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Being a teenager can be a challenging time – this is especially the case for teenagers living with type 1 diabetes.

During this time, many families living with diabetes may find it challenging to navigate their way through the diabetes care maze.

This letter is designed to provide you with information about some key issues you might like to consider over the coming year and where to find support for you and your teenager with type 1 diabetes.

Now your teenager is 16

If your teenager has not yet begun the process of transferring to an adult diabetes team, your current paediatric diabetes team will be actively planning for this transition. Different services transfer young people to adult services at different ages, so it is best to ask your teenager's diabetes team about the ideal time for this move and the steps involved.

If your teenager receives specific payments or supplements from Services Australia, they may be eligible for their own Health Care Card. For further information go to servicesaustralia.gov.au or contact Services Australia.

Your teenager's adult diabetes team will be central to their ongoing healthcare needs. Ideally, this will include:

- » Regular diabetes check-ups (at least four times a year)
- » An annual review for diabetes-related complications
- » Follow-up referrals to any specialist services that are required (such as ophthalmology) as a result of these reviews.

This may be the time to ensure that your teenager's knowledge of their diabetes care is as up to date as possible before they begin taking more responsibility for managing their diabetes. You are likely to continue to play a critical role in their life and their diabetes care for many years yet.

If your teenager is not currently using continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) or flash glucose monitoring (Flash GM) now might be a good time to consider whether this is something they would like to try, particularly as they become more independent and are learning more about how different factors affect their glucose levels. Talk to your teenager's diabetes team about how to access subsidised CGM and Flash GM products through the NDSS. Find out more here: ndss.com.au/devices-and-technology.

Driving ambition

Obtaining a driver's licence is a big step towards a young person's independence, so it is important to understand how having diabetes can affect this. State and territory licensing organisations have varying policies on driving with diabetes and it is important for the licensing agency to be informed that your teenager has diabetes when they go for their licence.

Most agencies allow people with diabetes to drive a vehicle as long as they have regular checks to manage any issues that may affect their driving, such as hypoglycaemia (hypo) or vision impairment. Talk to the diabetes team if you are not sure how this affects your own teenager's circumstances.

Please note that restrictions apply if your teenager does not disclose their diabetes to their insurance provider. For more advice and support, please call the NDSS Helpline on **1800 637 700** and ask to speak to a diabetes health professional.

Please ensure that you and your teenager is aware of the diabetes driving guidelines. You can find information about driving with diabetes and download the 'Diabetes and Driving' booklet at ndss.com.au.

Your teenager may be starting work for the first time. It can be difficult to know how and when to tell an employer and new workmates about their diabetes. You can find out about the rights of employees with diabetes at diabetesaustralia.com.au.

As your teenager matures, they may wish to discuss various topics with you. You should also encourage them to discuss any concerns with their diabetes team without you being present if they would prefer this. You can also refer them to ndss.com.au/living-with-diabetes/about-you/young-people where we have a range of resources on alcohol, drugs, travel and sexual health.

NDSS produces a resource for young people which covers all of these issues. Download 'Moving On Up' at ndss.com.au.

The information at ndss.com.au/living-with-diabetes/about-you/young-people is especially for young people 16-25 years with diabetes, but it is also useful for parents. It is a good source of information about the transition to adult services. The NDSS also administers a Facebook group called MyD - My Diabetes. This group provides a forum that allows young people with diabetes to communicate online.



Feedback and information

If you have any comments on the information you have received, please email us at: ndss@diabetesaustralia.com.au

If you do not wish to receive further correspondence from us, please go to ndss.com.au and update your personal details.