

## **Turning Eighteen – Big Changes on the Horizon!!**

Eighteen! Surely, the eighteenth birthday is a big milestone. Now considered an adult, you can vote, serve in the military, and enjoy all of the privileges and responsibilities of adulthood under the law. This includes rights related to your health.

Here are some important things you need to know.

You will make your own health decisions. Of course, we encourage you to continue to work with your parents for advice and guidance in all aspects of your life.

You must now give us permission to discuss your health with others. We are dedicated to maintaining confidentiality. At HPA, you may handle your health information in several ways:

- You will be asked to sign permission to share information with your parent(s) or other adult for each individual visit when you come to the office
- You may decide about whether or not to participate in electronic information sharing among your health care team. See our *Connected to Care for You* brochure.
- You may change your mind at any time about any of these choices

You may call your provider at HPA directly, without parent involvement. Parents can call HPA in a few circumstances:

- Our patient has given us written permission to talk to you
  - Without this permission, we can not discuss or give information to parents
- The call is to make an appointment
- The call is to GIVE information but not to ask a question or to GET information

You may also access health care at your college health center. These same features are likely to apply at college.

You may now have an Advance Directive, also known as a “living will”, to make your wishes about your health known in the future if you are unable to express them. You can find information about Advance Directives at [www.hunterdonhealthcare.org](http://www.hunterdonhealthcare.org).

We are happy and proud to continue to care for you until you graduate from college or turn 21. Thank you for choosing us for your medical home. We will help you transition to your adult medical home when you are ready.