vested interests or nefarious motives at play, a failure to identify resistance to transition can have serious impacts on the children and young people involved. It is therefore critical for those involved in supporting transition to ensure that they fully explore and secure buy-in prior to implementation, and to remain vigilant to resistance throughout the entire process.

PURPOSE OF THE TOOL

Defining Key Stakeholders

For the purpose of this tool, key stakeholders are defined as the individuals that hold significant decision-making power and/or influence over a residential care service provider and its transition. This includes founders, directors, managers, and key donors of the organizations operating residential care services.

The purpose of the tool is to assist technical support practitioners to closely track and monitor the progress of residential care services transitions they are involved in. It can be used as a workplan to guide the implementation of a transition strategy, allowing practitioners to identify relevant transition activities, set progress-related goals, and monitor progress against those goals. It links directly to the *Phases of Transition Interactive Diagram*, an interagency tool that provides an evidence-based framework for transitions.[1] The suggested activities and key milestones outlined in the Phases of Transition Interactive Diagram have been integrated into the Transition Monitoring Tool to establish a baseline for good practice.

The Transition Monitoring Tool guides users in selecting transition activities that align with their specific strategy and context. It encourages them to collaborate with key stakeholders to set time-bound goals that define expected progress across the three phases of transition. By tracking progress against an industry-standard baseline that can be tailored to individual transitions and reflects the goals agreed upon by stakeholders, the tool can help ensure good practice transition while maintaining stakeholder engagement throughout the entire process.

The tool's scoring mechanism provides practitioners with visibility of the overarching progress and status of transition, helping them identify where there are issues that may be undermining progress. This supports practitioners to adapt their strategy as often as necessary to ensure transition progresses safely and effectively for the children and young people at the center of the process.

Establishing Clear Benchmarks for Progress

The Transition Monitoring Tool is designed to provide a structured method for residential care service transition support practitioners to develop a monitoring framework for tracking progress. It supports the establishment of clear, shared benchmarks for each activity within the transition plan, allowing for the systematic tracking of progress over time. Practitioners can input updates related to their specific activities, ensuring that all aspects of the transition are accounted for. The tool consolidates these updates, providing a comprehensive view of progress, both at the individual activity level and across the broader transition plan. This functionality enables practitioners to make well-informed decisions regarding next steps and necessary adjustments to the plan, ensuring that the transition process remains on track and aligned with the overall objectives.

[1] *The Phases of Transition Interactive Diagram is an interagency consensus-based tool developed by the Residential Care Transition Working Group as part of the Transforming Children's Care Global Collaborative.*

Reporting

The tool is also designed to support donor and stakeholder reporting. It includes a specific reporting tab that extracts information from the more detailed reporting tabs and provides a high-level summary of progress across all three phases of transition. This reporting function can be used to:

- provide regular updates on transition progress to key stakeholders;
- provide inputs into project management reports;
- develop reports for donors funding the transition to keep them engaged; and
- trigger discussions with key stakeholders where lack of progress or resistance has been identified.

Practitioners can determine the appropriate level of information to be provided to these various groups, depending on their defined roles and responsibilities in and over the transition, and extract key information from specific activities as needed.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The Transition Monitoring Tool has been developed primarily for practitioners providing third-party technical support for the transition of private residential care services. Technical support practitioners can include individuals and organizations who assist with key stakeholder engagement and onboarding for transition, strategic planning and preparation for transition, organizational change management, social work and reintegration training, and ongoing coaching and mentoring.

When used as a workplan, the Transition Monitoring Tool may be beneficial to a broader audience. It can be used by directors and/or donors of residential care service providers who are undergoing transition without the support of third-party practitioners, although the scoring feature of the tool is likely to be less relevant for key stakeholders who have taken the initiative to independently transition.

The Transition Monitoring Tool may also be helpful in guiding the transition of public residential care services, where they are part of national action plans scaling back the use of residential care and key stakeholders may still hold a significant level of influence over the transition. However, the activities outlined in this tool are inappropriately suited for cases where child protection allegations or risks have resulted in government mandates for forced or emergency closures of public or private residential services.

SCORING MECHANISM

Quantifying and Scoring Progress

The Transition MonitoringTool features a series of checklists and automated calculations designed to quantify transition progress. In Phases 1, 2, and the organizational change processes in Phase 3, users are prompted to indicate the level of completion of each of the transition activities they have selected, which are then assigned numerical values and tallied to provide an overall percentage of activities that have been completed during each reporting period, as shown below.

