

Guidelines for gender affirming healthcare in Aotearoa, New Zealand

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Issues: The 2008, New Zealand Human Rights Commission (HRC) report, *To Be Who I Am*, identified major gaps in “the availability, accessibility, acceptability, and quality” in the provision of gender affirming healthcare¹. Since 2008, work to improve healthcare services has been undertaken by small groups of dedicated health professionals around New Zealand, but there is evidence that much of what was highlighted by the HRC may still remain true.

Description: This guideline was developed to help address some of the concerns raised in the HRC report. In addition, it was recognised that New Zealand’s previous good practice guide, *Gender Reassignment Health Services for Trans People within New Zealand*,² which was based heavily on the World Professional Association of Transgender Health, Standards of Care, version 6 (WPATH SOC v6),³ required updating to be in step with current practice and international guidelines.

Lessons learned: Sir Mason Durie’s models of healthcare, Te Pae Māhutonga and Te Whare Tapa Whā provided a valuable framework to build the guideline and incorporate feedback from community and clinicians around Aotearoa. The collaborative approach of developing the guideline helped to ensure that it was relevant for health services and reflected the needs of the community.

Next steps: It is the intention that the guidelines for gender affirming healthcare⁴ will be used to support the development of health services providing gender affirming healthcare around the country and provide guidance to District Health Boards (DHBs).

References:

1. *To Be who I am*. Kia noho au ki tōku anō ao. Report of the inquiry into discrimination experienced by transgender people. Human Rights Commission. 2008.
2. The Gender Reassignment Health Services for Trans People within New Zealand, Good Practice Guide for Health Professionals. Counties Manukau District Health Board, 2011. Wellington: Ministry of health.
3. The Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association. The Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association’s Standards of Care for World Professional Association for Gender Identity Disorders 6th Version 2001
4. Oliphant J, Veale J, Macdonald J, Carroll R, Johnson R, Harte M, Stephenson C, Bullock J. *Guidelines for gender affirming healthcare for gender diverse and transgender children, young people and adults in Aotearoa, New Zealand*. Transgender Health Research Lab, University of Waikato, 2018.