FAMILY VOICES
COLORADO

FAST FACTS

Health care transition is helping teens and young adults with chronic health conditions plan the move from CHILD-CENTERED to ADULT-CENTERED health care systems. This includes:
- Continued health care with adult health care providers.
- Shifting responsibilities from parent to child/youth/young adult.
- Helping youth and young adults to make their own health care decisions.
- A long-term plan starting at a young age to get ready for adult life.

Transitions from Pediatric to Adult Healthcare Providers

Whether you must find yourself or your child a new doctor, it is never easy. When there is a special healthcare need the switch is even tougher. Consistently, we hear providers say, “It is easier to just keep our complicated kids, rather than to try to explain all we know about them.” With the energy and dollars going into health care for children, there is no easy solution for those young adults needing to leave the pediatrician office for an adult healthcare provider.

Things to think about when choosing an adult doctor:
1. Does the doctor take your insurance?
2. Does the doctor understand or have experience with your disability condition or diagnosis?
3. Do you have a medical history, written down to share with the provider?
4. Can you make an appointment to sit down and talk before accepting you as a patient?
5. Ask the provider or office manager how to transfer files from another office.
6. Create a list of all the services you receive with a contact name and number.
7. Before meeting with the provider for the first time prepare a list of written questions.
8. Ask about preferred hospitals and services available when the office is closed.
9. Explain paperwork they may have to complete on your behalf.
10. Share a list of medications you are currently taking and the name and contact information of the prescribing doctor.

Do I understand my Medical Condition?

I have planned for my:
- Adult primary medical care
- Adult specialty medical care
- Adult dental care
- Adult vision care

I am able to:
- Ask for assistance to care for myself
- Describe my medical condition
- Perform daily medical care/treatments
- Refill medications and supplies

Understand my insurance coverage
Consent to medical care
Make medical appointments
Manage medications
Things to Think About

Nutrition
- I understand that I can deal safely with food allergies
- Understands specialized diets, foods, and medical follow up
- Understands healthy food choices
- Understands funding and budgeting for the purchase of food

Fitness
- Understands the benefits of a health and fitness program
- Participates in physical activity with modifications as needed
- Knows and understands the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and abusive behaviors
- Knows where and how to get help to maintain a healthy lifestyle

Self Advocacy
- Knows how to stop and think and when to say “NO”
- Knows how to make contact with community advocacy organizations
- Is aware of Self Determination
- Can call and ask for information, materials, and booklets with needed modifications
- Has good communication with doctors and other professionals

Rights and Responsibilities
- Is able to discuss conditions that require individualized accommodations
- Has toured schools
- Has considered the pros and cons of full time and part time enrollment and the effect on benefits offered
- Knows how to work with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Has worked with health services to plan for medical emergencies
- Has an Emergency Information Form (EIF) completed and given to all who will need this according to the directions on the form www.aap.org/advocacy/elf.doc
- Knows rights and responsibilities

Last thought... 7 Important Steps
1. Identify a primary care provider
2. Identify your knowledge base
3. Maintain an up-to-date medical summary that is portable and accessible
4. Create a health care transition plan by age 14 (who services, who provides, how financed)
5. Prevention is a key to staying healthy
6. Ensure affordable, continuous health insurance coverage
7. Identify another individual or team of people to help manage your health care needs if additional supports are needed.
Family Voices Colorado provides information, support, and training in health care and related systems for families of children with special health care needs and the professionals who work with them.

We can help!

Family Voices Colorado can...

- assist families in finding resources for their children with special needs
- empower parents to be strong advocates for their children
- guide families in the transition from pediatric to adult health care systems
- support providers in offering a medical home model of care
- help families navigate systems and advocate for positive system change.

Family Voices Colorado
303-733-3000
800-881-8272
www.familyvoicesco.org