

# Family Education Sheet

## Getting Ready for Your First Appointment with a New Provider



**Boston Children's Hospital**  
BRIDGES Adult Transition Program

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[www.bostonchildrens.org/familyeducation](http://www.bostonchildrens.org/familyeducation)

This Family Education sheet gives you information about how you can get ready for your first appointment with a new health care provider.

### Key points

- Your first appointment with a new provider will be more successful if you have all your thoughts, notes and questions ready on the day of your appointment.
- It's a good idea to check with the provider's office before the appointment to make sure they can help you with any special needs you may have.
- Bring your medical summary and health insurance card with you to your appointment.

Preparing is important when you start anything new. Preparing for a visit with a new provider is no different. Taking some time to prepare can help with any concerns you might have about starting this new relationship.

### Why do I need to prepare for my first appointment with a new provider?

There's a lot to cover in a first visit. This can include:

- Introductions
- Talking about issues or concerns you may have
- Talking about your medical history
- Your diagnoses
- Your medications
- Health care regimens

It's important to make the most of your time with your new provider and to be sure you get all of your questions answered during your appointment.

### When should I prepare for the appointment?

The best time to prepare for your first appointment really depends on you. We recommend that you start preparing once the appointment is scheduled. You don't want to wait until the last minute to start preparing for this visit.

### How do I prepare for my first appointment?

Preparation for the first appointment with a new provider is different for everyone. Everybody has their own needs and concerns. We've put together a list of ideas that other people have used to help lower anxiety levels as they prepare.

- Think about doing a "test-run" of going to the new provider's office before the day of your appointment to find out about where it is, what parking or transportation plans you might need to make and how handicap-accessible it is.

- Be sure to communicate any of your needs before the visit. These can include:
  - Language services
  - A handicap-accessible exam table
  - Assistive communication devices
  - Whether a caregiver or guardian can join you for the appointment
  - What the check-in process will be like (sign-in/registration process, waiting room options for example outside, the lobby or exam room, etc.)
- Have your medical summary and insurance card ready to share with your new provider (whether electronically or on paper).
  - Set one goal for your visit and make sure there's enough time to meet it.
  - Bring a list of school/community agencies you're connected to or would like to connect with for additional support (like IEP, PCA, PDN, DDS, CCM).
- Work with your current provider to make sure that your medical records and any imaging that's needed will be sent to your new provider before your appointment.
- Ask if it's possible to sign up for an online patient portal. This is a way to communicate with your new provider using your computer or smartphone.
  - Add your new provider's contact information to your phone.
- Think about bringing someone you trust along with you.

### Resources

- [Developing Medical Summary Family Education Sheet](#)
- [Health Care Proxy Family Education Sheet](#)
- [What Happens When I Turn 18?](#)
- [Transfer of Care to Adult Providers: A Guide for Young Adults](#)
- [Your Child's Transfer to Adult Providers](#)
- [Release of Information form](#)
- [Boston Children's Hospital Patient Portal](#)