

# Bridging 2 Adulthood Tips: Primary Care

## Finding a Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner for Adulthood

In Ontario, **children's healthcare ends at 18 years old** (i.e. the day before the child's 19<sup>th</sup> birthday). **Adult healthcare begins at age 19**. It is highly recommended that you start planning for the transition to adult medical services, including adult primary care, in advance.

### What is primary care?

Primary care is usually provided by a **family doctor or nurse practitioner** who helps you manage new (non-emergency) or ongoing conditions and promotes wellness.

### How can I search for a primary care provider for adulthood?

<p><b>Ask your current medical team</b></p>	<p>Ask your current community primary care provider if they can still see you as an adult. If not, they may be able to recommend an adult provider. Or, ask your Holland Bloorview medical team for any suggestions.</p>
<p><b>Holland Bloorview's Transition Pop-Up: Connect with Adult Primary Care</b></p>	<p><b>A group event with practical support:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information about primary care</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Experience from mentors &amp; community providers</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Practical support</b> to begin searching for adult primary care</li> </ul>
<p><b>Consider a physically accessible office</b></p>	<p>For <b>adults with physical disabilities in Toronto</b>, consider contacting <a href="#">Vibrant Healthcare Alliance</a> (416) 486-8666.</p> <p>The office is fully physically accessible with ceiling lifts and attendant services e.g. for assistance with transfers, the washroom, and clothing during appointments.</p> <p>Services with other health professionals (e.g. social workers, OTs, PTs, dietician) can sometimes be provided. There are also wellness programs.</p>

<p><b>Use search directories</b></p>	<p>Options include signing up for <a href="#">Health Care Connect</a> or using the <a href="#">Find a Doctor</a> search for local options.</p>
<p><b>Consider a Family Health Team</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Family Health Teams</a> provide coordinated primary care with different team members such as dietitians, nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers, pharmacists, respiratory therapists, OT, PT and others. Contact your local team to see what services may be provided.</p>
<p><b>Consider a Community Health Centre</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Community Health Centres</a> provide healthcare and wellness programs for individuals and communities.</p>

### Other things to consider:

- Ask that your **medical records be sent** to a new provider before your first appointment.
- Sign up for **Holland Bloorview’s Transitions Pop-Up: Organizing My Medical Records** group event for:
  - On-the-spot request** for your medical records (printed)
  - Practical support to organize** your medical papers in a binder
  - Advice from lived experience **mentors**
- **Ask questions to potential providers**  
It’s your right to ask about a provider’s credentials expertise, wait times, office hours, communication style, and experience with specific conditions.
- **Consider accessibility**  
Will you be able to physically access the building’s parking lot, entrance, washrooms, waiting room and exam tables? Will the sensory environment be okay or overwhelming? Can the office provide accommodations such as extra time for clothing management/transfers or waiting in a quiet area rather than the busy waiting room?

The information provided in this handout is for reference only. It is not intended as a recommendation or endorsement of specific programs, or as a comprehensive resource list.

This handout is brought to you by Holland Bloorview’s Transitions Strategy  
Contact: Laura Thompson, OT Reg. (Ont.)  
Team Lead & Occupational Therapist  
416-425-6220 ext. 3686, lthompson@hollandbloorview.ca