

# A Transition of Care Guide for Young Adults



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# Introduction

NYC Health + Hospitals is committed to helping our patients make a smooth transition from Pediatric/Adolescent Medicine to Adult Primary Care. We know that becoming an adult can be an exciting but stressful time full of many changes, and that leaving your Pediatric/Adolescent care team can be difficult. We understand how important and meaningful the relationship with your provider can be, which is why a smooth transition process is essential. Please know that we are here to help you along the way.

As you develop from a teenager into an adult and take on more responsibilities, it is important to learn about the Transition of Care process. As a child, your parent or guardian was usually the decision maker when it came to your health care. As a teenager, you face more decisions in your health care and are allowed by law to seek some services confidentially. These are some of the first steps in taking responsibility for your care and can give you an idea of what to expect once you fully transition out of Pediatric/Adolescent Medicine.

This guide was created with the intention to help support you through your Transition of Care journey. We hope you find this guide useful as you prepare to take the next steps in life.

# Transition of Care

## What is Transition of Care?

Transition of Care is the process of preparing you for health care as an adult, which later on leads to the transfer from Pediatric/Adolescent Medicine to Adult Primary Care. If you will become your own legal guardian at age 18, this process will mean learning how to manage your own health care needs.

## Why is Transition of Care important?

It is important to have a medical care team that can best help you at your current developmental stage. Pediatric/Adolescent Medicine providers are experts in caring for children and teenagers but may not be trained to care for adults. You will work together with your Pediatric/Adolescent Medicine care team to find an Adult Primary Care team, who are experts in providing care to adults. The Transition of Care process exists to provide you with information and resources you may need to make the best choices for your health care.

## How should transferring care begin?

The age at which transition should happen may vary for everyone, but it is important that the transition process takes place over time rather than all in one visit. During this time, it would be ideal to start taking more responsibility for managing your own health care needs in small steps. Starting transition discussions early can help ensure care is not disrupted and provide a smooth transition.

## What does transitioning include?

This process is different for everybody and is done in collaboration with your Pediatric/Adolescent Medicine care team. If you become your own guardian, there will be a transfer of responsibilities from your guardian to you. This includes consenting to your own care, scheduling appointments, communicating with your providers, signing up for your MyChart patient portal, and requesting and picking up medication refills on your own.

# What's The Difference?

## How is Pediatric/Adolescent Medicine different from Adult Primary Care?

There can be some differences between Pediatric/Adolescent Medicine and Adult Primary Care, but this can vary depending on the practice. It is important to understand these possible differences so that you know what you may expect when you transition your care to Adult Primary Care.

|  | <b>Pediatric/<br/>Adolescent<br/>Medicine Practice</b>   | <b>Adult<br/>Primary Care Practice</b>  |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Role of<br/>Primary Care<br/>Provider<br/>(PCP)</b> | PCP will usually coordinate your care with specialists as needed for more focused care of some conditions.   | PCP more typically manages some chronic conditions but may refer to specialists when needed.  |
| <b>Appointment<br/>Time</b>                            | Appointments tend to be longer. There is usually more flexibility in seeing you if you are running late for your appointments.   | Appointments tend to be shorter. You may be required to reschedule the appointment if you are more than 30 minutes late.  |
| <b>Resources</b>                                       | Practice may be <b>more likely</b> to have other support services including social work, care coordination and mental health. Your PCP may be more likely to provide gynecologic care or other reproductive health care. | Practice may be <b>less likely</b> to have other support services including social work, care coordination and mental health. Your PCP may refer you to another provider for gynecologic or other reproductive health care. |

# Primary Care Providers

## Who can choose my new primary care provider (PCP)?

Ultimately, you can decide who will be your new primary care provider (PCP). Once you identify a PCP, make your first appointment with them. Depending on your insurance, you may have to call beforehand to let your insurance know that you chose a new PCP. Your Pediatric/Adolescent Medicine care team is available to help with this process as needed.

