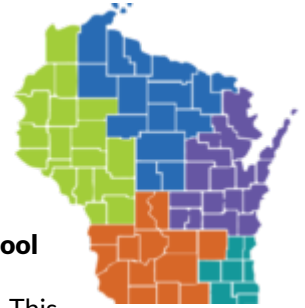


HEALTH TRANSITION WISCONSIN



Health Transition Wisconsin Creates Webpage Dedicated to Wisconsin School Nurses

Healthcare Transition is the change from pediatric to adult healthcare services. This transition typically takes place between the ages of 12 and 26 years. This webpage offers tools, resources, and trainings to help Wisconsin School Nurses provide best practice transition care to their patients with developmental disabilities or special healthcare needs. [Link to webpage.](#)

What is Health Care Transition?
The Importance of School Nurses

Tim Markle, Director of the [Wisconsin Youth Health Transition Initiative](#)

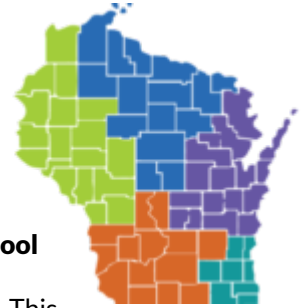
First, let me introduce myself. In addition to my statewide work around Health Care Transition and integrating Health Care Transition into the lives of youth and young adults with special health care needs and disabilities, I am the parent of 26-year-old autistic young man. He has been in-charge of his health care for a few years and is still learning about how to be in-charge of his health care given his unique physical and mental health profile. He is not that different from the students you support in Wisconsin schools – students with autism, other disabilities, chronic health conditions, etc. Some of them have an IEP or a 504 plan, and others don't. But they all need support to live a healthy, self-determined lives as they become adults.

Second, let me introduce what we mean by Health Care Transition (HCT). At a presentation at the Wisconsin Association of School Nurses Conference in 2023, Julie Hajewski (MSN, ANP-BC, APNP) and myself referred to this core definition “*HCT is the process of moving from a child to an adult model of health care with or without a transfer to a new clinician.*” [Got Transition](#), a national leader in Health Care Transition, breaks this down into three parts: **Preparing** (learning skills, building knowledge), **Transfer of Care** (new PCP, specialists, therapists, etc.), **Integrated** (successfully utilizing appropriate health care resources as an adult). Health Care Transition can be a complicated, multi-layered process and is often one of the last parts of transition to be considered by youth and families.

Third, let me affirm what you are already doing! You are already the trusted expert providing guidance, support, and expertise between the educational world and the medical world. You are already caring for students with disabilities, health care needs, chronic conditions, etc. When we look at Health Care Transition, you have a unique and important role in preparing your students to successfully manage their health care (as appropriate). During the 2024-2025 school year, the Youth Health Transition Initiative (YHTI) is partnering with Louise Wilson, DPI School Nurse Consultant, to provide resources to grow your knowledge and your confidence to help your students' successfully transition into adulthood.

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Tools to Support Health Care Transition

Tim Markle, Director of the Wisconsin Youth Health Transition Initiative

Last month, we provided some introductions, to myself, and to Health Care Transition (HCT), and we acknowledged the important role school nurses play in helping students become healthy adults. This month I want to provide a quick overview of some tools, available to you, to help support your work in transitioning students into the world of Adult Health Care.

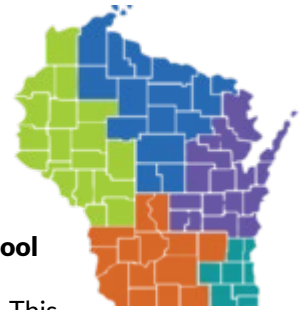
First, we know the education systems loves assessments! Our national partner, [Got Transition](#), has developed a [Health Care Readiness Assessment for Students](#). The assessment can be filled out as part of IEP transition meetings or to can guide school nurses in helping students work on Health Care Transition Goals. The assessment goes through important areas of health (appointments, medications, emergencies, etc.) and allows the student to mark “Yes”; “I want to learn”; or “No”. We know not all students will master each task, but the assessment gives a great baseline indicator of knowledge and provides starting points for focused learning. The assessment is also available in [Spanish](#).

Second, we want to encourage School Nurses to be a part of the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) as appropriate, especially during Transition. Got Transition has offered [Sample Goals](#) that build off of the Health Care Transition Readiness Assessment. The Goals are written to be incorporated into an IEP, but they can also be goals school nurses can work on with their students and families apart from the IEP.

