

Transition – Health Care

Taking Charge of Your Health Care:

A handout for adolescents and young adults with special health care needs and disabilities

Be your own health care advocate

- Learn about your condition or disability.
- Know the warning signs that mean you need emergency help.
- Know who to call in case of an emergency. Carry that information with you.
- Learn how to make your own appointments.
- Write down any questions you have before you go to the doctor's office.
- Meet privately with your doctor / nurses and others.
- Speak up and ask your doctor or nurse questions. If you don't understand an answer, ask again.
- Talk to your doctor about difficult topics such as relationships, drugs, and birth control.
- Tell your doctor if you are feeling down. Your doctor can suggest people to talk to.
- Ask your doctor to explain all tests and their results.
- Ask for copies of medical tests or reports.
- Carry your insurance card and other health care information that you think is important.

Take charge of your health care information

- Be sure to understand the medications that your are taking. What are their names and when do you take them?
- Know how to call your pharmacy and how to fill your prescriptions.
- Make sure you know your insurance and how to get a referral.
- Keep a list of address and telephone numbers of all your doctors and nurses.
- Keep a notebook of your doctor reports, medications, operations and results of medical tests.
- Ask your doctor for a short written summary of your health condition.
- Know how to order and take care of any special equipment your use.

Plan for transfer to an adult doctor

- Talk your doctor about how and when you should start seeing an adult doctor.
- Discuss with your doctor resources that might be helpful to your.
- Meet and talk with the new adult care doctor before your switch.

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