

How Does Health Care Differ in the Adult World?

When an individual with special needs transitions from pediatric to adult health care, the family may discover that services are not always provided in the same way. Below are some questions to think about when preparing for a transition of health care facilities. If you're not sure of the answers, consider asking: Pediatric or Adult Social Worker from the facility, Clinic Nurse, staff from the Special Needs Family Center or families who have transitioned to adult care.

Health Care and other Decision-making

Who will sign forms required for medical information and records to be transferred to adult care?

Who will be speaking to the health care providers about concerns and deciding about recommended treatment?

If the young adult is incapable of making health care decisions or signing releases of information, what steps must be taken to give someone else the legal authority to take these roles?

Health Care Financing

How does health care coverage change once an individual becomes an adult?

Will the young adult need to apply for different insurance coverage through the state?

Does the young adult need to go through a disability determination? (Determination criteria are different for people under 18 years than for adults.)

Will the young adult be able to remain on parents' coverage if they remain a full-time student? What about if they are not a full-time student? (Check with your private insurance policy.)

Hospital Rules and Accommodations

If a young adult is inpatient, who may visit and what are the visiting hours?

May family members stay overnight in the room with the patient?

Are there outside accommodations if the family is coming from outside the immediate area?

Parking

Where is the most convenient parking? Is there a valet service?

Is there a fee to park or use the valet?

Family Resources and Information

Is there a library or resource center available for families?

Are there any computers available for family use? What about Wireless connectivity for those who have their own laptops?

Does the facility offer any workshops or other classes for patients and families?

Social/Emotional

Does the facility provide any specialists to help the patient? Are there any Social Workers to help with community resources and referrals or coping with the diagnosis or long-term needs?

Cafeteria/Deli/Food Service

Is there any food service available in the facility? Do they provide any patient-family discount?

What types of food are offered? What are the hours of operation?

Are there restaurants or other places to get food nearby? Do any of these offer delivery?

Recreation/Entertainment

Are any games or other types of distraction available for patients? How does a family access them? Does the facility provide educational workshops or other planned recreational activities?

Schedule Appointments What is the process for scheduling follow-up clinic appointments?

What is the process for scheduling inpatient studies (such as Epilepsy Monitoring)?