

Healthcare Transition

A guide for caregivers

What is the difference between a pediatric and adult approach to health care?

The main difference between a pediatric and an adult approach to health care is that your child is now the primary person communicating with the doctor about their health. This change usually comes when your child turns 18, even if they are still seeing their pediatric doctor.

Can I make medical decisions for my child when they turn 18?

At age 18, your child is lawfully in charge of their own communications with their doctor. At age 18, they are also the only one privy to their medical records. This is, unless, they have provided you with permission via a signed release of information (ROI) form. If they sign an ROI form, this allows you to communicate with medical professionals on their behalf when they need you to, and can provide you with some access to their medical records as needed. You may also have been granted the legal authority to view records, make medical decisions, and communicate on their behalf if you were elected as their legal guardian or have a been elected as their medical Power or Attorney.

How can I facilitate successful healthcare transition for my child?

Assess Readiness:

- <https://www.gottransition.org/parents-caregivers/hct-quiz.cfm>

Practice Healthcare Autonomy as early as possible:

- When able, allow your child to practice communicating with the doctors themselves about their healthcare needs and concerns.

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- Help your child create a “healthcare passport.” This is a document that they carry which lists their healthcare diagnoses, medications, allergies, and other needs. This can be a manual document they carry with them in a wallet or digitally stored on a phone app such as MyChart® or MyID®.
- As soon as your child turns 15, you can ask your child’s doctor what your child’s healthcare transition plan will look like. Specifically, what providers will take over your child’s medical care after they turn 18?

Call to Action!

Considering your child’s path to adult health care

What are some of the ways your child can prepare for the world of adult medical care? Do they know what diagnoses they have? Do they know what medications they take? Have you asked your child’s pediatric provider for a transition plan?

Jot down how you can facilitate your child’s autonomy when it comes to their future adult medical care:

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Resources:

- Got Transition
 - <https://www.gottransition.org/parents-caregivers/>
- The Explaining Brains Blog by Dr. Liz Angoff
 - <https://explainingbrains.com/blog/>