

Title:

A cross-sectional description of the lives of young adults with Down syndrome transitioning from school to post-school

Authors:

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Abstract:

**Introduction:** Down syndrome is the most common genetic cause of intellectual disability and occurs in 1/1000 live births in Western Australia. Life expectancy for people with Down syndrome has increased from approximately twelve years to sixty years in the past two generations. Transition from school to post-school is a time of upheaval, stress and important decisions and currently services have been reported as disjointed and unprepared for young adults with developmental disabilities. The aim of this study was to investigate the factors which influence transition outcomes for young adults with Down syndrome.

**Methods:** Questionnaires involving two parts; health functioning and service needs of the young adults and family functioning and well-being were sent to participants in the Down syndrome 'Needs Opinions Wishes' study (n=350). The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health provides an internationally recognised framework for this research.

**Results:** N=202 questionnaires were collected. Participants were aged 16≤31 years, with n=86 females and n=116 males. Participants were grouped into three categories by age in 2009; pre transition 16 to 17 years (n= 25), early transition 18 to 22 years (n=71) and late transition 23 to 31 years (n=106).

**Conclusion:** Further analysis will inform factors which influence transition outcomes and provide a clear picture of the health and well-being of this cohort in terms of body functions and structure, activity, participation, contextual influences and quality of life.