

Health care transition planning covers topics such as:

- Knowing and managing your health conditions or diagnoses.
- Scheduling doctor visits, participating in visits, and understanding how to consent to medical care.
- Arranging transportation to medical appointments.
- Managing health needs and routines away from home, including in an emergency.
- Navigating the health care system and keeping track of health records.
- Understanding health insurance and possible benefit changes in adulthood.
- Making healthy choices and avoiding risks.



Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) Systems Development Group

Our program funds community-based organizations to provide case management and family supports and community resources to better support health care transition planning. Visit: dshs.texas.gov/mch/CSHCN.aspx

Got Transition

The national resource center on health care transition providing evidence-based strategies for youth, young adults and their families. To learn more, visit: gottransition.org

Navigate Life Texas

A website with resources on transition to adulthood and Medicaid waiver programs. To learn more, visit: navigatelifetexas.org

Texas Parent To Parent

Parent to parent has resources on the Pathways to Adulthood Program, Care Notebook ideas and Portable Medical Summaries. To learn more, visit: Txp2p.org

Department of State Health Services

Maternal and Child Health

P.O. Box 149347 MC-1922
Austin, TX 78714-9347
512-776-7373
Fax: 512-458-7658
Email: CSHCNSDG@dshs.texas.gov
Product ID: 4-6 12/2025



Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs

UNDERSTANDING HEALTH CARE TRANSITION:
A GUIDE FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES



dshs.texas.gov/mch/CSHCN.aspx



Texas Department of State
Health Services

Health care transition is a process that helps youth with disabilities or special health care needs and their families prepare for the adult health care system. By working together, health care providers and families can help make sure the youth is as healthy and independent as possible.

Planning for health care transition should always include the youth's wants and needs and the family's values. While the planning process is different for every person, doctors recommend starting to plan by age 12.¹

¹Supporting the Health Care Transition From Adolescence to Adulthood in the Medical Home." Pediatrics 128.1 (2011): 182-200.

Got Transition² describes health care transition as the process of getting ready for health care as an adult, with the following steps:

Discovering (starting at age 12)

- Talk to your pediatrician about how you can work together on transition.
- Find out when to start having some time alone with your doctors.

Tracking (ongoing)

- Know your own health information.
- Keep track of your health records.
- Create an emergency care plan and Portable Medical Summary.

Preparing (ongoing)

- Use Got Transition's checklist to learn skills to take more control of your health care.
- Start early and take small steps toward independence.
- Partner with your school support team to add health care goals into your Individualized Education Plan (IEP).



Planning (ongoing)

- Learn about HIPAA privacy laws and legal changes that occur when you turn 18.
- Work with your current health care team to find adult providers in your area.
- Learn about supports where you live to help you stay healthy.

Transferring (age 18 – 21)

- Ask your current health care team to share information about your needs with your adult team.
- Bring questions to ask your new providers.
- Keep building skills to help you manage your health care.

Completing

- Give feedback to providers to help make health care transition easier for others.
- Make your voice heard!

²Got Transition (gottransition.org) has many resources to help you throughout the transition process.