Activity Summary	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22
Not Yet Started	27	20	11	6	3
In Progress	6	10	14	12	16
Completed	1	4	9	15	12
Interference From Key Stakeholder	0	0	0	1	3
N/A	4	4	4	4	4
Total Activities	38	38	38	38	38
Completed Activities (% of Total Activities)	3%	11%	24%	39%	32%

The social work-related processes in Phase 3 rely on a color-coded scoring system that indicates various degrees of transition progress, corresponds to suggested implications for transition, and links to a set of basic recommended actions for the transition strategy, as shown below.

Color Rating	Transition Progress	Recommended Actions	Scoring Logic
Go	Progress is in alignment with established goals There is likely a genuine commitment to transition from all key stakeholders	Continue implementation as outlined in strategic plan Continue tracking progress	Percentage increases from previous reporting period and/or is higher than the highest percentage to date OR 80% to 100% of children / young people / families are receiving case management services
Pay Attention	Progress is slightly out of alignment with established goals	Review established goals and progress to date with key stakeholders to identify any challenges with implementation	Percentage is the same as the previous reporting period or the same as the highest percentage to date

Color Rating	Transition Progress	Recommended Actions	Scoring Logic
Pay Attention	There may be obstacles to transition that have not been identified or addressed but this does not necessarily indicate resistance from key stakeholders	Discuss, agree upon, and document proposed solutions with key stakeholders Adjust goals as necessary	OR 60% to 79% of children / young people / families are receiving case management service
Caution	Progress is significantly out of alignment with established goals Transition may be stalled and there are likely obstacles or resistance to transition from key stakeholders that have not been identified or adequately addressed OR Progress is improving following a period of regression	Discuss lack of progress and review partnership agreement with key stakeholders Make necessary adaptations to transition strategy Determine concrete actions to push transition forward and document agreement of key stakeholders Re-evaluate stakeholder intentions to transition and review options for Pathway B: Closure or Divestment	Percentage is the same as the previous reporting period and is lower than the highest percentage to date OR Percentage increases from previous reporting period but is lower than the highest percentage to date OR Percentage decreases from the previous reporting period for the first time and is lower than the highest percentage to date OR 20% to 59% of children / young people / families are receiving case management services
Re-Evaluate	Progress is minimal to none Transition may have regressed and key stakeholders may be intentionally interfering with or sabotaging transition	Re-evaluate whether transition is feasible and remains the safest option for children Consider rerouting to Pathway B: Closure or Divestment Review child protection risk assessment and implement mitigation strategies Report any child protection concerns to relevant local authorities	Percentage decreases from the previous reporting period and is lower than the highest percentage to date OR 0% to 19% of children / young people / families are receiving case management services

The color-coded scoring system is utilized at this stage in Phase 3 because resistance or interference from key stakeholders tends to have the most significant impact on children and young people during the social work and reintegration activities. The commencement of these activities often signals a tangible shift in the status quo for residential care providers and unaddressed resistance can sometimes result in interference in case work for children and young people. The drop-down menus in the tool allow for users to indicate where key stakeholders are interfering with the transition process, while users can also indicate a lack of progress in cases where stakeholder intentions may not be clear. Despite the distinct scoring systems, however, it is important for users to recognize that resistance may still be present in Phases 1 and 2, as potentially indicated by a lack of progress across reporting periods.

In the example below, the scoring highlights steady progress across the timeframes established by the user, with only one instance where no progress was made between reporting periods. The yellow scoring flags to users that they should pay closer attention to identify whether there is a risk of stalled progress. In this case, minor issues were identified as the cause and progress continued through to a positive outcome.

Activity Summary	Jun-24	Aug-24	Oct-24	Dec-24	Feb-25
Not Yet Started	8	5	2	2	0
In Progress	3	5	8	8	6
Completed	0	1	1	1	5
Interference From Key Stakeholder	0	0	0	0	0
N/A	2	2	2	2	2
Total Activities	13	13	13	13	13
Completion %	12%	27%	38%	38%	62%

Where the scoring indicates that transition progress has stalled or regressed, as shown in the example below, users are guided to consider whether there is a possibility of hidden or unaddressed resistance to transition from key stakeholders. In this case, the presence of orange scoring led users to increase the frequency of monitoring and adapt their transition strategy. Although the key stakeholder discussions triggered by the orange scoring temporarily resulted in improved progress, transition ultimately continued to regress, at which point the decision was made to divest.

