

Transition

What is Transition?

Transition is a term used to describe the process of change. Transition is about planning the move from one thing to another, like moving from school to University or moving out of home into a flat or unit.

In this case transition is the term used to describe the process of moving from paediatric to adult health care. Most young people transfer to adult care around the time they finish school, usually between the ages of 17 and 18 years, but preparation should start much earlier.

You may have been going to the same clinic or service since you first got diabetes and you know everyone there and more importantly they all know you. The thought of changing doctors, educators and maybe even hospitals can be scary.

When does Transition Start?

Transition starts at around **13 to 14 years** of age. You and your family will start to receive information from your diabetes doctor or educator on the transition process. Your diabetes educator will arrange an appointment with you and your parent/s or carer/s to discuss transition and to begin the process of preparing you to manage your diabetes independently.

At various times during the transition period your diabetes educator, dietitian and social worker (if applicable) will arrange for you to be given up-dates on diabetes.

Continuing on the Journey

At around **17 to 18 years** of age your diabetes doctor or educator will discuss the options available to you for where and who will care for you when you transfer to adult care. The idea is to give you plenty of time to think about what **you** want in the future.

It is also time to make sure you are up-to-date on what you know about diabetes as well as get some new information on how to look after your diabetes in special situations.

No Adult Diabetes Specialist Service

Not all areas have adult diabetes specialist services or clinics that you can transfer to. In this situation you may be referred to a local **General Practitioner** (GP) who will look after your diabetes. Your GP should refer you to a diabetes specialist in another town once a year or at any time you are having problems with your diabetes. The transfer period should be gradual and involve you alternating visits with your paediatric service and your GP.

A New Beginning

The age that you finally transfer will depend on your individual needs and whether there is an adult diabetes service available in your area. Some places, such as the John Hunter Children's Hospital Diabetes Centre transfer young people when they turn 18 or when they finish school, while other Centres may not transfer you until you are in your early twenties.

Before you transfer your diabetes educator will meet with you and ensure that your diabetes knowledge and skills are up-to date.

Beyond Transition

By the time you transfer you should be confident to make decisions about your diabetes care. After you transfer your diabetes educator or case manager will stay in contact with you to make sure you are happy with your new service.

Sometimes young people don't like the service or doctor they have been transferred to. Appointment times may not suit or waiting times are too long, or they simply can't get time off work to attend appointments. If this happens to you, don't stop going or 'drop out' of diabetes specialist care. Young people who drop out run the risk of not being properly checked for preventable diabetes related complications and have a greater chance of being admitted to hospital because of their diabetes.

Don't Just 'Drop Out'

If you are **not** happy with your new doctor or service we don't want you to 'drop out' of care. Contact your diabetes educator or case manager from your paediatric service or locate another diabetes service if possible.

We don't want you to 'drop out' of care. Together with your diabetes educator or case manager you will find a doctor or clinic that **you** will be comfortable with.