

# Differences in care

## Paediatric to adult healthcare



### Adolescent Transition

Adolescent Transition Education Package | **Fact Sheet 2**

**An information sheet for patients transitioning from paediatric to adult health services**

There are many differences between the services that you receive at a children's hospital and the services that you will receive when you reach adult healthcare.

Below is an outline of some of the main differences you may come across, and some helpful hints and key questions to ask.

Sometimes change can be a bit challenging but hopefully these tips can help make your transition to a new hospital an easier experience. This is an exciting stage of your life as you become an adult and take charge of your health.

	Paediatric Services	Adult Services	Remember that
Independence and Self-Management	<p>Child health services are family focused. Things you may experience at the RCH are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions are more likely to be directed at your parents</li> <li>• Your parents/carers book appointments for you</li> <li>• You are on your family's Medicare, healthcare and health insurance accounts</li> <li>• Your parents pay for the appointment afterwards if there is a charge</li> <li>• Your parents may tell your doctor your current symptoms and ask &amp; answer questions on your behalf</li> </ul>	<p>When you transfer to an adult service the focus is very much on you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions are directed at you and you are expected to know and be able to explain all your information</li> <li>• You book your own appointments</li> <li>• You keep track of your own appointments and are in charge of rescheduling</li> <li>• At the end of the appointment you may have to pay for it if it is in the private setting</li> <li>• You might need to travel to your appointments on your own</li> <li>• If you are on medications you will need to know what they are, how to collect them and order more when they run out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be confident and honest in your answers to your doctor. A good doctor will listen non-judgementally and make sure you have a voice</li> <li>• If you are unsure about your health, your condition or your treatment, don't be afraid to ask your new doctor</li> <li>• Book your appointments well in advance. Ring the receptionist and book a new appointment if you can't make it. Keep a diary so that you remember appointments</li> <li>• Get your own Medicare account and keep your card in your wallet. Then it's handy, especially in emergency situations</li> <li>• Allow plenty of time to get to your appointment – parking may be difficult or the train may run late</li> <li>• Strive to be independent, but keep your parents/carers informed to a degree that you are comfortable with – after all you will always be their child</li> </ul>
Information	<p>Doctors give information and use language that you can understand. If you don't understand you can always ask your parents.</p>	<p>Adult services should use language that you understand, particularly about your condition or treatment.</p>	<p>Don't be embarrassed about not understanding. Ask your doctor to explain words that you don't understand. Part of their job is to keep you informed.</p>

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	Paediatric Services	Adult Services	Remember that
<b>Environment</b>	The RCH is very familiar to you, you know your way around and may have a certain area that you enjoy hanging out in. You will mainly have children and young people around you.	Adult services are new to you and the building is unfamiliar, you may get lost and not know where facilities are. You will quickly learn your way around but ask someone for directions if you are unsure. You will find particularly with some health conditions that there are a lot of older people around you.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If possible, go in and visit your new healthcare facility and familiarise yourself with the surroundings. Find where the bathrooms, places to eat, kitchen facilities, possible youth areas are situated</li> <li>• Make sure you know how to get to your doctor's rooms before your transfer</li> </ul>
<b>Links to Services</b>	At the RCH you may have been linked to services within the hospital; i.e. tests, programs, other service providers such as nutritionists, physiotherapists.	At an adult service it may be more likely you will be referred to services outside the hospital and you will need to organise and keep track of these appointments yourself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure you can get to your appointment and that you know where you are going. Request services as close to home as possible</li> <li>• Book appointments well in advance</li> <li>• Ensure that new service providers are highly recommended by your doctor – you deserve the best. Ask any questions you have about the service</li> </ul>
<b>Costs</b>	Many services at the RCH cost less than in the adult healthcare system.	Adult services may charge extra for items such as equipment and medication.	<p>Make sure you are aware of any extra costs and that you have some financial support; whether that comes from your parents/carers, Centrelink or a part time job.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask in advance if there are any possible financial costs for your next appointment</li> </ul>

## Points to keep in mind...

- You can always have someone with you at your appointment or you can be seen on your own
- Take a list of questions or a description of your symptoms with you, so that you don't forget
- If possible make a longer appointment [if you have a lot to talk about]. GP's can offer longer appointments
- If you don't feel comfortable with your new doctor it is ok to change doctors. The first service may not be right for you. You have the right to ask for another referral
- Your say is important; make sure you use it to express how you are feeling and to ask any questions you may have. If you don't ask you won't know!
- Your new healthcare team want the best possible health outcomes for you, just the same as your previous team
- Your parents/carers may still have an important role in helping you manage your condition when you are unable to, however the responsibility for your healthcare ultimately ends with you

## Questions to ask...

### Travel

How will you get to the adult hospital? Where will you park or get off the tram? How much will it cost?

### New hospital/service

- Does the building have easy access (especially if you use mobility aids)?
- What are the opening hours of the new hospital?
- Do you connect with and feel listened to by the hospital staff?
- Has the hospital had experience with young people with similar conditions to yours?
- When is your next appointment?
- How do you reschedule an appointment?

### Appointments

- How quickly can you get in to see your doctor when you need an appointment?
- What are the charges? What payment options are there?
- How much notice do you need to give for rescheduling your appointment?

### Links to services

What services or support networks are out there for adolescents and young adults? These may be condition specific or problem specific support networks.

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](http://www.rch.org.au/transition)**