

Transition from children's to adults' services – what you should expect

Information for the public

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About this information

NICE guidelines provide advice on the care and support that should be offered to people who use health and care services.

This information explains what care young people and their parents or carers should expect from children's and adult's services during transition. It suggests questions to ask, and where to find further help. NICE suggests that when using this information it is downloaded as a PDF.

To read the advice itself see the [guideline on transition from children's to adults' services](#).

What is transition?

If you're a young person with health or social care needs, then as you get older there will

come a time when you'll need to move from children's to adults' services. This is called a 'transfer'. It needs to be carefully planned so you feel prepared for the move and to make sure there are no gaps in the care you receive. It's important that you, and the people who support you, have enough time to really think about what types of care you'll need in the future.

After you transfer, adults' services should make sure that you have as much support and information as you need.

The period of planning, transfer, and the support you have afterwards is called 'transition'.

Transition doesn't start at the same age for everyone. It will depend on your care and support needs and what seems right for you. It will also depend on what the law says about different services.

The people who provide your care and support should involve you and your parents or carers at every stage of your transition. They should make sure you have the information you need to make decisions. The information should be easy for you to use and understand.

Before you transfer to adults' services

The people who provide your care and support should talk to you and your parents or carers about your transition. This should happen early enough before you transfer so you have time to really think about what you want.

They should help you to choose a person to act as a link between you and the various staff who support you, including your GP. This person, called a 'named worker', should be someone you already know and get on well with. The named worker will be your main contact until a few months after you've transferred to adults' services.

Your named worker should discuss with you:

- what to expect
- how you can be fully involved in your transition and control what happens
- what your care and support options will be after you transfer

- any assessments you may need to have
- what help is available before, during and after the transfer; this could include:
 - peer support (support from other young people who have experience of transition)
 - advocacy (support from someone independent from children's or adults' services, who can represent your interests)
- information about different ways to manage your care and support, including funding (if you're eligible for this)
- who to speak to if you're worried or have questions.

If you won't have support from adults' services after you leave children's services your named worker should still make sure your GP is involved in planning your transition. Your named worker should also give you information about other kinds of support available.

Your transition plan

Your named worker should be the main person who helps you to plan your transition. They should also make sure your GP and people from the other services who support you are involved. Your plan should reflect what's important to you, what you feel you **can** do and what you **want** to be able to do in the future. It should include some goals that you want to achieve, in areas like:

- your health and wellbeing (including emotional health)
- education
- living independently
- taking part in day-to-day community life
- employment.

Your named worker should talk with you about how to review the plan in the future to make sure it's still right for you.

Helping you feel confident about moving

from children's to adults' services

You may feel unsure about the idea of moving to a new service, especially if you've been with children's services for quite a while. Your named worker can help you find ways to get familiar with the new services before you transfer. This could include:

- meeting some of the people who will be supporting you in adults' services
- going to a joint clinic involving people who work in children's and adults' services
- visiting adults' services
- trying peer support or mentoring
- talking with other young people who have experienced transition to adults' services.

You could also put together some information about yourself, so the people in adults' services can get to know you as a person before you transfer. The information could include details of your education, health and care needs (including the name of your GP), and your achievements, goals and hopes for the future. You could either do this yourself or involve your parents, your named worker or someone else you trust.

Questions you or your parents or carers might want to ask

- Can I meet the people in adults' services before I transfer?
- Can I have an on-site visit before I transfer?
- What choices do I have about the care and support I will get from adults' services?
- Can I speak to other people in my age group who have moved from children's to adults' services?
- How will my GP be involved during my transition?
- Where can I get independent advice or support??
- What if I don't want my parents or carers involved after I've turned 18?
- What benefits and entitlements will I be eligible for, and how can they be used?

- I'm not eligible for state-funded care but I will need support after I turn 18 – what should I do?

After you transfer from children's services

The people who support you should make sure that you have as much help and information as you need straight after transfer. They should make sure you know who to speak to if you have any problems or concerns. This should include your GP and social worker if you have one. They should put you in touch with an advocate (someone who can provide independent support and represent your interests) if you need this.

Keeping in touch

If you don't come to meetings or appointments after you've transferred, someone from adults' services will try to get in touch with you and your family. They may speak to your GP and other people who have supported you. They should also ask your named worker to try to contact you. Your named worker should talk to you about whether your care and support plan is still right for you. They should check whether you need some help to use the service, or whether there is some other way to meet your needs.

Questions you or your parents or carers might want to ask

- What support is available in my local community to help me live as independently as possible?
- What support is available to help me find employment, education or training opportunities?
- What are the options for how I receive and manage my social care funding?
- What should I do if my son, daughter or a person I care for opts out of contacting adults' services after they transfer?

What you should expect

Children's and adults' services should both take responsibility for your transition. They should work together to ensure you have a smooth and gradual move from children's to adults' services. They should work closely with your GP and any other services that support you.

If you have an education, health and care (EHC) plan, health and social care services should work closely with education. This will help to make your transition go more smoothly.

You should see the same healthcare worker for the first 2 appointments after you transfer. You should also see the same social worker throughout your transition, from the early planning stages up until the first review of your care and support plan.

Where can I go for more information and support?

For advice and support contact:

- [Action for Sick Children](#), 01663 763 004
- [Care Leavers' Association](#), 0161 637 5050
- [Carers Trust](#), 0844 800 4361
- [Contact a family](#), 0808 808 3555
- [Mencap](#), 0808 808 1111
- [YoungMinds](#), 0808 802 5544 (parent and carer helpline)
- [Youth Access](#), 020 8772 9900
- [Stonewall](#), 0800 050 2020

You can find more information on the [Info 4 Care Kids](#) and [NHS Choices](#) websites.

- For any concerns about a health service, speak to your local patient advice and liaison

service (PALS). You can get the contact details from your GP, by calling 111 or on [NHS Choices](#).

- For any concerns about care contact the [Care Quality Commission](#) (03000 61 61 61) or the [local government ombudsman](#) (0300 061 0614).
- For any concerns about a school or other education service, contact [Ofsted](#) (0300 123 4666).

To find out more about what NICE says on this topic, see our page on [service transition](#).

NICE is not responsible for the quality or accuracy of any information or advice provided by these organisations.

Update information

Minor changes since publication

April 2016: Clarified the role of an advocate.

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Accreditation

