



**Stanford**  
Children's Health

Lucile Packard  
Children's Hospital  
**Stanford**



# Guide to Turning 18

To help you and your parents understand  
your new health care responsibilities

# New Privileges, New Responsibilities

Turning 18 is a major milestone in life. At 18, you are recognized by state and federal law as a legal adult. Congratulations! As an adult, decisions regarding your health care will occur differently than when you were younger, even though you still are being cared for at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford | Stanford Children's Health.

Before you turned 18, your parents were responsible for you and had authority to make decisions regarding your health care. Now that you are 18, you have the authority to make these decisions. This is true unless the court has appointed a legal guardian to continue to make decisions for you beyond your 18th birthday.

## The following points will help you and your family understand your new responsibilities as an adult patient:

- When you come to the hospital as an adult patient, you will be the one to check in, answer questions, and sign forms in the Admitting Office.
- The Admitting Office will ask you for your own insurance information.
- You will be asked if you would like to complete your own Advance Health Care Directive, a form used to state your health care wishes if you are unable to talk about them yourself.
- When there are new test or lab results, the doctors will talk with you directly about them.
- You will decide who can receive medical information about you. If you would like to share your medical information with anyone, including your parents, you can sign a Release of Health Information form. This form gives Stanford Children's Health permission to share (disclose) information only to those you have listed on the form.
- The health care team will talk directly to you, ask you questions, listen to your responses, and ask for your agreement on the plan of care.
- When there is a choice for a procedure, treatment, medication, etc., you will make the final decision.
- The staff will give the discharge teaching and instructions to you, along with anyone else you decide is going to help you when you get home.

Your parents and others may continue to be involved in your health care as much as you want them to be. They can make suggestions, give you advice and help you think through options you may have.

## Things for You to Consider

- Discuss with your parents how you would like them involved in your medical care.
- Discuss with your parents whether your health insurance will change when you turn 18.
- Learn about Advance Health Care Directives.
- Talk to your doctor to find out if he or she continues to see patients past their 18th birthday. If not, ask your pediatrician and/or specialist to recommend an adult provider.
- Learn about your health history from your doctor and your family.

## A Note to Parents

As your child makes the natural transition to greater independence with adulthood, he or she will be taking on many of the medical responsibilities that you have carried out on his or her behalf for so long. While this change is not always easy for parents, especially those who have guided their child through medical challenge, it is a positive achievement in your child's life. Parents can support their adult sons or daughters by allowing them to step into their new authority, but still being available to guide, advise, or support them at their request. You can also continue to assist them by modeling good health habits and responsibility for your own medical care, and providing assistance or answers to their questions whenever needed.

# Resources at Packard Children's

Admitting and Clinic Registration	(650) 497-8229
Case Management	(650) 721-0175
Center for Adolescent Health	(408) 637-5959
Child and Family Life Services	(650) 497-8336
Housing Office	(650) 498-7971
Interpreter Services	(650) 497-8371
Medical Records	(650) 497-8079
Office of Patient Experience	(650) 498-4847
Patient Financial Services	(650) 736-2273
Referral Center	(800) 995-5724
Social Services	(650) 497-8303
Spiritual Care	(650) 497-8538
Teen Van	(650) 736-7172

## Helpful Links

- Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford website: [www.stanfordchildrens.org](http://www.stanfordchildrens.org)
- Center for Adolescent Health: [www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/service/adolescent-medicine](http://www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/service/adolescent-medicine)
- Financial Assistance and Insurance Information: [www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/patient-family-resources/financial-insurance-information](http://www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/patient-family-resources/financial-insurance-information)
- Release of Health Information Form: [www.stanfordchildrens.org/content-public/pdf/authorization-for-release-health-information-english.pdf](http://www.stanfordchildrens.org/content-public/pdf/authorization-for-release-health-information-english.pdf)
- Patient's Rights and Responsibilities: [www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/patient-family-resources/patient-rights-responsibilities](http://www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/patient-family-resources/patient-rights-responsibilities)
- Advance Health Care Directive information from California: [www.dss.cahwnet.gov/forms/english/pub325.pdf](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/forms/english/pub325.pdf)
- Nearest Medi-Cal or Medicaid office: [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)
- Palo Alto Medical Foundation, Adolescent Interest Group: [www.pamf.org/teen/](http://www.pamf.org/teen/)
- Palo Alto Medical Foundation, Teen Parenting Resource: [www.pamf.org/parenting-teens/](http://www.pamf.org/parenting-teens/)