
Late Adolescence (18-21)

Though cognitively the young adult is still developing, most states consider them legal adults, and they should receive an adult model of care with privacy and confidentiality protection unless there are legal documents stating otherwise. Thus, young adults without written documentation should be seen one-on-one for the complete preventive visit. During this time many young adults leave home and pursue more education, military service, and full-time employment, so a transition priority is to prepare for and transfer to an adult health care clinician to take over their care in a location that is convenient for them. This is a good time to complete a final transition readiness skill assessment to identify what skills still remain to be learned to share with their new adult clinician, continuing their trajectory towards self-care.

It is helpful to ask the importance and confidence questions on self-care and transferring to an adult health care clinician if these are not part of the practice's transition readiness skill assessment. These two questions follow a motivational interviewing strategy that has repeatedly been shown to lead to greater engagement in health care interventions and improved patient outcomes (see Table 1). Examples of a transition readiness tool with scorable confidence and importance questions are available for adolescents and parents/caregivers.^{1,2} Sample tools are also available for adolescents with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD) and their parents/caregivers.^{3,4} An additional transition preparation strategy is the preparation with the adolescent and parent/caregiver of a portable medical summary and, if needed for those with special health care needs, a plan of care with transition goals and actions. Sample medical summary and plan of care tools are also available.^{5,6} All of these tools can be found at the web links below.

For young adults in the process of transferring to an adult practice, a transfer checklist should be completed and shared, with the young adult's consent, with the adult clinician. This checklist includes a medical summary, latest transition readiness skill assessment, and plan of care and legal documents (if needed for young adults with special health care needs). A sample checklist can be found at the web link below.⁷

For young adults with ID/DD, if needed, the legal documents related to decision-making support should have been completed and placed in the medical record. Additional information, including guardianship laws by state, can be found at <http://supporteddecisionmaking.org/>.

¹ <http://www.gottransition.org/resourceGet.cfm?id=224>

² <http://www.gottransition.org/resourceGet.cfm?id=225>

³ www.acponline.org/sites/default/files/documents/clinical_information/high_value_care/clinician_resources/pediatric_adult_care_transitions/gim_dd/idd_transition_readiness_assessment_for_youth.docx

⁴ https://www.acponline.org/system/files/documents/clinical_information/high_value_care/clinician_resources/pediatric_adult_care_transitions/gim_dd/idd_transitions_tools.pdf

⁵ <http://www.gottransition.org/resourceGet.cfm?id=226>

⁶ <http://www.gottransition.org/resourceGet.cfm?id=227>

⁷ <http://gottransition.org/resourceGet.cfm?id=229>

Sample Questions

Ask the young adult (they should be seen one-on-one with their clinician unless written documents state otherwise):

Do you want your parent/caregiver/significant other present during this visit?

Tell me about when you need to see your primary care and, if needed, specialist clinicians. What about when you would go to the emergency room and not your primary care clinician?

What questions do you have about the changes in privacy and consent that happened when you turned 18 and legally became an adult?

What health insurance coverage do you have? Can you keep it over the next one to two years?

What questions do you have about managing your care when leaving home (e.g., when going to college)?

What questions do you have about finding a clinician who cares for adults?

If transition to an adult health care clinician has been discussed in previous preventive visits:

- *What skills in managing your own health do you need help with?*
- *What questions or concerns, if any, do you have as you transfer to a clinician who cares for adults?*
- *How can our practice help you find an adult health care clinician you feel comfortable with? Do you have any preferences about your next clinician (e.g., gender, location)?*

If this is the first time you are discussing transition to an adult health care clinician:

- *Our practice has a process to help you transition to a clinician who cares for adults. Do you have any questions about this process? How important is it to you to prepare for/transfer to a clinician who cares for adults? Please rate 1-10 with 10 being most important. (See Table 1)*
- *How confident do you feel about your ability to prepare for/transfer to a clinician who cares for adults? Please rate 1-10 with 10 being most confident. (See Table 1)*

Potential additional questions

Do you know how to contact your physician? Does the office know how to contact you for an appointment reminder? For the benefit of the practice, do you know how and when to contact our office to schedule, reschedule, or cancel an appointment? Do you know how to reach us when the office is closed?

How important is it to you to manage your own health care (e.g., filling a prescription and taking your medications, carrying around an insurance card, and scheduling your appointments)? Please rate 1-10 with 10 being most important. (See Table 1)

How confident are you about managing your own health care (e.g., filling a prescription and taking your medications, carrying around an insurance card, and scheduling your appointments)? Please rate between 1-10 with 10 being most confident. (See Table 1)

Ask the parent/caregiver (with permission of young adult):

Do you have any questions about the changes in privacy and consent that happened when your son/daughter turned 18 and legally became an adult?

What questions or concerns, if any, do you have about your son/daughter managing their health as they transfer to an adult practice or a new location, such as college?

Anticipatory Guidance

For the young adult:

- While you may have to wait for your first adult appointment, it is very important to make this appointment and have a primary care clinician. Attending preventive visits is one way to take control of and manage your health.
- Based on your self-care skill assessment, let's decide on one or two goals to work towards between now and your next appointment. (If you do not have a recent self-care assessment available, suggest they take one and refer to the anticipatory guidance on importance and confidence questions in Table 1.)
- Information shared between us is confidential and cannot be shared with others, including your parents/caregivers, without your permission.
- Our practice's approach is to care for patients up to [insert age], although we recognize that some of our patients may wish to leave before that time. Whatever your preference, we want to make sure that you are prepared for this transition and that you have the needed information about your own health.
- Let's review your medical summary and, if needed for those with special health care needs, plan of care.
- This is a time in your life when many young adults leave home for college, to serve in the military, or for a new job. Let's discuss staying engaged in your care.

(Anticipatory guidance for importance and confidence can be found in Table 1.)

For the parent/caregiver:

- This is a time in your young adult's life when many leave home for college, to serve in the military, or for a new job. Let's discuss planning for how to assist your young adult to stay connected to health care and how they can find and coordinate their care with a new clinician.
- Information shared between your young adult and their clinician is confidential and cannot be shared with you without their permission.

(Anticipatory guidance for importance and confidence can be found in Table 1.)