

Scottish Paediatric Endocrine Group



Transition: A Guide for
Young People and Families

What is transition?

Transition is the process of preparing you for transfer on to the adult service from the paediatric clinic. It is a gradual process, that gives both you and your family or carers time to get ready and to discuss your healthcare needs as an adult. Transition helps you to become more responsible for your own health and to make decisions relating to your care. This process will usually begin from around age 12, once you have started at high school, and will continue in the run up to the move to the adult clinic once you are around 18 years old.

Some hospitals will have a dedicated transition clinic or young people's clinic (e.g. for the 16-25 age group), while others will work towards a move to an appropriate adult endocrine clinic at age 18. Your healthcare team will explain the process in your local hospital to you to help you prepare.

Why do I have to move?

As you approach adulthood, you will need care from adult-trained doctors and nurses rather than children's specialists. You may also prefer to be seen in a more grown-up environment rather than in a children's clinic.

What will be different?

You will start to take more control of your own health, including the consultation with the doctors and nurses. You may wish to spend some time with the doctor or nurse by yourself, though this is entirely up to you and you are welcome to bring support into your appointments if that is what you want. In the adult clinic the doctors and nurses will probably spend more time talking to you than to your parents or carers, which may take some getting used to! The adult team also have more experience in issues such as travel, work, alcohol and sexual health, and are happy to discuss any of those things with you should you wish. The adult team will also help to prepare your parents/carers for your increasing independence.

What if my parent(s) or carer want to know what was said?

It is up to you if you would like them to come into the consultation, or join you at the end for a summary, which can be a good way of developing your

independence whilst keeping your parent/carer involved as things progress towards you taking over your healthcare. Please tell us if there is anything you would prefer not to share. The only exception is if there is a worry that you or someone else is at risk of harm – but we would discuss this with you, including who we would need to speak to if such an issue arises.

Who will be in the adult or young adult clinic?

The adult clinic will usually be staffed by an adult endocrinologist and adult nursing team. There may be joint appointments with the paediatric team in some joint clinics, or there may be a joint appointment before you make the move to the adult clinic so that you have met the people who will be involved in your care when you move.

Who can help me to prepare for these changes?

Your healthcare team in paediatrics, and your new adult team, will help you in several ways:

- Giving you more control over your own healthcare
- Teaching you about your condition and your medicines and treatments including side effects and complications so that you have all of the right information
- Seeing you for part of the consultation on your own, so that you can gradually develop the confidence to come in on your own for the whole appointment
- Arrange a joint appointment with both the paediatric doctor and adult doctor present so you can meet your new team with some familiar people around you





What if I am not ready?

We hope that the gradual process of getting you ready for the adult service will prepare you and your family well, and that you will be prepared by the time you make the move. Please talk to your team about any concerns you have and we will all do our best to work through them with you.

Your family

Families and carers can find this process of transition tough, too. Do talk to each other as things progress. It is a scary time for families, coming to terms with their young person growing up and taking responsibility for their own health, when the parents and carers have often been in the driver's seat. It can be worth talking practical aspects through in advance of appointments, like whether you would like to come in by yourself for some of the appointment, and who will collect prescriptions and manage appointments.

Further information

Please contact your local Endocrinology team for more information regarding your transition process if anything is unclear to you. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this from an early stage.