
FINDING ADULT HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

A Primary Care Provider (PCP) is a provider who sees patients for regular check-ups, vaccines, when they don't feel well, or for health issues that you don't need to see a specialist for. Regular check-ups with a PCP can help catch problems early on. If a patient needs to see a specialist, a PCP can often refer them to someone that they trust.

Pediatricians are typically only trained to see patients until the age of 21, but some health issues that start when someone is a child may change as they get older. As they age, your child may also develop other health conditions that are more common in adults. If your child is seeing a family doctor now and you want to keep seeing them as an adult, you do NOT need to switch to a new PCP. If your child is currently seeing a pediatrician, your current pediatrician may help you find a new PCP that serves adults. This conversation typically happens around ages 17-21. Even if your child is seeing a family doctor, they may need to find new specialists that can better serve adults.

How to Find Adult Providers

- Ask your child's current provider for a referral
- Consider your own primary care provider as someone that could see your child
- Call your child's insurance company
- Check with your local support groups
- Call large medical and specialty rehabilitation hospitals and ask for a referral line
- Ask your Care Coordinator or Case Manager for suggestions
- Ask friends for suggestions

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PARENTS & CAREGIVERS (CONTINUED)

Questions to Ask

It is important to find a provider that makes your child feel comfortable and that can meet their unique needs. Before your child chooses a new provider, call their office and ask to speak with a staff member who has time to answer your questions, or make an appointment to meet the provider and staff in person.

- **Ask the Office:**
- Does the provider accept your child's insurance coverage? Are they taking new patients?
- Is the office accessible (easy to reach and easy to get around inside the building or clinic area)?
- What are the office hours? How can the provider be reached after hours?
- How will the provider exchange information with your child's specialists?
- Will the office be flexible to meet your child's health needs (allow service dog, schedule visits so you will not miss a meal, or schedule at quiet times if your child is sensitive to noise)?

Ask the Provider:

- Is the provider willing to discuss your child's health history and special needs with your child's pediatric provider?
- Does the provider currently see patients with health conditions similar to your child's?
- At what hospital does the provider schedule procedures?
- Where did the provider get their medical school and specialty training? Are they board certified?
- Does the provider have any special interests or more advanced training?

Ask Yourself:

- Does the provider listen to me and my child or are they constantly interrupting us?
- Can the provider explain information in a way that I or my child can understand?
- Does the provider take enough time to answer our questions?
- Does the provider treat my child and I with respect?