



## **UMHS Transition Process: Helping Children with Complex Medical Needs Transition from Pediatric to Adult Healthcare**

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The health care providers at the University of Michigan Health System (UMHS) are aware of how stressful it can be to understand the changes in health care needs of your growing child. We have developed a process to help children with complex medical needs transition from pediatric to adult health care. This is an introduction to the UMHS Transition Process. To see how pediatric care differs from adult care see page 3.

### **What is “Transition” and how is it different from “Transfer of Care”?**

The word “transition” describes the process in which an adolescent gradually becomes more responsible for managing all aspects of their life, including their medical needs. “Transition” is a process that occurs over many years, while “Transfer of Care” is the change to an adult doctor in a new clinic.

### **What is the UMHS Transition Process?**

The UMHS Transition Process aims to help your child learn to manage their own health and life needs as much as they are able. Our goal is to help patients and their families feel prepared for the eventual transfer to an adult doctor. For most young people, being prepared means gaining the skills and knowledge needed to look after their own health. Even if your child will stay with the same doctor as an adult, they will benefit from our Transition process. For children who have cognitive impairments or developmental delay, parents play an ongoing role in supporting youth to manage health care needs into adulthood. The UMHS Transition process will assist parents with this process.

### **What happens during the UMHS Transition Process?**

Starting around age 12, your child’s medical team will spend time at each visit to help your child take an active role in their health care and life plans as much as they are able. We will do this through questions, discussions, and educational materials. Families will be active participants in this process. This is a gradual process. We won’t cover everything at once.

## **What topics will the medical team address during the UMHS Transition Process?**

As part of the UMHS Transition Process, your child's medical team will help them learn skills to manage their health as an adult. We will cover the following topics during the UMHS Transition Process:

1. Health Knowledge - understanding their diagnosis
2. Health Emergency - who to call and where to go
3. Medications Adherence - managing medications and refilling prescriptions
4. Self-Advocacy - scheduling medical appointments
5. Lifestyle, sexuality - learning about the reproductive system
6. Insurance And Financial Planning - staying informed on Affordable Care Act
7. Education And Vocation Planning - learning about Individualized Education Plan
8. Transferring Care to an Adult Doctor - participating in choosing an adult provider
9. Advanced Directives and Palliative Care - selecting a Durable Power of Attorney

If your child has a condition that prevents them from making healthcare decisions, we will also provide information on long-term adult care, including supported decision-making or guardianship.

## **How long will the UMHS Transition Process last?**

The UMHS Transition process will start around age 12. The Transition Process will continue until your child learns to manage their own health and life needs as much as they are able. The Transition Process ends when the young adults are between the ages of 18-24 and have covered the topics above.

If you need a new adult doctor, your pediatric doctor will help you find one. Your doctor will send medical records and talk to the new doctor about your child's individual needs.

The age of transfer will be different in each clinic, and in some clinics, the young adult may continue to see the same doctor. Talk to your doctor to learn when transfer will occur in your clinic.

**Please ask your UMHS doctor for more details about our  
Transition Process.**

Child-to-Adult Care Transition Initiative  
Helping Children with Complex Medical Needs Transition from Pediatric to Adult Healthcare  
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## Pediatric vs. Adult care: How do they differ?

Health care for children is different than health care for adults. This table describes some of the differences.

<b>Pediatric Care – Where you are now</b>	<b>Adult Care – Where you will be</b>
Pediatric clinic	Adult clinic
Parents are in charge	Care is self-directed
Care is monitored by parents and health care providers	Care is self-monitored and supported by health care providers
Appointments are scheduled	Adult must schedule own appointment
Support services are offered for financial and emotional issues	Adult must seek support services for financial and emotional issues
Parents are responsible for finances and payment	Adult is responsible for own finances and payment
Parents have insurance	Adult must have own insurance
Transportation provided by parents	Adult must provide own transportation
Parents request information about treatment	Must request own treatment information
Parents request information about outcome	Must request own information about outcome
Education about reproduction concerns offered	Adult should make informed reproductive/contraceptive decisions

Adapted from: [University of Washington Program for Phenylketonuria.](#)