

GPs

If you are under 16, it's a good idea to have a guardian with you at health appointments. But we know that this might not be possible.

If you're under 16 your guardian usually needs to register you at a GP practice. It is possible to register or to make an appointment by yourself if you're under 16, but they might ask some questions to make sure you're okay.

Once you turn 16, doctors and nurses should treat you like an adult. This means you can make your own decisions about your health and your treatment.

If your guardian had access to your online medical records (this is called 'proxy access'), this access should be removed once you turn 16.

Whatever your age, most of the time GP staff will keep your information private – unless there's a serious risk to you or someone else.

It's important to remember that staff use their own judgement, so your experience can vary depending on the person you see.

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Gender-affirming healthcare



Your rights:

Transgender and non-binary people have the same rights to confidentiality as a cisgender person. Healthcare professionals should not dismiss your feelings or discriminate against you.

Hormone treatments are available around the age of 16, but this works on a case-by-case basis. The first step is going to your GP.

Young people will always be strongly advised to inform their guardian.

Information and support:

SAYit – a Sheffield charity with meetings and events for LGBT+ young people sayit.org.uk 0114 201 2633

Transactual UK – in-depth information about trans rights, UK laws, and transgender people's experiences transactual.org.uk

Dental Care



Dental care is free if you are under 18, or if you are under 19 and still in full-time education.

Your guardian can ask to see your dental records if you're under 16.

Once you turn 16, you can consent to dental treatment by yourself and won't have to tell your guardian. However, you will be encouraged to tell them especially for more major treatment.

Your Health, Your Rights: A Teen's Guide

It can be hard to understand your rights as a young person accessing healthcare.

We've created this guide to help people under 18. It explains what you can access by yourself, and when your parent or guardian will be told about your treatment.

Key definitions:

Confidentiality: information about you and your health is kept private, and not shared with other people without your permission

Consent: your ability to say yes or no to something and go ahead with an action, for example a medical test or treatment. Being able to give consent can depend on having capacity

Capacity: your ability to fully understand what you are being told, what you want, and what the action entails. This may be affected by your mental state, physical state, or a disability.

We're here to help you find reliable information about health and social care. We also help services to improve based on your feedback.

Contact us: 0114 253 6688
www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk

The facts at a glance



Young people are entitled to receive safe, effective healthcare.

If you're under 16 and have capacity, you should still be able to:

- Register with a GP practice
- Collect prescriptions
- Go to GP and hospital appointments alone
- Use sexual health services
- Go to the dentist
- Consent to treatment


Some of these will depend on the judgement of healthcare staff

Once you turn 16:

- Healthcare staff should treat you as an adult
- You can make your own decisions about your health
- Staff should only share your information if they believe there's a serious risk to you or others, or you don't have capacity to make decisions.



Scan here to check out our webpage on young people's rights



Sexual Health



Your rights:

Sexual health services include STI screening and treatment, contraception, pregnancy tests, and information & advice. These services are free and available to everyone.

If you are **13 or over**, anything you say is confidential. If you are **under 13**, your information will have to be shared.

What is available in Sheffield?

Sexual Health Sheffield provides free support and treatment to anyone who needs it. They are based at the Royal Hallamshire Hospital (entrance 11a B Road).

If you are **under 18** you can go to the Sexual Health Sheffield Youth Clinic. Drop ins are available on Mondays and Thursdays from 2:00pm – 6:00pm.

How do the Youth Clinics work?

The youth clinic is completely confidential if you are **13 or older**. If a guardian calls, they will not be given any information about your treatment, or even your attendance.

There are select examples where this confidentiality will be broken such as abuse, statutory rape or a significant risk to you or someone else.

Mental Health



Seeking support:

If you're **under 16**, your guardian needs to give consent for a referral to Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). If you're **16 or over** then you can seek support without their consent.

Confidentiality:

If you're **16 or over**, personal information about you and your mental health should usually be kept private by professionals.

There are exceptions if your clinician believes you are a risk to yourself or others, or do not have capacity to make decisions. Then, they might speak to your guardian or other professionals.

If you're **under 16**, your guardian will usually be involved in your support, and they will have access to your information.

Other places you can go for help:

There are **national charities** offering guidance and support, including:

Shout – a free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging service. Text them: 85258

Samaritans – a charity providing a free, confidential phone line for those struggling to cope. Call them: 116 123

Young Minds – a charity providing lots of information specifically for young people. Find them: youngminds.org.uk

There are **local charities and groups** too; you can find out about lots of these through the Sheffield Mental Health Guide: sheffieldmentalhealth.co.uk, or call them on 0114 273 7009