

Resources for parents and carers



Adolescent Transition

Adolescent Transition Education Package | **Fact Sheet 12b**

An information sheet for parents and carers of patients transitioning from paediatric to adult health services

Caring for a child with a health condition or disability can be a full-time job in itself. Sometimes it's easy to forget your own needs. This can have an impact on your wellbeing and may even affect your ability to care for and support your child in the way you would like to.

The healthcare transition journey is an important time for both you and your son or daughter, particularly as you learn to adjust to your changing role in their healthcare. It is important for you to promote independence in your son or daughter, encourage solo appointments and support their right to confidentiality.

The following information may be helpful as you embark on this journey. Please visit www.rch.org.au/transition/for_parents/for_parents_and_carers/ for more tips and resources.

Sources of support

As a parent/carer of a young person with a health condition or disability, knowing where you can find support during this period of change can be useful. It often helps to know that you're not alone and can turn to others for additional assistance.

People or organisations that may be helpful:

- Your child's medical, nursing and healthcare team members
- Family support workers or social workers
- Psychologists or counsellors – ask your child's medical team for a referral
- Parent support and advocacy groups
- Support organisations for your son/daughter's specific health condition (see links on transition website)
- Adolescent transition clinics
- Family and friends
- The internet. Remember, not everything you read is factual so start with accredited medical organisations such as those found on the adolescent transition website

Taking care of yourself

Here are some general tips for looking after yourself, particularly if your child has a physical or intellectual disability requiring your full-time care.

- Eat well balanced meals and exercise
- Sleep regularly
- Negotiate sharing roles at home
- Talk to others about your situation
- Set aside time to spend with individual members of your family
- Ask for help when you need it
- Accept support from others
- Take time out for yourself
- Know your hospital and community resources and support groups (links overleaf)

Healthcare transition is a process which takes place over many years involving preparation, skill acquisition and follow-up once the young person has entered the adult health service.

This process is underpinned by the understanding that this transition is a significant change event in both the life of the young person and parent/carer, requiring significant planning and support from all members of the healthcare team.

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Services and Resources

These websites may help you and your son/daughter during the transition process and actual transfer from child to adult health services.

For more information on how to cope with your changing role:

- Association for Children with a Disability
www.acd.org.au
 - Helping you and your family
http://www.acd.org.au/information/content/HYYF%202009/hyyf09_booklet.pdf
 - Through the maze
www.acd.org.au/information/ttm.htm
- There's no such thing as a silly question
www.arthritisvic.org.au/home

For general tips on parenting:

- ABCD: Parenting Young Adolescents
www.abcdparenting.org
- About Kids Health
www.aboutkidshealth.ca
- DUCKS (for Dads)
www.mdakf.com.au/ducks.html
- Drummond Street Services
www.dsrc.org.au
- Family Advocacy
www.familyadvocacy.org.au
- Kids Health for Parents
www.kidshealth.org/parents/
- Parenting Australia
www.parentingaustralia.com.au
- Parenting Ideas
www.parentingideas.com.au/Home
- Parentline
www.parentline.com.au
- Parentline (Education Department)
www.education.vic.gov.au/earlychildhood/parentline
- Parenting Research Centre
www.parentingrc.org.au/vp

- Raising Children Network
www.raisingchildren.net.au
- Strong Bonds- Building Family Connections
www.strongbonds.jss.org.au

For information and access to support groups:

- RCH Support Groups Directory
ww2.rch.org.au/supportgroups/directory/
- Chronic Illness Alliance
www.chronicillness.org.au/community.htm
- RCH Family Advisory Council
www.rch.org.au/fac

Centre for Adolescent Health:

www.rch.org.au/cah

The Royal Children's Hospital Centre for Adolescent Health promotes good health for all adolescents through research, education and clinical service. The Centre provides general medical services to adolescents with a focus on complex family situations, eating disorders, chronic illnesses and runs a peer support programme for young people with significant chronic illness. The Centre also provides specific services to high risk young people.

There is useful information, resources and links on the Centre's website for young people, their parents and carers, and health professionals. Topics covered include health and wellbeing, sexual health, mental health, domestic violence, disabilities, drugs and alcohol, legal services, information services and information for same sex attracted young people. Other information that you may find useful on the site includes booklets and reports on adolescent health as well as research that staff are currently undertaking.

For more info contact:

The RCH Adolescent Transition Team on **9345 4858/4980**

or find email details and more info on www.rch.org.au/transition

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