



# Research corner

## Transition in care: from childhood to adulthood

Source: Presentation by Anna Simon at ISSAID 2019

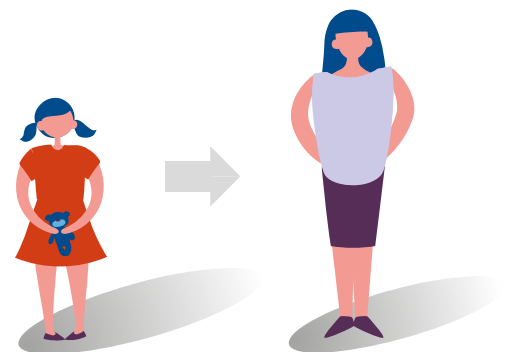
How best to accompany a young patient into adulthood? The transition is a risk factor for decreased health if not properly addressed. But a proper transition plan can help the young patient gain confidence and smoothly enter the world of adult medical care.

### Leaving childhood can trigger a breakdown in teenagers' patient care

Healthcare systems and hospitals are not really prepared for accompanying patients' transition from childhood to adulthood. To be smooth, the transition should address the medical, psychosocial, educational and vocational needs of adolescents and young adults. Switching from paediatric to adult clinic for example can be destabilizing. During the consultation, teenagers often leave their parents doing all the talking, as they don't have enough faith in their knowledge or own experience. As a result, follow up is lost, compliance can decrease, leading to decreased health and risk for complications.

### Phasing the transition at hospital to stay on track

The following phases are proposed at the Nijmegen Medical Centre (NL). To help keeping some bearings, a yearly transition consultation can be organized at the paediatrics department from age 12. For ages 16-17, the consultation takes place at the adult outpatient clinic, with the paediatric clinician and nurse from the adult care department. For ages 17-18, patients have their first appointment with the adult physician together with either the paediatric clinician or nurse practitioner.



Clinical management should accompany the transition to adulthood

Questionnaires are sent to youngsters in advance so that they have enough time to complete them and have them think about their priorities and questions they may have. The clinician speaks first alone with the youngster during the consultation. The youngster decides with the clinician what to tell the parents, who are invited to join the consultation during the second half.

But parents should definitely be included in the transition plan, because they are the ones supporting their youngsters. Handling over responsibility is a topic to which they should contribute while making the transition plan. But parents might also need guidance during the transition process to accompany their child as well as possible.