## How can I find a primary care provider?

- + Ask relatives or friends for recommendations
- + Contact your insurance company to get a list of in-network providers near you
- + Ask your Pediatric/Adolescent Medicine care team for recommendations

You can also follow these steps to find a specialist with the help of your PCP.



# What You Should Know

## What happens when I turn 18?

Transition of Care discussions may start at different ages for different people, but below are some responsibilities that you will take on when you turn 18.\* It is normal to feel nervous about these transitions, but your care team will help you with this process.

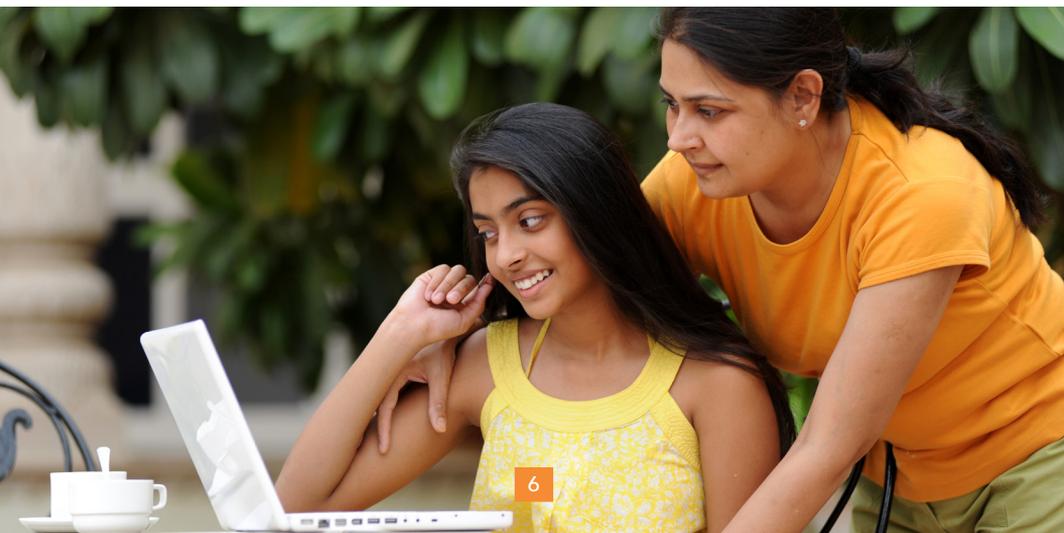
- + You become a legal adult, which means you are responsible for all decisions about your health care.
- + Your care team should speak with you directly about your care plan and ask you for consent (permission) if you want them to also discuss it with a parent, family member or trusted person.
- + You decide who will know about your health care. If you would like to share information with a parent, family member, school, employer, therapist or anyone else, you will sign a release of information form that describes what information you want to share and with whom. You can change your mind at any time.
- + You are responsible for scheduling and keeping appointments.
- + You will check yourself in for appointments and sign your own forms.
- + Your care team will contact you directly with test or lab results and other communications.
- + You will speak to your insurance plan if you have any questions or concerns. You will need to give permission if you'd like your insurance plan to speak to a parent or family member.

\* Except in special situations when someone may become your legal guardian

# What You Should Know

## To-Do List:

- + Learn your insurance information. You may need to ask or discuss with a parent or guardian.
- + Update the phone number and email on file so your health care team can contact you directly about appointments and results.
- + Save your health care provider's contact information in your phone, so you know how to get in touch with your health care team.
- + Familiarize yourself with your medical history, family medical history, medications, allergies and care team members. This is a process that may take some time.
- + Sign up for MyChart, an online patient portal where you can easily access your medical information, review results and message your care team. Your parent's access to your MyChart will end automatically once you turn 18, but you will have the option to allow them to view your information as a proxy if you choose. You can sign up for MyChart by visiting: [epicmychart.nychhc.org/mychart](https://epicmychart.nychhc.org/mychart)
- + Think about choosing a health care proxy, someone who you trust to make decisions for you if you are ever unable to do so yourself. One example of when this may happen is if you have surgery under anesthesia. To learn more, visit [health.ny.gov/publications/1430.pdf](https://health.ny.gov/publications/1430.pdf)



