

research snapshot

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Problems With Changing From Pediatric to Adult Healthcare

What is this research about?

Young adults with cerebral palsy (CP) have different experiences when they change from pediatric care to adult programs. Some young adults have had a positive experience when changing to adult programs. Yet, the majority of people have not had a good experience changing to adult programs. Key issues happen before the change, during the change, and after the change to an adult program. People report feeling anxious and abandoned when poor information is given about the change to adult care.

What did the researchers do?

A group of young adults were asked to answer question about their experience changing to adult programs. The young adults finished a semi-structured interview and a short survey. All the young adults were between the ages of 18 and 25 and were diagnosed with CP. Questions were focused on:

- Learning about the lived experience of having a disability. This included the type and frequency of medical services.

What you need to know:

Young adults with CP have difficulties when changing from pediatric to adult programs. Patients had anxiety, felt there was a lack of support, and a loss of services. Respecting young adult's independence will help to make the change to adult CP care easier.

- The transition from the pediatric healthcare system to the adult healthcare system.
- The ethical and social issues encountered in the healthcare system (for example, independence in making medical decisions).

What did the researchers find?

Young adults had an overall negative view about the change from pediatric to adult programs. They had a variety of concerns including:

- Anxiety about the transitions.
- Feeling that there was poor communication between the pediatric and adult programs.

- Feeling a lack of support, preparation, and information during the change.
- Reporting that they did not receive the same amount of time and attention in the adult program.
- Feeling that healthcare professionals knew more about CP in the pediatric setting.
- Feeling that there was not a smooth transition and there was instead an abrupt loss of services.

How can you use this research?

Practitioners will realize the difficulty that young adults with CP have when changing from pediatric to adult programs. It is suggested that young adults should be made to feel more comfortable with the program change.

Policy makers will learn about gaps in patient care and attempt to provide the structure needed to create a smooth change between programs.

About the Researchers

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Cerebral palsy, Young adults, Neuroethics, Transition, Autonomy, Medical decision making

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