

14 April 2022

[REDACTED]

## Response to a request for official information

[REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for official information received 16 March 2022 by Nelson Marlborough Health (NMH)<sup>1</sup>, where you ask the following questions:

*I'm emailing on behalf of all transgender people in the NMDHB catchment area,*

- 1. I would like a definitive answer as to what the actual guidelines are for transgender people to access hormones therapy in the NMDHB catchment area.*

### NMH response:

Please see the following excerpt from the attached *Community HealthPathways Nelson Marlborough* Gender Dysphoria and Trans-gender Health criteria:

#### **Hormone manipulation**

- Endocrine hormone manipulation is not undertaken lightly. It is usually only considered in those aged > 18 years, and after a full psychological assessment, which is only available privately and may take several sessions.
- If a patient is accepted for hormone treatment, this will be directed by an endocrinologist, with appropriate monitoring by general practice.

- 2. I would like access to the pathways that is usually reserved for clinicians so I can personally ascertain the correct way to go about things and then to possibly put suggestions for professional improvement to those who may then require it.*

### NMH response:

The *Community HealthPathways Nelson Marlborough* site is for registered health professionals practising within their vocational scope.

This response has been provided under the Official Information Act 1982. You have the right to seek an investigation by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or free phone 0800 802 602. If you have any questions about this decision please feel free to email our OIA Coordinator [OIArequest@nmdhb.govt.nz](mailto:OIArequest@nmdhb.govt.nz)

<sup>1</sup> Nelson Marlborough District Health Board

I trust this information meets your requirements. NMH, like other agencies across the state sector, supports the open disclosure of information to assist the public's understanding of how we are delivering publicly-funded healthcare. This includes the proactive publication of anonymised Official Information Act responses on our website from 10 working days after they have been released. If you feel that there are good reasons why your response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'HE', written over a horizontal line.

Hilary Exton  
**Acting Chief Executive**

Encl: *Community HealthPathways* Gender Dysphoria and Trans-gender Health criteria (5pages)

# Gender Dysphoria and Trans-gender Health

## Clinical editor's note

June 2021 – Paediatrician or endocrinology services are currently unavailable for patients under age 16 in Nelson-Marlborough. This advice will be updated should the situation change.

## Background

### ▼ About gender dysphoria and trans-gender health

#### About gender dysphoria and trans-gender health

- Gender dysphoria is when a person, who identifies as a gender that is different from their biological sex, experiences discomfort or distress about this discrepancy.
- Gender nonconformity (or gender incongruence) refers to a person who identifies with a gender that is different to their biological sex.
- Some people do not gender identify as either male or female, but feel they are both, or somewhere in between, and are considered "gender variant".
- Check with your patient about their preferred term (he/she).
- If required, treatment for gender dysphoria may involve psychological assessment and support, or hormonal or surgical treatment. Treatment is individualised.

For further information, see [WHO ICD-10 – Gender Identity Disorders](#) and [Delivering Health Services for Transgender People: Advice for Health Professionals](#).

## Assessment

### 1. History – Ask about:

- ▼ gender-specific history

### Gender-specific history

- Duration of awareness of gender identity issues.
- How they would describe their gender to others.
- Who they have disclosed to and their main support (family or others).
- How comfortable or distressed they are with currently living in the gender they are expressing.
- Any care or treatment received to date.

- medical, drug and alcohol, and sexual history.
- mental health issues, including bullying, self-harm and suicidality.
- family support, including functioning and dynamics.
- social, vocational, and educational situation.
- medications – prescribed and non-prescribed.

### Medications

- Ask about:
  - complementary therapies.
  - self-medicating with hormones.
  - previous or current use of puberty blockers.
- The patient may already be buying and taking unregulated hormonal therapy products, often via the internet.
- Discuss risks if the patient is self-medicating.

2. Determine whether your patient is seeking general reassurance, education and support, or active treatment:

- Psychological therapy

### Psychological therapy

- Psychological therapy should ideally be provided by a psychologist with appropriate experience in gender dysphoria.
- In the absence of serious mental health issues this is not available in the public system.

- Hormone manipulation

### Hormone manipulation

- Endocrine hormone manipulation is not undertaken lightly. It is usually only considered in those aged > 18 years, and after a full psychological assessment, which is only available privately and may take several sessions.
- If a patient is accepted for hormone treatment, this will be directed by an endocrinologist, with appropriate monitoring by general practice.

- **Gender reassignment surgery (GRS)**

#### **Gender reassignment surgery (GRS)**

- Patients seeking gender reassignment surgery must first have a full psychological assessment, which is only available privately and may take several sessions.
- Surgery is not funded by the Nelson Marlborough DHB, but there are a small number of gender reassignment surgeries (GRS) funded privately through the Ministry of Health High Cost Treatment Pool.
- Only male to female surgery is performed.
- Referrals can only be made by an endocrinologist.
- Female to male "bottom" surgery can be obtained through private overseas facilities at the individual's cost.

3. Consider STI screening and bloods for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, HIV.

## **Management**

1. Provide patient information and support, and address any specific health needs. This may be all that is required.
2. For more in-depth gender care, or if the patient is seeking active treatment, offer referral for a **transgender assessment** at INP Medical Clinic.

#### **Transgender assessment**

- A limited number of funded assessments are available for young people up to and including age 21 years. From age 22, fees may apply.
- The assessment will explore the patient's history and gender needs, and result in a care plan and support framework.
- Onward referral for a psychological assessment may be made as part of the care plan, or if the patient is seeking further treatment.

## **Request**

Paediatrician or endocrinology services are currently unavailable for patients under age 16 in Nelson-Marlborough.

- If serious mental health issues, refer directly to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) if service criteria are met.
- If required, refer to INP Medical Clinic for a [▼ transgender assessment](#) .
- In some circumstances, a direct [▼ private psychologist](#) referral can be made, although a prior transgender assessment via INP Medical Clinic is preferred.

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## Information

### [▼ Clinical Resources](#)

#### Further information

- [Ministry of Health – Health Care for Transgender New Zealanders](#)
- [The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne – Australian Standards of Care and Treatment Guidelines for Trans and Gender Diverse Children and Adolescents](#)
- [University of Waikato Transgender Health Research Lab – Guidelines for Gender Affirming Healthcare for Gender Diverse and Transgender Children, Young People and Adults in Aotearoa New Zealand](#)
- [WPATH – Standards of Care for the Health of Transsexual, Transgender, and Gender Non-conforming People](#) .

### [▼ Patient Information](#)

Information for young people:

- [Beyondblue – Families like mine](#)
- [Dara Hoffman-Fox \(gender therapist\) – A Bit About Me](#)
- [Gaynz.com – Homepage](#)
- [Gender Minorities Aotearoa – Homepage](#)
- [Itanz – Homepage](#)
- [New Zealand AIDS Foundation – Homepage](#)
- [OutLine – Homepage](#)
- [RainbowYouth – Homepage](#)
- [Scarleteen – Genderpalooza! A Sex & Gender Primer](#)

Information for parents:

- [Beyondblue – Families like mine](#)

- [DSD Guidelines – Handbook for Parents](#)
- [Gender Minorities Aotearoa – Homepage](#)
- [OutLine – Homepage](#)

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## PAGE INFORMATION

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