# The First Appointment

## Things to bring to your first Adult Primary Care appointment:

- + Identification Card (ID)
- + Insurance card or information
- + Phone or notebook (useful for putting scheduled appointments in your calendar or taking notes)
- + Medication list or bottles (if you take any medicine)
- + Allergy list (including specific reactions you have had)
- + Medical Summary from your previous PCP (this can be electronically sent)
- + Your preferred pharmacy address and phone number
- + List of questions to ask

## Things to help prepare for your first Adult Primary Care visit:

- + Make sure the primary care provider (PCP) listed in MyChart is the PCP you chose.
- + Call your insurance to confirm that your new PCP is in-network.
- + Find out your Adult Primary Care team's contact information such as address, phone number and office hours.
- + Ask your Pediatric/Adolescent Medicine care team to share your medical information with your new Adult Primary Care provider.
- + If you still have insurance through your parent or guardian, they may receive notification of health care visits or services. Discuss with your PCP if you want certain visits or services remain confidential.



### **Some questions to ask at your first Adult Primary Care appointment:**

- + Best way to schedule, reschedule or cancel appointments
- + Late and no-show policies
- + Availability for same-day, walk-in or sick visits
- + Coverage after-hours and when your provider is away
- + Services available other than primary care (e.g., social work, mental health, reproductive health, gynecologic care, nutrition/wellness, etc.)

### **Tips for your first Adult Primary Care appointment:**

- + Arrive at least 15 minutes earlier than your appointment time to fill out paperwork
- + Bring an open mind
- + Ask questions when you do not understand something
- + Familiarize yourself with your new practice

# Glossary

**Adolescent Medicine Provider:** A primary care provider who specializes in the health care and well-being of adolescent and young adult patients (typically ages 12-25, but this may vary depending on the clinic).

**Confidentiality:** The right to have your medical information kept private from others unless you give permission. For adults 18 and older, this includes all medical information. For teens under age 18, this includes sexual and reproductive health information and some mental health information. There are some exceptions when information can no longer be kept private, including if you are at risk for hurting yourself or others or if someone is hurting you. Please feel free to discuss this further with your health care provider.

**Family Medicine Provider:** A provider who sees children and adults for primary care and may also provide obstetric and gynecologic care.

**Guardianship:** The right that the law grants a person to make decisions about the education, finances and medical care of a child, an incapacitated adult or a developmentally disabled adult.

**Health Care Proxy:** The person someone chooses to make health care decisions for them if they cannot make decisions for themselves.

**Internist:** A provider who sees adults for their primary care.

**Pediatrician:** A provider who sees children for their primary care.

**Portable Medical Summary:** A document that gives an overview of important medical information for your new providers. This can be transferred electronically and/or on paper.

**Practice:** A facility where one or more medical providers see patients.

**Protected Health Information (PHI):** All of your health care information with a higher level of privacy protection. Written permission is required to share these documents with anyone. Medical records, laboratory reports and hospital bills are examples of types of documents that contain PHI.

**Specialist:** A provider who sees patients for specific conditions. There are specialists who provide care for only children, for only adults and for both children and adults.

**Transfer of care:** To move from one provider to another provider.

# Resources

**Got Transition:**

A resource center with information for providers, youth and families covering all aspects of transitioning care. [www.gottransition.org/](http://www.gottransition.org/)

**MyChart:**

NYC Health + Hospitals' patient portal, the most convenient and secure way to access your health information. [epicmychart.nychhc.org/mychart](http://epicmychart.nychhc.org/mychart)

**Health Care Proxy Information:**

A clear explanation of the responsibilities of a health care proxy and directions on how to fill out and sign the form. [health.ny.gov/publications/1430.pdf](http://health.ny.gov/publications/1430.pdf)

**Youth Health Website:**

A website for adolescents for additional resources on health care. [www.nycyouthhealth.org](http://www.nycyouthhealth.org)



*Scan this QR code with your smart phone to access this brochure online, along with "A Health Insurance Guide for Young Adults" and "A Guide to Guardianship"*







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