

PHYSICIAN'S GUIDE

Assisting Adolescents with Cerebral Palsy in Transition to Adult Healthcare

Adolescents with cerebral palsy (CP) often face difficulties transitioning from pediatric to adult primary and specialty healthcare providers willing/able to manage routine and complex care effectively. The recommendations below provide guidance for medical professionals to minimize the frustrations and stresses of adolescent patients and to support continuing good health and quality of life as they mature into adults.

1 **EXPLAIN** and discuss special healthcare needs your patient has and may have in the future.

2 **INSTITUTE** concrete plans for transition to adult healthcare services by mid-adolescence.

3 **IDENTIFY** adult primary (e.g. Internal or Family Medicine, OBGYN) and specialized (e.g. Physiatry, Orthopedics, Therapeutic) healthcare options.

4 **INFORM** of possible changes in healthcare insurance coverage.

5 **CONSIDER** emotional attachments to past providers and build bridges to future providers.

6 **PROMOTE** independence and personal responsibility for healthcare when feasible.

7 **DISCUSS** sexuality in general and as specific to CP.

8 **ENCOURAGE** exercise and healthy eating habits, providing specific suggestions to individuals and/or their families and caregivers.

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