

# Special Healthcare

## Healthcare Transition



Healthcare transition is a reality that every young adult will face in their lifetime; your child can not see a pediatrician forever!

The healthcare transition process seeks to ensure a young adult has a smooth, uninterrupted transition from pediatric care to the adult healthcare system. The goal is continuity of developmentally appropriate, high quality healthcare with specialized accommodations when appropriate. It is an important process for all youth; it is especially important for youth with childhood onset chronic disorders, chronic illness, disability or special healthcare needs.

It is recommended that family, physician and child should start talking about healthcare transition beginning at age 14. The shift to the adult healthcare system would ideally occur between the ages of 18-21.

The goal of the healthcare providers, family and children/young adults with and those who have lifelong complex health is to be part of the collaborative team process.

As youth get older, managing medical needs becomes their own responsibility. Achieving this independence requires an organized transition process to gain independent health care skills, prepare for an adult model of care, and transfer to new providers.

This process includes ensuring that high-quality, developmentally appropriate healthcare services are available in an uninterrupted manner as the person moves from adolescence to adulthood.

Family TIES of Massachusetts provides information, referral, and parent to parent support for families of children with special health needs or disability and their professional partners. We also provide information about Early Intervention (EI) and maintain a complete list of EI Programs in Massachusetts.

The information provided on the back page of this sheet is not a complete list of the resources that may be available. For information about community based programs, resources and local support groups, please call your Regional Coordinator or our toll-free line 800-905-TIES (8437).

We publish an annual *Directory of Resources for Families of Children and Youth with Special Needs*. The Directory is always listed as the first place to look for resources on our Topic Sheets!

Call us if you would like a copy of the directory mailed to you. A pdf version of the directory is available to download on our website [www.massfamilyties.org](http://www.massfamilyties.org). You can also find the phone number for the Family TIES Regional Coordinator for your area on our website.



**Healthcare Transition Tips**

- Understand that this is a process that requires ongoing planning, start early
- Talk to your child's healthcare provider to determine if the practice has a transition policy, if so what is it and their thoughts about this for your child especially if your child has special healthcare needs
- Discuss and create a transition plan for your child/young adult
- Create opportunities for your child to actively participate in their doctor visits.
- Determine what your child knows about their basic health care and if they have special healthcare needs, what is their understanding of it.
- Consider using the Assessment Tools for young adults on "Got Transition"
- Determine if there is a liaison who will facilitate the communication between the pediatric and adult health care teams
- If possible, meet with the Adult Health Care Provider prior to health care transition

## Information and Resources

**Massachusetts Department of Public Health Programs:**

- Health Transition for Youth and Young Adults with Special Health Needs  
<https://www.mass.gov/health-transition-for-youth-and-young-adults-with-special-health-needs>
- Federation for Children with Special Needs: LINK Center <https://fcsn.org/linkcenter/>

**National:**

- Got Transition  
<https://www.gottransition.org/index.cfm>
- National Parent Center on Transition and Employment Health & Transition  
<https://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/health/>

**Article:**

- Preparing Students to Manage Health:  
[http://parenttoparentnys.org/images/uploads/pdfs/Health\\_Care\\_and\\_Transition\\_P2\\_PNYS\\_oct\\_2012.pdf](http://parenttoparentnys.org/images/uploads/pdfs/Health_Care_and_Transition_P2_PNYS_oct_2012.pdf)
- Pediatric versus Adult Providers - Some differences you may encounter when switching from doctors that see children to doctors that see adults  
<https://cshcn.org/adolescent-transition/pediatric-versus-adult-health-care/>
- Incorporating Pediatric to Adult transition into NCQA patient Centered medical Home Recognition  
<https://www.gottransition.org/resourceGet.cfm?id=444>