	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25
Actual - Score	2	5	6	8	14	16	11	6
Goal - Total Possible Score	5	10	28	43	53	72	80	93
Percentage of Children Receiving CM Services	40%	50%	21%	19%	26%	22%	14%	7%

The scoring function of the Transition Monitoring Tool thus aims to help users identify where progress is out of alignment with the established goals or where there may be resistance, so that steps can be taken to address it, adapt the transition strategy accordingly, and if necessary, consider an alternate pathway to closure or divestment. By establishing concrete measures and goals for transition activities, pre-determining what constitutes acceptable progress through discussions with key stakeholders, and quantifying and scoring that progress, the tool assists users to ascertain whether transition is moving forward and remains safe for children and young people.

A Note on Scoring

It is important to point out that there are many limitations to the automated scoring features of the tool. The reporting summary section of the tool allows users to indicate where they might disagree with the implications and can provide a rationale for why the scoring does not necessarily indicate resistance.

While the tool can provide a high-level picture of broader transition progress, it cannot replace the knowledge, experience, logic, and intuition of users. Ultimately, it is up to the user to determine whether the scoring interpretations and suggested implications for transition accurately reflect the reality.

USAGE OF THE TOOL

Context

The Transition MonitoringTool was designed for the context of full transition, planned closure, or divestment of residential care services. It is not designed for emergency or rapid closures, as mandated by authorities, or in high-risk situations warranting the immediate transfer of children.

Transition Framework Tools

The Transition Monitoring Tool does not serve as an introduction to transition. For broader information on what transition entails and the aims of the three phases of transition, users should refer to the Phases of Transition Interactive Diagram.

The Transition Monitoring Tool is designed to be used in conjunction with the *Transition Framework Tools*:

Phases of Transition Interactive Diagram

The interactive diagram provides a roadmap for transition across three phases:

➜ **Phase 1 – Learning and Engagement**
➜ **Phase 2 – Preparing for Transition**
➜ **Phase 3 – Implementing a Transition**
  - Pathway A: Full Transition to Other Non-Residential Services
  - Pathway B: Safe Closure and Reintegration or Divestment

The suggested activities and key milestones outlined in the interactive diagram have been integrated into this tool to establish a baseline for progress markers.

Transitioning Models of Care Assessment Tool

Findings from the assessment tool, particularly those around stakeholder motivations and psychological ownership of the residential care service and the transition, should inform the engagement strategy for key stakeholders. Assessment results can influence how the Transition Monitoring Tool should be used to set clear expectations for transition and determine the most appropriate level of reporting for donors.

Transition Cost Estimation Tool

The activities outlined in the Transition Monitoring Tool can inform the levels and timeframes of ongoing and spike costs associated with transition.

Tailored Approach

As transition strategies must be tailored to the individual context and assessment findings, this tool should not be interpreted as promoting a one-size-fits-all approach. The activities in the tool represent the full scope of activities outlined in the Phases of Transition diagram but the tool has been designed to allow users the flexibility to make the necessary adaptations for their given transition. A drop-down menu allows users to identify which transition activities are not applicable to their situation, removing those activities from the automated calculations and progress scoring. Users can also enter additional transition activities not captured in the tool that will automatically factor into the scoring.

Influencing Practice

It is important to acknowledge that multiple agencies may be involved during various stages of a transition, and that one technical support agency may not partner with a residential care service provider throughout the entire process. Thus, the ultimate goal is not for the tool to be utilized exclusively throughout the implementation of transition but rather to influence practice wherever possible. If the tool serves only as a workplan for organizations while they are engaged with the residential care provider, it can still be helpful in achieving secure buy-in and building a strong foundation for proceeding phases.

It is also important to note that practitioners may not need to complete the tool to determine how a transition is progressing. If some of the suggested activities in the tool can be integrated into the daily practice of technical support practitioners, it may help them more easily recognize when progress has stalled and adjust the transition strategy as necessary.

Transition Monitoring Tool

To access the Transition Monitoring Tool, please click *here*.

Resources

Better Care Network Transition Hub

Divestment of Residential Care Services: Guidelines and Recommendations for Donors Supporting Residential Care Services

Keeping Children Safe: A Toolkit for Child Protection

Leaving Alternative Care and Reintegration

Oxfam Australia Child Safeguarding Toolkit

Phases of Transition Interactive Diagram