



Children's Community Nursing

Transition Decisions, rights and responsibilities

Information for young people, parents and carers

If you would like this information in another language or format, please contact the **Community Children's Nursing Team** on **0203 316 1950**.

What is Transition?

- As children get older and it's time to switch from children services to adult services, we call it "Transition."
- This is a really important time for the young person because now they have the right to be more involved in deciding things about their own healthcare. It means they can have a say in what happens and what is best for them.
- This leaflet has been created to help young people and their parents/carers understand some of the important legal and professional issues surrounding the healthcare of young people.

Parents and carers

- Transition is a time of change for parents too.
- Parents might worry that they won't be included as much, or that their young person might not be ready for the changes. It's normal to feel that way and it is important that parents and carers remember they can still be involved.
- Not every young person will need the same level of support, and transition is different for everyone, including parents and carers.
- Talking about health and healthcare is a sensitive and personal thing and we encourage young people to discuss their healthcare decision with their parents or carers.
- We will make sure young people and their families understand any changes and will offer lots of information, advice and guidance.



Consent

- When a person makes a decision about their healthcare, it is called **Consent**.
- No one can make a person do something they do not want to do.
- This means doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals must ask a person's permission before giving any treatment.

There are two types of consent a person can give:

1. Informed consent

Before a person agrees to most medical tests and treatments, there are important things that should happen:

- They need to be given information about the test/treatment, that makes sense to them.
- They should have enough time to think about it.
- They should have a chance to talk about any treatment choices with someone.

2. Implied/Inferred consent

This is when a person shows that they agree to have a check-up or treatment.

For example, when you roll up your sleeve to have your blood pressure checked.

Remember, even in this situation, you can still ask questions and take some time to think before saying "yes".

It is essential to feel comfortable and to know what is going to happen. Take your time to decide.

Who can give consent?

- A 16 and 17 year old can also make decisions, and consent to their treatment without parental consent.
- For children and young people under the age of 16, their parents, or those with legal parental responsibility, can make most decisions for their children.

Competent

- Children who are younger than 16 can sometimes be considered capable of making choices about their own health, without needing their parents. We call this being **competent**.
- This means that a healthcare professional will check if a young person can understand and decide about their own care. They want to make sure the young person knows what is going on and can make a good choice.



Parent and carer's role

- Sometimes, parents and caregivers might feel left out when we suggest seeing their child without them or when getting their child's consent.
- We will always ask the young person if it's okay for their parents or caregivers to be there with them. We want everyone to feel comfortable and safe.
- Parents still have a very important role in their child's healthcare. For example, a young person may want to make a decision, but need the support of their parents or carers to help them. This is called a **shared approach to decision-making**.

What would happen if there were concerns about the decision a young person has made?

- If a parent or carer has concerns, it is important they talk to the young person to let them know why they are worried.
- If a healthcare professional is concerned, they will discuss this with the young person. They may also get advice from other professionals.

What happens when parents or carers disagree with a young person's decision?

- The healthcare professional must do what is best for the young person. This is called making a decision in their **best interests**.

The healthcare professional will do this by:

- Listening to what the young person says
- Listening to what their parents think
- Consider how all this might affect the young person's health

Keeping information private

- Keeping information private is called **confidentiality**.
- All health care professionals must make sure information shared with them remains confidential. When children are young, their parents or carers need to know all the available information to make informed decisions about their child's health.

Decisions, rights and responsibilities

- When a young person can make decisions about their health, they have the same legal rights as adults about confidentiality.
- A young person who is seen alone will be advised by a health care professional that the information they share will be treated as private and can only be shared with a young person's permission or knowledge.
- It is a good idea for young people to talk to their parents when making decisions about their health. Parents can be a big help and give support.
- However, if a young person doesn't want to involve their parents, especially if it's a private matter, the healthcare professional might still talk to the parents about the general plan for treatment or procedure without sharing all the specific details.
- It's all about finding the best way to help the young person.



Exceptional circumstances when information has to be shared

- We always try to keep things private, but there are times when it's not always possible.
- For example, if a healthcare professional is worried that someone might get hurt or needs help, they might need to tell someone else about it. This is because we must keep everyone safe and protected.

This leaflet only gives general information. You must discuss the individual treatment with the appropriate member of staff.

You may find these resources helpful for further information

- NHS website <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/consent-to-treatment>
- NSPCC website <https://www.nspcc.org.uk>
- Ready Steady Go [Transition Ready Steady Go - TIER Network](#)
- Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health www.rcpch.ac.uk

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please email whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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