

DARREN'S TRANSITION STORY

My name is Darren. I am 23 and I have had Diabetes since I was five years old. I attended the children's clinic every three months since I was diagnosed. When I was turning 18, at my second last visit to the children's clinic, I was surprised to hear that I would be transitioning to the adult service. This was the first time I had heard about transition.

At first, I felt I was ready for the transition; I was comfortable with my condition and had been well informed on how it developed and where it was at. However, I was worried about "the change" of doctors and nurses as I'd grown to be friends with the staff at my children's clinic. These feelings were natural, and I believe the transition was handled very well by both the children's and adult clinic staff. For my final visit with the child services, the nurse from the adult clinic came over and carried out all the routine tests and procedures. This was helpful because it meant that there was a familiar face when I attended the adult clinic for the first time.

I was nervous on my first visit to the adult clinic, I walked into the waiting room and instantly realised that I was the youngest person there! However, my new nurse came in straight away and I was made to feel welcome and settled into the new surroundings and routine of the adult service. At my first check-up I met all the people who would help me maintain my condition at a good level that I felt comfortable with. I have all their contact details and they are always available to give me help when I need it.

My Mam always came into see the doctor with me in the children's services and she came in with me on the first day of the adult services. I felt that as I was an adult now this should change and now I go in by myself. I prefer it that way and I feel more in charge of my condition. This is a big step up but my parents were happy to give me the space to begin to look after my own healthcare.

Change is good and the transition should be made to suit your needs. Now I feel that I have a good working relationship with my team. It's an open relationship, where I feel comfortable discussing all aspects of my illness. I think it's important to speak up and be honest so that you are happy with the team.