Third, is not a tool, but a consideration. Consider what health plans you may have in place for a student. Are there pieces of that plan that would be appropriate for the student to know about, or that they might have to be in charge of, once they are out of high school? Where can you help the student to become the leader of their health team? How can you help them be knowledgeable about their unique body and mind and be able to communicate their health needs? Thank you for all you are doing!

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Being Thankful for School Nurses (and Health Care Transition)
November 2024 Newsletter

Tim Markle, Director of the [Wisconsin Youth Health Transition Initiative](#) I had the opportunity to talk to a mom last week. She told me about the school team that surrounded her son as he was in high school and was looking ahead to being an adult. She explained how the IEP team grew to include people who were helping her son learn to work, included people who were helping him to get health benefits support, and included the school nurse. The school nurse was helping her son to learn about his unique health needs, helping him learn how to be more self-sufficient, and helping him to be a healthy, successful adult – after high school. She was very grateful for that school nurse.

I have talked with families with adolescents who used to hang on the parents' every word but now seem to have trouble listening. (Stop chuckling). They care deeply about their child but also realize the child is making their own way and forming their own decisions. They see their child being influenced by so many people (real, virtual, or somewhere in between). What if there was a caring and supportive person who could understand the youth's uniqueness, abilities and disability, and could help them learn how to manage their health care for life? So thankful for school nurses who can be that supportive voice, that listening ear, who can help guide our children to healthy adulthood.

Adulthood can be scary. Transition (12-26 years old) can be overwhelming. School nurses are in a powerful and unique position to interact with students and to help them understand their disability and health. Each person is different and there are no "one-size fits all" for being a healthy adult. There are tools and resources to help, and we will continue to gather resources at <https://healthtransitionwi.org/wisconsin-school-nurses/>. But you are the best option, the best resource, for our children and youth with special health care needs. You understand health affects learning, health affects life. Health is foundational to success. We are thankful for all the school nurses who help our children prepare to live life to the fullest, to the healthiest, they can. Thank you.

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The Importance of Making Decisions

Tim Markle, Director of the [Wisconsin Youth Health Transition Initiative](#)

You are reading this, probably, because you are a School Nurse in Wisconsin. So, as a shout-out to schools, here is a True/False Pop Quiz! True or False – every decision you have made has been a great (or at least a good) decision. True or False – you have never made a bad decision. True or False – you have learned from what has happened because of decisions you have made. Feel free to grade your own paper. What if you were a child/adolescent, who has had the chance to make few, or any, meaningful decisions? And then one day, you had to make all sorts of meaningful decisions – like, adult level decisions? I might be frightened, anxious, and full of self-doubt. Good decision-making is a learned skill that develops over the course of time by, you guessed it, making decisions – both good and bad.

As a parent of child with special health care needs, I have taken many short cuts over the years. One short cut has been to tell my child what is best for them without explaining why or explaining the options that I have considered. I have just out of the blue said stuff like, “you need to have surgery” or “you can’t eat that” or “don’t do that.” I have their best interests in mind and their safety in mind, but by not explaining, not involving them in the decision, I may lead them to believe they are incapable of making decisions or they don’t have a say in their own life. Explaining what is happening and involving my children in decision making takes time and energy. But I need to remember the outcome – the outcome is to have a healthy adult, living a self-determined life.

I know you are short on time and not short on things that need to get done. When you can, please help your students understand how different decisions can affect their health (good and bad). Don’t let them make disastrous choices but let them make health choices that might result in them being uncomfortable. It is very hard for teenagers to understand cause and effect, blame it on their growing brain, but it is so important for them to understand how their health decisions impact their future. Consider how they have grown in their maturity and decision making in school, and they will continue to grow after they exit school. How ready will they be to make decisions? Maybe they will continue to need support and need to learn about Supported Decision Making. Maybe they will need to have someone else making their decisions – called guardianship. We have some partners who can help you learn more about guardianship and supported decision making:

- Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities has [toolkit](#).
- Family Voices of Wisconsin has a great [fact sheet](#) and offers [trainings](#).
- WI Youth Health Transition held a session as part of [Transition Talks Tuesdays](#).

You are in a great position to help students learn to make informed decisions so they can live the life they want to live. Thank you for caring.

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Have you ever wondered...Does my child's School Nurse have a role in the IEP?

