

Your child's transition from children's allergy services to adult services

This leaflet gives information about your teenage child's move from children's allergy services to adult allergy services.

What is transition?

Transition is the process of preparing, planning and moving your teenage child from children's services to their GP or local adult services.

Most of our patients do not need to be seen every year, because of the rate allergies change and develop. Usually children with allergies are seen at these key points.

- At 4 years old - just before they start primary school
- At 7 to 8 years old - (Year 3) junior school
- At 10 to 11 years old - (Year 6) about the time they start secondary school
- At 12 to 13 years old - (Year 8)
- At 15 years old - (Year 10 or 11)

Moving to adult services is a natural step and it's important for your child to develop independence in their health care as they do in other areas of their life at this age.

From about 12 years old, we try to make sure your child is seen by a member of the allergy team who is familiar with our adolescent transition pathway. By 16 years old, we try to have given them education and information about their allergies and how to manage them as safely as possible. Most 16 year olds can be discharged from our service back to their GP.

Discharge or transition?

Criteria for discharge to GP at 16 years old

- Food allergies (single or multiple) that are unlikely to resolve, and your child shows a good understanding of how to manage them. We do not need to keep testing even if your child still needs to avoid certain foods.
- Good control and understanding of how to manage other allergic conditions such as eczema, asthma and hay fever (allergic rhinitis) by using the information and guidance provided from the children's allergy service.

Criteria for transition into adult allergy services

These patients will be referred to the adult allergy service at Guy's Hospital or your local adult allergy service. People who:

- have medicine allergies with incomplete investigations
- still need food challenges (clinically or nutritionally important and likely to pass the challenge)
- have multiple allergic conditions (food allergy, asthma, eczema, rhinitis) needing ongoing holistic overview where there is concern over the control of these conditions or about how well they will manage on their own
- are 16 years old and due to start omalizumab for chronic spontaneous urticaria (patients need to meet adult omalizumab criteria)
- idiopathic (without reason) or exercise-induced anaphylaxis with ongoing episodes

If the main ongoing difficulty is with asthma or eczema control, your child might be referred to an adult respiratory or dermatology service.

If the main ongoing difficulty is with hay fever, your child might be referred to an appropriate adult allergy service that can offer options for further treatment. Please be aware that this might not be at Guy's Hospital but a different allergy clinic in London or nearer your home.

As a parent or carer you might have to cope with your own challenges as you encourage your child to look after their own health care and become independent.

Challenges you might face during this transition

When your child begins this transition you might have challenges, such as:

- getting used to your child seeing the doctor, nurse or dietitian on their own for part of the visit
- your role changing from managing your child's care to becoming more of a support for them
- feeling excluded as your child takes on more of their own care
- concern about your child's readiness to transfer to adult services
- them adjusting to adult services and a different environment
- developing confidence in your child's new medical team

We'll work with you throughout your child's transition process to help you to:

- encourage your child to take charge of their own health
- take a step back from managing your child's health, to supporting them to do this
- pass your knowledge about your child's allergy onto them
- encourage your child to talk directly to their health team

If you have any concerns please discuss them with the team caring for your child. Please note, we have also given your child a leaflet to help them understand the transition from children's services to adult services.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's transition from children's services to adult services, please contact the allergy service on:

phone 020 7188 3300, or you can book a phone appointment using MyChart for the specialist nurse helpline. You can find more information on the allergy page of our **website**, www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/our-services/hospital/allergy-service/overview.aspx.

Phone: 020 7188 5830 for adult services

For more information on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **web:** www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/leaflets

Evelina London Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's medicines, please speak to the staff caring for them or contact our helpline, **phone** 020 7188 3003, Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), **phone** 020 7188 8801 **email** gstt.pals-gstt@nhs.net

Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please contact the service your child is seeing.

NHS 111

This service offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day, **phone** 111 **web** www.111.nhs.uk

NHS website

This website gives information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you take control of your health and wellbeing, **web** www.nhs.uk

Get involved and have your say: become a member of the Trust

Members of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust contribute to the organisation on a voluntary basis. We count on them for feedback, local knowledge and support. Membership is free and it is up to you how much you get involved. To find out more, please get in touch, **phone** 0800 731 0319 **email** gstt.members@nhs.net **web** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership

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