

Differences in Care: Pediatric to adult-based care

An information sheet on transitioning
to adult-based care

There are many differences between the services that you receive at the IWK Health Centre and the services that you will receive when you reach adult health care. Below is an outline of some of the main differences you may come across, as well as some helpful hints and key questions to ask.

Sometimes change can be a bit challenging but hopefully these tips can help make your transition an easier experience. This is an exciting stage of your life as you become an adult and take charge of your health.

	Pediatric Services	Adult Services	Remember that...
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IWK is very familiar to you. You know your way around and you may have a certain area that you enjoy hanging out in. You will mainly have children and young people around you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult services are new to you and the building is unfamiliar. You will quickly learn your way around and can always ask someone if you are unsure. You may find that there are a lot of older people around you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If possible, go visit your new health care facility and familiarize yourself with the surroundings. Find where to go for your appointment(s) and other important locations (e.g. bathrooms, places to eat, parking etc.)
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information is typically shared with your parents/caregivers. If they don't understand the information, they ask questions on your behalf. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information is shared with you and you will need to ask questions if you don't understand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't be embarrassed about not understanding. Ask your health care provider to explain. It is part of their job to keep you informed.
Links to Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the IWK, your specialist may have arranged other services like tests, programs and appointments with other service providers. Appointments tend to be longer so you can see each team member. You may rarely see your family physician since your primary care needs are met by the IWK staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within adult services, it may be more likely that you will be referred to services outside of the clinic. Your appointment time will be shorter and you will have separate appointments from your clinic; e.g. Physiotherapy. You will be expected to have a family physician to oversee your health care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before transfer to adult-based care, ask questions and know what services are available to you. While in pediatric care, make sure you have a family physician to oversee your health care. Upon transition, inform them of your transition plan.

	Pediatric Services	Adult Services	Remember that...
Independence & Self-Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions are more likely to be directed at your parents/caregivers. • Your parents/caregivers book your appointments for you. • You may be on your family's health insurance plan. • Your parents may tell your health care provider your current symptoms as well as ask and answer questions on your behalf. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions are directed at you and you are expected to know and be able to explain your information. • You book your own appointments. • You keep track of your appointments and you are in charge of rescheduling. • You might need to travel to your appointment on your own. • If you are on medications, you will need to know what they are and how to reorder them. • You may have to obtain additional health care insurance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be confident and honest in your answers to your health care provider. • A good health care provider will listen non-judgmentally and make sure you have a voice. • If you are unsure about your health, your condition or your treatment, don't be afraid to ask. • Book your appointments well in advance. Call to cancel if you can't attend and have a method to remember your appointments. • Have your provincial health card in your wallet. • Allow plenty of time to get to your appointment; there may be traffic or the bus could be running late. • We all need support. Identify your supports and keep them informed so that they continue to help.

Points to Keep in Mind:

- You can always have someone with you at your appointment or you can be seen on your own.
- Take a list of questions or a description of your symptoms with you, so you don't forget.
- Continue to have regular family physician appointments and keep them informed.
- Your say is important; make sure you use it to express how you are feeling and to ask any questions you may have. If you don't ask, you won't know!
- Your new health care provider wants the best possible health outcomes for you, just the same as your previous health care provider.
- Your parents/caregivers still have an important role in helping you manage your health.

Questions to Ask Yourself:

Travel

- How will you get to your new appointments?
- Where will you park or get off the bus? How much will it cost?

New Hospital/Service

- Does the building have easy access (especially if you use a wheelchair, walker or crutches)?
- When is your first appointment?
- How do you reschedule an appointment?

Appointments

- How quickly can you get in to see your health care provider when you need an appointment?
- How much notice do you need to give for rescheduling your appointment?