Tim Markle, Director of the [Wisconsin Youth Health Transition Initiative](#)

Happy New Year wonderful nurses! It was a very pleasant surprise to read this article* from the [WSPEI Connector January 2025](#). It is written for families, but I wanted to share it with you to thank you for fulfilling such an important role for our children with special health care needs. As you know, before students have a Post-Secondary Transition Plan (PTP), they have an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Information about School Nurses to consider:

- School nurses have an important role in determining how student health conditions affect their education.
- A school nurses' role on Special Education Evaluation and IEP teams is not well understood and thus school nurses are often overlooked, or not invited to these meetings.
- Below are some of the roles school nurses play and resources school nurses use to document health needs and the interventions they or other staff will perform to keep students safe in school and to remove health barriers to education.
- Having a school nurse on your child's IEP team if they have a health condition, is important so they can advocate for your student and help determine appropriate accommodations and possible goals.

School nurses may be involved in:

- Determination of (health) disability needs.
- Providing in-service training for staff regarding the individual health needs of the child.
- Provide and/or delegate to unlicensed personnel to provide specialized healthcare services in the school setting (requires supervision).
- Assist with transition planning related to chronic health conditions of a student.
- Documentation and billing for Medicaid school-based services.

It is considered best practice to incorporate some of the information from a health plan into the 504 plan or an IEP, but the plans do not substitute for each other.

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Under the Program Modifications or Support for School Personnel section of the IEP document, school nurses can include a statement to the effect that “School nurse develops and maintains an Individualized Health Plan (IHP-nursing care plan), Health Plan, or Emergency Action Plan (EAP) that addresses student health needs and the plan(s) is/are on file in the health office.”

- Individualized Healthcare Plan (IHP) –nursing care plan for School Nurse
- Student Health Plan – summary of health and safety needs of student for school staff
- Emergency Action Plan (EAP) - used by lay staff in an urgent or emergency situation

Resources listed in the article:

[Comparison IHP/ EAP/504 Plan/IEP](#)

[School Nurse Documentation in the IEP](#)

[DPI School Nursing Website](#)

In addition, here is the link to our website:

[Health Transition and School Nurses Website](#)

*Article [Accessed from the WSPEI Connector – January 2025](#)



CDC

New COVID-19 and RSV Estimates Can Help Shape Prevention Efforts

It is not possible to know exactly how many people get sick from COVID-19 and RSV. That’s because not everyone who gets COVID-19 or RSV will get tested or seek medical care. Also, COVID-19 and RSV are not nationally notifiable diseases. This means only cases that lead to hospitalization are reported to CDC.

Because of this, CDC uses models to estimate the national impact of COVID-19 and RSV—for example, how many people go to a healthcare provider or are hospitalized because of these illnesses. The models use inputs from continually updated surveillance data and data from the latest scientific studies. CDC has published similar estimates for flu for many years.

People can use this information to help them make informed decisions about their healthcare, such as vaccination, testing, and treatment. These estimates can help public health officials promote prevention measures and plan for COVID-19 and RSV impacts on healthcare systems to ensure that Americans can continue to get the healthcare they need during times of widespread respiratory illnesses. The estimates will also help us compare the burden associated with COVID-19 and RSV year over year and compare it to other respiratory illnesses.

Preliminary U.S. [COVID-19](#) and [RSV](#) burden estimates since October 1, 2024, are available on CDC’s website and will be updated weekly on Fridays. This year’s and previous years’ flu disease burden estimates are [also available](#).

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Just the facts. . .

Tim Markle, Director of the [Wisconsin Youth Health Transition Initiative](#)

For those who don't understand how horribly I'm dating myself with the title, check out [Dragnet](#) from 1967-1970.

Some people appreciate numbers and bulleted lists. So, this one's for you.

Studies have shown that effective pediatric-to-adult health care transition results in increased:

- Adherence to care
- Adult clinic attendance
- Patient satisfaction
- Quality of Life
- Self-care skills

and decreased:

- Lapse in care
- Perceived barriers to care
- Hospital admission rates
- Hospital lengths of stay
- Morbidity and mortality

According to the National Survey of Children's Health (2021-2022):

- There were 131,000 youth ages 12-17 in Wisconsin who had a special health care need
- Around 69% of youth with special health care needs in Wisconsin did not receive services necessary for transition to adult health
- Wisconsin is one of the top states in youth receiving services—31%

These facts are based on a hand-out developed by [Got Transition](#) and [Wisconsin Youth Health Transition](#). You can get a copy of this fact sheet, a handout on the difference in adult care from pediatric care, and more information on helping students by stopping by our exhibit at the Wisconsin Association of School Nurses Conference and/or emailing me at tmarkle@wisc.edu. If are able to attend the conference and you stop by our exhibit and you say the word "shenanigans", you may get one of 50 water bottles I'll have on hand.

