



TRANSITION TO ADULT HEALTH CARE POLICY

The Kids Clinic (TKC) strives to serve as our patients' Medical Home by partnering with patients and parents/guardians to deliver comprehensive, coordinated, family-centered care. We seek to respect both our patients' legal rights to privacy and parents'/guardians' concerns for their child's or young adult's well-being. We assist our patients in learning and practicing the skills they will need as adults to become responsible for their health and manage their health care. We work with patients and families to ensure a smooth transition to adult health care.

Patients 13-17 years old:

Beginning at the age of 13 years, at least part of a patient's medical visit may be in private, and the parent/guardian will be asked to step out of the exam room. The patient or parent/guardian may ask for a medical assistant to be present in the exam room. Discussions of certain sensitive issues, such as reproductive health, mental health, and substance use, will remain confidential and will not be shared with the parent/guardian unless the adolescent gives consent. Medical records documenting the corresponding portions of the medical exam and discussion also will be treated as confidential, to the extent required by law, and will be released to a parent/guardian or other people only with the patient's written authorization.

For adolescent patients with developmental disabilities or other special health needs, it may be necessary and appropriate to modify these policies to accommodate their needs. We welcome patients and parents/guardians to discuss special needs with us so that we may plan reasonable accommodations together.

In addition, TKC will inform the parent/guardian of any life-threatening situation or behavior involving any patient younger than 18 years, whether disclosed by the patient or becoming evident through a medical examination. In this case, we will inform the patient that we will disclose or have disclosed this information to the parent/guardian.

Patients 18 years and older: *Patients 18 years and older are adults under the law.*

TKC will respect the right of patients aged 18 years and older to privacy regarding their health information and records. Providers will meet with and examine these patients privately unless the patient requests that the parent or other person be present. TKC will respect the patient's right to make their own health care decisions and manage their health care unless a court has determined that they cannot do so and has appointed a legal guardian. Please provide us a copy of the court's decree or equivalent documentation if you have been appointed the legal guardian of your adult child so that we may conform to the terms of your guardianship.

TKC cannot communicate with a parent or other person on the patient's behalf unless s/he is the legal guardian, authorized health care agent (proxy), or we have, on file, written consent from the patient. If we do not have documentation on file, TKC requires patients 18 years and older to do the following on their own: make appointments, request referrals, request medication refills, and communicate about their care, billing, and insurance matters. We will gladly assist our patients of any age in understanding and practicing these skills.

Understanding your insurer's privacy policies:

Please be aware that young adults and children, insured under a parent's family policy, might receive statements from the insurer at the parent's address. TKC has no control over insurers' procedures and is not responsible for any resulting disclosure of health information. Please get in touch with your insurer about any questions regarding its privacy procedures and policies.

Transitioning from pediatric to adult health care:

TKC serves patients from birth up to their 19th birthday*. We welcome our young adult patients to continue in our care until they are 19. By that age, patients should transition to an adult primary care provider (usually a doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant practicing Family Medicine or Internal Medicine) and adult providers for any medical specialty care the patient may receive. We encourage you to start collecting information about adult healthcare providers before age 19, as it may take a few months to get a new patient appointment. Continuing annual preventative care visits through young adulthood is important.

*Our providers may make exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

Remember to check with your insurer or ask the adult provider which insurance plans they accept.

The following would be reasons we'd ask a young adult to transition to an adult provider sooner than age 19:

- They are married
- Working full-time and/or not going to school
- Are pregnant or have their own child
- At high school graduation, if they are going to college/trade school
- Have a medical condition better served by an adult provider

Please note that once patients turn 19, we cannot administer vaccines as all of our vaccines are provided by the Vaccines for Children program. If the patient needs a vaccine, they will need to visit a pharmacy, etc.

We are available to discuss healthcare transitions with patients and families. We are committed to partnering with you throughout the process to ensure a smooth transition.

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at 509-448-7337

These policies follow generally accepted guidelines for pediatric practices and federal and state law, including HIPAA (the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and Washington RCWs. In Washington, a person under the age of 18 cannot consent to medical care unless one or more of the following exceptions apply: If the minor is emancipated (legally independent) or married to someone at or above age 18.

(RCW 26.28.020) In the event emergency care is necessary. (When impractical to get parental consent first) For birth control and pregnancy-related care at any age. (See State v. Koome) For outpatient drug- and alcohol-abuse treatment beginning at age 13. (RCW 70.96A.095) For outpatient mental health treatment beginning at age 13. (RCW 71.34.500 and 71.34.530) For sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, beginning at age 14. (RCW 70.24.110) This policy is not legal advice. Please consult a lawyer if you need legal advice.

We do not have a specific recommendation for certain providers or offices in Spokane. It is nearly impossible for us to keep up with who is coming and going from Spokane area clinics. However, below are some places to start if you don't already have a provider/clinic in mind. Always reach out to them first to see if they accept your insurance plan and are taking new patients.

Once you select your adult provider, please sign a release promptly so we may send your medical records to this provider. You may use TKC's release of records form at www.kidsclinicspokane.com, the adult provider's form, or another equivalent form. Please be aware that TKC disposes of medical records according to state law. This generally means that we retain records for ten years after the last date of service (visit, phone call, or prescription request) or until age 21, whichever is longer.

The larger clinics have various locations with individual phone numbers. Please use their website to find a location that works for you.

Providence-various locations- providence.org

CHAS-various locations- chas.org

MultiCare-various locations- multicare.org

Kaiser Permanente-various locations- healthy.kaiserpermanente.org

Spokane Teaching Health Center 509-626-9900- spokaneteachinghealth.org

Northside Family Physicians 509-483-3155- spokanephysicians.com

The Doctors Clinic of Spokane 509-489-3554- doctorsclinicspokane.com