5.4. Ability to manage endings

Working with planned endings

- An ability to work collaboratively with children/young people to manage the process of discharge from inpatient care, identify and mitigate any risks, and put in place any future support

- An ability to prepare children/young people for endings by explicitly referring to the likely time limits of an admission or the intervention as soon as it is known
- An ability to assess any risks to children/young people that may arise during or after discharge (or transfer from) the service
- An ability to help the child/young person express feelings about discharge, including both positive and negative feelings (e.g. disappointment with the limitations of the intervention)
- An ability to help children/young people make connections between their feelings about discharge and about other losses/separations
- An ability to help children/young people explore any feelings of anxiety about managing without the service
- An ability to help children/young people reflect on the process of the admission and what they have learnt and gained from it
- An ability to say goodbye in a shared, mutual and genuine way
- Where there is a planned transition to another service, an ability to prepare children/young people appropriately (e.g. by giving them information about what the new service offers and its style of working, or arranging joint appointments with practitioners from the new service)

Working with premature or unplanned terminations

Knowledge

- An ability to draw on knowledge of national and local guidance on the assessment of risk relating to children/young people ending contact with a service, including policies, procedures and standards in relation to:
  - risk assessment and management
  - consent, confidentiality and information sharing
- An ability to draw on knowledge of local organisations to which the child/young person may be referred at the end of unplanned contact with the service

Working with unplanned endings initiated by the child/young person

- Where possible, an ability to explore with children/young people why they wish to terminate contact with the service earlier than originally planned
- An ability to explore with children/young people whether their concerns about the service can be addressed
- An ability to assess any risk arising from early termination with the service
- An ability to contact relevant agencies regarding early termination

- An ability to review contact with the child/young person verbally or through a discharge letter

- Where working with families/carers, an ability to establish who wishes to terminate contact early (i.e. the extent to which it is something they all wish for, or if it is a view held by some and not all)

Working with unplanned endings initiated by the team

- Where an unplanned ending is initiated by the team (e.g., because of a failure to engage or to make progress), an ability to discuss with the child/young person:
  - the reasons for discharge, in a compassionate (non-blaming) manner
  - their own sense of what has not worked for them (especially if it can help identify treatment regimens that may be more helpful)
  - any negative feelings associated with the discharge (e.g. a sense of failure)
  - the options for treatment that are open to them