Thank you for making a difference.

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Videos and Sample Questions

Tim Markle, Director of the [Wisconsin Youth Health Transition Initiative](#)

We have a new video up on the WI Youth Health Transition [Wisconsin School Nurses Webpage](#). It is a short video (under 9 minutes) introducing Health Care Transition. I hope you take a look. Please let us know what else you might find useful at healthtransitionwi@waisman.wisc.edu.

We have talked about IEP (Individualized Education Program/Plan) transition goals in the past. I know not all school nurses have been involved in IEP planning, so we thought we'd provide just a few examples that you could be involved in. You can find all the sample goals from our partners at Got Transition: <https://www.gottransition.org/resource/?sample-goals-for-tra-iep>

- I can name my learning differences, disability, medical, or mental health diagnosis (e.g. diabetes, depression).
- Before a doctor's visit, I prepare questions to ask.
- I know my food allergies.
- I know how to read and follow the direction labels on my medicines.
- I know what to do when I run out of my medicines.

I could not think of a better person in a school to help students learn about themselves and how to interact with the health care system.

I hope to see you at the Wisconsin Association of School Nurses Conference. If are able to attend the conference and you stop by our exhibit and you say the word "shenanigans", you may get one of 50 water bottles I'll have on hand.

You can always learn more at [Got Transition](#) and [Wisconsin Youth Health Transition](#).

Thank you for making a difference.

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Tim Markle, Director of the Wisconsin Youth Health Transition Initiative

Thank you to all the wonderful people I met at the WASN Conference during the exhibiting time and those who attending the breakout with the MMSD school nurses and Dr. Bekx. I really do appreciate seeing people and talking with them and you all are a very passionate group!

To close out the school year, I wanted to pull out a statement from the [National Association of School Nurses Position Statement: Transition Planning for Students with Healthcare Needs](#).

NASN Position

“It is the position of the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) that healthcare transition (HCT) planning and implementation for all students with healthcare needs should be a well-coordinated process that occurs whenever a student moves into, through, or out of a school setting. The continuation of safe, quality, equitable care for all students with healthcare needs is essential for supporting positive health and academic outcomes, so that all students have equal opportunities to attain their full potential. As a vital member of the interprofessional school-based team, the registered professional school nurse (hereinafter referred to as school nurse) is ideally situated to provide expertise, leadership, and care coordination for students during HCT (NASN, 2022).”

Can I paraphrase? **YOU** are ideally situated to provide **expertise, leadership, and care coordination** for students during Health Care Transition.

I know you have a lot on your plates. And I know you are ideally situated to be a supporter and leader in helping students transition into the world of adult health care. There are some of our students for whom continuity of care is vital (as in life or death). You can help make that happen.

Thank you for all you do to care for our students and to help them become the best, healthiest, most self-determined, adults they can be.

HEALTH TRANSITION WISCONSIN



November Health Transition Wisconsin and School Nurses

Tim Markle, Director of the [Wisconsin Youth Health Transition Initiative](#)

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Two things this month:

First, thank you for everything you do for our students with special health care needs. You are the bridge and support between education and the health care system and lives are better because of you.

Second, in the health care transition community and special education we continue to have discussions about how can we help students and families become aware of, and begin the process of, transitioning into adulthood earlier. We don't want our kids to grow up too soon, but we do want them to build the skills and gain the knowledge they will need to succeed.

With some of our students, school nurses are extremely involved in teaching them about dealing with asthma, managing diabetes, and being aware of other chronic health conditions. With other students, the need for health care training isn't as obvious. For some students, they need more information about how their disability might influence them in college or at work. Others may need to understand how to talk with medical professionals (outside of the awesome school nurse). Some students might have an IHP, an IEP, a 504 plan. And school nurses can help and may need more information.

I was excited to come across a short course designed for School Nurses from Boston University. The course is self-paced and broken into sections, including; Advocating for Students and Families, Overview of Plans, 504 Plans; IEPs. Check out [Supporting Students with Special Health Care Needs: The School Nurse and the IHP, 504, and IEP](#). I have a feeling if School Nurses were involved earlier in IEPs and 504s, then when it comes time to talk transition, you are already part of the team and can contribute your knowledge and expertise to helping students become success adults.

(There is a cost to take the course).

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