

Implementation Toolkit Resource Guidance

Special Health Services Transition Packets

Section I: Resource Overview

Summary
The Division of Special Health Services at the North Dakota Department of Health developed Transition Packets that are provided to youth ages 14 to 21 to assist them in managing their health care needs as they move to an adult health care setting.

Resource Description

The goal of the Transition Packets is to offer resources that help all youth actively participate in the transition process to adult health care. Packets are provided to youth ages 14-21 that receive services through Special Health Services in North Dakota. This prepares them to become more independent in their medical management as they get ready to leave home, attend college, or work.

Purpose

The earlier youth start to learn about what is involved in transition and how to engage, the more successful they will be in the transition process.

Intended User

The packets are intended for youth and their families to prepare for a more active engagement in the transition process. Users would include the youth and families, as well as any other interested party that is addressing transition to adult health care. Special Health Services has provided packets to teachers, school nurses, service providers, county social service workers, physicians, health coaches, medical social workers, and many more. The intent is to get the information out to where it will do the most good. The initial phase of packet distribution targeted youth and families, but Special Health Services saw the value of making the packets available to providers, as they work closely with families as well.

Intended Beneficiaries/Target Population

The target population are youth ages 14-21 that may have a special health care need or have received services through Special Health Services.

Materials Required

The generic transition packet (used for all ages) generally includes the following:

1. [Health Snapshot Pocket Guide](#) – this is a booklet that the youth will use to capture all of their medical information, emergency contacts, pharmacy information, and medical

providers. It also has a section for them to write down questions to ask when they are meeting with their physician, hospital/surgical providers, dentist, mental health professional, etc. as well as a timeline for transitioning. The pocket guide was developed collaboratively through our state-wide Transition Community of Practice.

2. Fact sheet: "[Helpful Hints on Transitioning to Adult Health Care](#)"
3. [Bright Futures What to Expect & When to Seek Help Ages 11-21 years](#)
4. [Immunization Recommendations 7-18 years.](#)
 - a. [If appropriate, Immunization Recommendations 0-6 years](#)
5. [Information on Vaping: Vaping is not a Safe Alternative](#)

If youth have more chronic conditions or developmental disabilities the packets include information on:

- [Vocational Rehabilitation](#)
- [Family Voices of North Dakota](#)
- [Health Care Coverage Options](#)
- [Medical Homes](#)
- Planning for after High School for [Parents](#) and [Youth](#)
- [Launch Life](#) informational [brochure](#)

In addition to the generic packet, Special Health Services compiles materials into three groups, based on age. These packets offer specific information relevant to the particular age group. A list of materials included in each packet is below. For access to materials that are not linked above, or for questions about age-specific packets, please get in touch with the project contact (Heather Kapella: hkapella@nd.gov).

Group 1 (Ages 14-15):

- My Health Pocket Guide
- Medical Wallet Card
- Parent Brief
- NDIS Healthy Transitions Resource & Materials List
- IPAT – Assistive Technology and Education brochure
- Family Voices Transition Brochure
- Cover fact sheet

Group 2 (Ages 16-17):

- Talking to Your Doctor DVD
- Ten Steps to Health Care Transition
- KASA Advocacy Tips
- IPAT – Assistive Technology and Transition to Adult Life brochure
- NDIS Healthy Transitions Resource & Materials List
- Getting Ready for Life after High School – What Students Need to Know
- Getting Ready for Life after High School – What Parents Need to Know
- Voc Rehab brochure
- Tell Me I Can't... I'll Show You I Can
- Cover fact sheet

Group 3 (Ages 18-21):

- HRTW Tools & Tips – Getting What You Need at Your Doctor Visit Transition Health Care Tips
- Transitions: A Guide to Getting Older and Changing Health-Care Providers
- Websites to Help Young Adults with Transition
- NDIS Healthy Transitions Resource & Materials List
- IPAT – Transition for Employment
- Health Care Coverage Options brochure
- Cover fact sheet

Section II: Using the Resource

How to Use this Resource

Transition packets are hard copy and sent via the mail.

Internal Capacity (Staff Needed to Develop this Resource)

The resources were developed through the Division of Special Health Services at the North Dakota Department of Health. The development and dissemination of the Transition Packets is currently overseen by a Special Health Services Program Administrator. This full-time employee spent a portion of their time working on the packets. Facilitating the transition packets program is part of their job description, but they do not work on the packets full time.

Collaboration/Partners (External Partners who Helped Develop the Resource)

The following organizations provided input on the development of the packets: Family Voices, other North Dakota Department of Health Divisions, Vocational Rehabilitations Services, Department of Public Instruction, Transition Community of Practice, Federation of Families, North Dakota State Council of Developmental Disabilities, Pathfinder Parent Center, Minot State University, Anne Carlsen Center, and the North Dakota Department of Human Services. The partners listed above have changed over the years since the implementation, but contact is made quarterly with most of them through a statewide Transition Community of Practice committee.

Lessons Learned

This was a successful collaborative effort, with organizations working together to help North Dakota youth to prepare for transition. One of the challenges of this project is making sure that the information is updated on a regular basis. To mitigate this challenge, Special Health Services ensures that the information is thoroughly reviewed every two years. For items that need to be updated yearly (e.g., the Immunization schedule) a reminder system was established to remind staff to print the new version annually.

Over the course of their implementation, the packets have been paired down to a “generic” set of information, with additional information if the youth’s needs are more significant or chronic. This allows Special Health Services to have a supply of generic transition packets available on hand and gives the team the ability to add more information as needed, tailoring each packet to the youth’s specific needs.

Next Steps

The resources provided are updated every two years, and additions are made during that time. These decisions will be made based upon new information available that is relevant to the transition aged youth.