Kidney Kids NZ

Transition into adult care

Facts for rangatahi

Advice in this pamphlet is only intended as a guideline.

Please check with your GP or specialist if you have any questions relating to your child's condition.

What does transition mean?

Transition is the process of preparing you to move from paediatric into adult care. The timing of the move or transfer usually happens between the ages of 16 and 18.

As you age your needs change, so when you become an adult you will need a doctor that knows how to care for and manage kidney disease in adults. For example, how kidney disease affects other parts of your body, such as your heart or bones, can change as you get older. Different medications or treatments may also become more effective or available when you reach adulthood.

Moving into adult services will mean you:

- **Learn about adult healthcare**
- **Meet new teams**
- **Become more independent (in charge) of managing your health.**

Why is transitioning important?

It’s important that you gradually learn to become more independent and confident with managing your own health.

For some, the transition will be easy to manage; others may require a bit more support after moving into adult care. Each person’s needs are different and your healthcare team will work with you and your whānau to make the transition process as smooth as possible.

How whānau can help with your transition

Your whānau can support you to understand the process and become more involved in your own healthcare by:

- Providing advice and guidance
- Helping you connect with your healthcare team
- Listening to you when you want to talk about things that are worrying you
- Helping you find a GP that understands your health needs and others you can connect with.

How does the transition process work?

The process will begin a few years before you are ready to transfer to adult care.

When you reach your teenage years, you can be seen for part of your visits on your own. Your parent or caregiver will then join you at the end of the appointment.

In the visits on your own, you will discuss the same things you would usually talk about in any clinic visit, such as:

- What medications you are on, how much you need and why.
- Ways to help with your medications, including apps you can use to help you remember to take them
- Health and lifestyle issues, such as drugs and alcohol, sexual health and contraception.

We do not share private information unless there are concerns about you or someone else's safety. It is up to you to decide if you want to share your information with your parent or caregiver.

What is informed consent?

Once you reach 16 years of age your healthcare team will assume you are able to:

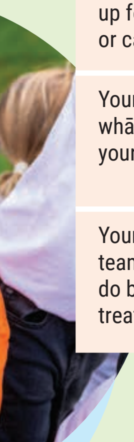
- Understand information about your health
- Consent to health procedures
- Ask appropriate questions to be able to do those two things

If you, your whānau or your healthcare team raise any concerns about your ability to give consent, you will be offered an assessment of mental capacity. This aims to make sure you receive information in a way you understand, so you can make informed-consent decisions. The report generated may also provide tips for future health professionals to help them help you make decisions about your health when you are older.

The results are not legally binding, so your rights will not be taken away from you.

The difference between child healthcare and adult healthcare

Child healthcare	Adult healthcare
Questions, discussions and plans for your care are made with parents and whānau.	Questions, discussions and plans for your care are asked and made with you.
Your parents and whānau decide what the best care plan is for you.	You will make decisions on what care is best for you.
Your parents and whānau help you understand what your health condition is like.	You can ask your health team questions to help you understand your health condition. You can also have a parent or support person with you to listen and help you understand.
Your parents and whānau arrange your appointments and take you there.	You will need to take responsibility for when and where your appointments are and how to get there.
There is a playroom and usually a television and activities on the ward.	There are no activities provided.
You usually have a single room at Starship Hospital.	Usually you will be in a shared room with other adults. You may be in a mixed-gender room.
Wards are usually set up for a support person or carer to stay.	Wards don't usually provide for a support person unless you are seriously unwell.
Your parents and whānau take charge of your medications.	You will take charge of your medications (including getting them and restocking them before you run out).
Your parents and healthcare team make sure you do blood tests and treatments when needed.	You will be responsible for getting your blood tests and treatments done.



Tips and tricks to get started with transition

- If you have trouble remembering to take medications, then an alarm or blister packing your medicines may help.
- Ask lots of questions in different ways so that you understand your health condition and how to manage your health.
- If you feel bothered or stressed, even if it's unrelated to your kidney health, talk to someone you trust (ask your health team for resources for this).
- Reach out to your parent, support person or your healthcare team if you need help making appointments and getting to appointments.
- Ask your healthcare team for resources for youth health and transition.
- Have a plan and medication card in your wallet or phone that you carry with you at all times.

Transitioning from Kidney Kids

There are many local youth and adult groups available, including:

- **Kidney Health New Zealand**
- **The Kidney Society**
- **Youthline NZ**
- **Organ Donation New Zealand**

Visit **kidneykids.org.nz** for support links.

More questions?

Write them down here. You can ask your Kidney Kids support person, or your health provider about these.

Kidney Kids has plenty of information about conditions that can affect children's kidneys. If you can't find the information you are looking for, please contact us.

Kidney Kids NZ

Kidney
Kids
NZ

Our vision is for all Kidney Kids and their whānau to lead their best lives and to feel supported, understood and connected in a caring community.

Get in touch

If you would like more information about our organisation, or if you, your whānau or friends have a child with a kidney condition and you would like to register with us, please get in touch.

Find us

0800 215 437 – Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm
or email **support@kidneykids.org.nz**

kidneykids.org.nz

**Pamphlet prepared for Kidney Kids of New Zealand Inc.
by the Nephrology team at Starship Hospital**