



Supporting conversations about moving to adult health

Health professionals play an important role in supporting young people with intellectual disability as they prepare to move to adult health services. A key part of this role is having conversations with young people and their family/carers about moving to adult health services.

Talk to the young person, even if they have a family member or carer with them. Be patient, listen, and allow time for them to respond before moving on to the next point.

Start early – identify patients who are 15 years and older to have these conversations with.

COMMUNICATION TIPS

- open body language
- speak clearly
- use plain language (no jargon or acronyms)
- one point at a time
- be present
- give the young person your attention
- get to know the young person
- use the teach-back method
- make reasonable adjustments as required
- give the young person time to consider any questions they have
- assess the young person's capacity to consent and/or who the 'person responsible' is
- the young person may not remember previous conversations
- be prepared to repeat information at each appointment

EXPLAIN

Start the conversation, advise that transition is a gradual process, and you will support the young person and their family/carers as they move to adult health services.

As you get older you may need to see different healthcare workers who take care of adults.

When you are 15 years and older we will start preparing for you to move to adult health services.

We will work together over a period of time so that you will be ready when the time comes to make the move to adult health services.

UNDERSTAND

Check that the young person and their family/carers understand what you are saying. Look for communication signals, even subtle ones (e.g. facial expressions).

How would you like me to communicate with you?

What support can I provide to help you understand?

Tell me in your own words what we talked about.

ASK

Ask open questions where possible, and provide additional support if required.

Do you have any questions for me?

What can I do to help you get ready to move to adult health services?

Do you consent to me talking to other health care workers and/or your family/carers about moving to adult health services?

REVISIT/CHECK IN

Plan further conversations about transition with the young person and their family/carers.

We will be having regular conversations about moving to adult health services.

We will talk about ways that you can be involved in the process of moving to adult health services.

You can write down questions you would like to ask me about moving to adult health services.

