

# TRANSITION

## TRANSITIONING FROM PAEDIATRIC TO ADULT HEALTH SERVICES: A YOUNG PERSON'S EASY GUIDE.



EPILEPSY NEW ZEALAND  
INFORMATION BROCHURE

### A GROWING INDEPENDENCE

At some point, young patients receiving paediatric health care will need to transfer to adult health services. The term used for preparing for this is "transition".

The best way to transition is by starting early and planning it out gradually. The objective is to make you accountable for your health care by promoting independence.

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| Transition from paediatric to adult health services | • P. 2 |
| Taking charge of your own health care               | • P. 3 |
| Self-managing your health                           | • P. 4 |
| Transitioning to adult health                       | • P. 5 |
| Tips for transition                                 | • P. 6 |
| Further reading                                     | • P. 7 |

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE INFORMATION IN THIS BROCHURE IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL ADVICE AND PROVIDES ONLY A LIMITED AMOUNT OF INFORMATION ON THE TOPIC. PLEASE CONTACT YOUR HEALTH TEAM FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE TRANSITION.

# TRANSITION FROM PAEDIATRIC TO ADULT HEALTH SERVICES

The transition stage assists you in developing skills and knowledge to manage your own health. Support will be provided during the transition process for several years. You can expect the involvement of medical teams from a number of areas, so be willing to ask questions about things you do not know or want to know.

## Transition from Paediatric to Adult Services

**VS**

**CHILD**

- 1 You normally have a parent/carer with you at appointments
- 2 Your parents/carer normally books your health appointments for you
- 3 Questions are mostly directed at your parent/carer to answer
- 4 If you go into hospital the wards are decorated, you have activities and you may be with children of a similar age. Parents can often stay over

**ADULT**

- 1 You may choose to attend appointments on your own
- 2 You will normally book your own appointments
- 3 Questions are directed at you to answer
- 4 If you go into hospital you may be in with older adults. There are no set activities and parents may find it more difficult to stay over

[www.epilepsy.org.nz](http://www.epilepsy.org.nz)

Transition may seem daunting at first, but it may increase your confidence as you become better at making decisions and taking responsibility for your health.

# TAKING CHARGE

Get involved in your health care, understand your condition and care.

Writing down the questions you've got and bringing them to your meetings may be helpful.

## TAKING CHARGE OF YOUR OWN HEALTHCARE CHECKLIST

- ✓ Learn about your condition
- ✓ Keep a record of your seizures
- ✓ Have a routine with medication
- ✓ Keep a note of appointments
- ✓ Plan transport to appointments
- ✓ Remember to keep others informed
- ✓ Don't understand? Ask questions or take someone with you

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Make an effort to be acquainted with the team who are helping you transition, because they are going to try and better understand you and support you through this time.

It's time for you to take charge of your life, organise the things around you and plan ahead, but slowly, take your time to figure out what's working for you.

# SELF-MANAGING YOUR HEALTH

Transitioning and independence as a young adult, combined with the new responsibilities of taking care of your health, can feel overwhelming at first.

## SELF-MANAGING YOUR HEALTH

- + Self-managing your epilepsy involves making good lifestyle choices, knowing and avoiding triggers (when possible) and using prescribed ASM's
- + Self-management means taking responsibility to ask for help, this support may be friends/family; or perhaps a doctor/service or a support group for people with epilepsy
- + Take a look at any unhealthy aspects of your lifestyle. Take back control and try to make one positive change at a time, to better control your epilepsy
- + Plan ahead. If you're going on holiday, think about how to plan your medication routine. If you're attending a late-night event (and lack of sleep is a trigger), plan to be with someone the next day and rest up
- + Follow up on any medical concerns, seizure changes or medication issues

ASM's- anti seizure medication

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Thinking about your priorities and how they can be impacted by your health is beneficial as you approach closer to the transfer stage.

You may start thinking of your future, your profession, whether you will be able to drive, and will your seizures change as you get older or go through puberty. You can discuss these or any other worries you may have with your family as well as any of your medical professionals.

# TRANSITIONING TO ADULT HEALTH SERVICES

What knowledge do you have regarding transitioning from child health to adult health services?

## TRANSITIONING TO ADULT HEALTH SERVICES?

- + Around the age of 14 you may start to make decisions or choices about your health care. Parents are often still encouraged to be part of this process.
- + Normally, if you are over 16 years or over, your parents are unable to access your health records, unless you give permission.
- + If there are concerns you may harm yourself, or if you are being harmed, or your welfare, or safety are at risk; it may be necessary for health professionals to share specific details with the appropriate service.
- + You can apply to see your health records under most circumstances (there are a few exceptions) . You can ask questions about anything you don't understand.

*\*Please note the above is a guide, it may not apply to all young adults.*

[www.epilepsy.org.nz](http://www.epilepsy.org.nz)

Collaborate with your health professionals to make sure you have access to clear and comprehensible information that will help you navigate your way into adult health services.

# TIPS FOR TRANSITION

Your parents or caregivers are also in a period of transition and they may find it challenging to 'let go' and allow you to make decisions on your own. Keep your lines of communication open and remember that your parents or carers can still be a valuable asset and support during this time.

## TIPS FOR TRANSITION FROM CHILD TO ADULT SERVICES

- + I have an understanding of my epilepsy and I am able to communicate to others about my seizures**
- + I know the medical terms used when talking about my condition**
- + I am responsible for taking my medication**
- + I have the confidence to speak up and tell others what I need**
- + I know how to make appointments and know who my health team are**
- + I know who or where to go to if I need extra support**

[www.epilepsy.org.nz](http://www.epilepsy.org.nz)

Help your parents understand that you need time and space to resolve your own issues and conflicts. Encourage your parents to step back and allow you to start managing your own issues.

Do you have a thorough understanding of your epilepsy and the best course of action for your health and well-being? If you don't have enough information, consider who can point you in the right direction to find it.

## FURTHER RESOURCES

For further reading please go to:

[www.starship.org.nz/youth-transition/](http://www.starship.org.nz/youth-transition/)

[www.starship.org.nz/transition-fact-sheet-for-young-people/](http://www.starship.org.nz/transition-fact-sheet-for-young-people/)

[www.healthify.nz/hauora-wellbeing/t/transition-services-youth-and-young-people/](http://www.healthify.nz/hauora-wellbeing/t/transition-services-youth-and-young-people/)

For further support from Epilepsy New Zealand

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