

Why is this important?

At age 18, you become an adult under the law. This means you will be the decision maker about your medical care.

You also have a right to privacy about your medical information and can choose who receives that information. You must give us permission to share any information about you with others. This will require you to sign a "Release of Information" form. We will talk to you about exceptions to this if necessary.

Message to the Teen/Young Adult

You legally become an adult at the age of 18. You are generally then able to take control of making decisions for your personal life and health care.

What does this mean for you?

- Starting around age 12, we will help you prepare to manage your health care.
- By age 15, we will check your ability to take on more responsibilities, such as:
 - spending at least part of your clinic visit alone with your provider
 - developing skills to be more comfortable asking questions.
- Our goal is for you to be involved in your own health care. Special plans should be made as needed for those with intellectual disabilities or special health care needs.

Policy Statement:

Information for Parents and Patients

Guidelines

Successful transition of care to adult providers requires a proven process of planning and preparation over time. The pediatric care team, family, adult caregiver and patient will all need to work together to prepare for adult health care.

Our Children's Mercy medical teams care for infants, children and teens. Some of our patients will continue to need ongoing care from one or more specialists after they become adults. We have developed transition guidelines to smooth the process of moving on to adult health care.

Most patients can learn to manage their health care needs independently with the help and guidance of their provider and support of their family or adult caregiver. This gradual approach shifts the responsibility of care from the family and pediatric provider to the young adult.

- Our transition training becomes more complete as teenage patients age.
- Every patient will have a plan for transitioning. Not all patients have the same learning styles or capacity, so the transition process is tailored for each patient.
- Each clinic will create transition goals. They will teach and guide specific health issues for all patients.
- We recognize parents and adult caregivers have played a major role in their child's medical care. We work closely to create goals to transfer care from the parent or adult caregiver to the young adult patient.
- Some patients are not able to provide consent or be the sole decision-maker for their own health care by age 18. Parents and adult caregivers will be guided to resources to assist in coordinating custodial care.
- Our goal is that patients will be ready to fully transition care to an adult provider between the ages of 18 and 21.
- A transfer summary will be provided to both you and the new physician or medical team at the last Children's Mercy clinic visit.

