

## CORPORATE OFFICE

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15 May 2019

Gloria Fraser

**Email:** [fyi-request-10073-4efbb49f@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-10073-4efbb49f@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Gloria

### **RE Official Information Act request CDHB 10079**

I refer to your email dated 12 April 2019 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Canterbury DHB regarding gender affirming healthcare availability. Specifically:

- 1. Are transgender healthcare providers under the Canterbury District Health Board encouraged to follow Oliphant et al's (2018) Guidelines for gender affirming healthcare for gender diverse and transgender children, young people and adults in Aotearoa New Zealand? If not, which guidelines do they follow, if any?**

The Oliphant (2018) Guidelines for gender affirming healthcare have been used to inform the Canterbury DHB Clinical HealthPathway relating to transgender healthcare. These guidelines are endorsed and used as a reference point by those clinicians working in the provision of transgender healthcare.

The World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) guidelines are also taken into account. <https://www.wpath.org/about/ethics-and-standards>

- 2. Is a readiness assessment required to access gender-affirming healthcare services? (This is an assessment of readiness for treatment from a medical and psychosocial perspective, as well as whether the client understands the risks and benefits of treatment, and is sometimes referred to as a 'mental health assessment').**

Yes an assessment by an appropriate psychologist or psychiatrist (with experience in gender dysphoria) is required before referral can be made to Secondary care (Canterbury DHB) services. These assessments can be obtained via the public system (CAF or adult mental health) or via private clinicians (listed on HP) with expertise. Only ONE assessment for endocrinology or surgical services is required. Patients only require a second assessment for Genital reassignment surgery. Previously this assessment was required to go on the waitlist but currently the original assessment (for hormones or other gender affirming surgeries) is enough. This acknowledges the long waitlist for genital reassignment surgery and an assessment will be arranged closer to the surgery date.

**3. If a readiness assessment is required to access gender-affirming healthcare services, who carries out this assessment? Is this assessment funded by the Canterbury District Health Board? Does the assessment use an informed consent model?**

As above. Yes an "informed consent model" is used.

**4. What steps is the Canterbury District Health Board taking to improve healthcare provision for transgender New Zealanders?**

The Canterbury DHB has been working through Canterbury Clinical Network over the past two years to improve services for gender diverse people.

Actions to date include:

- Setting up a new Community Advisory Group for gender diverse peoples in Canterbury, which will have appropriate consumer, whānau, Maori, PHO and clinician membership;
- Clarifying and streamlining referral pathways from general practice to secondary care (and the corresponding clinical guidelines, Hospital and Community HealthPathways for general practice, have been updated);
- Organising the appointment of a CDHB clinical champion for the organisation (one of our surgeons)
- Gender Diversity/ transgender health has become part of the Canterbury Child & Youth Health Workstream's annual work plan.
- Ongoing lobbying for increased trans-friendly mental health services for those that need them to improve mental health equity.

I trust that this satisfies your interest in this matter.

Please note that this response, or an edited version of this response, may be published on the Canterbury DHB website after your receipt of this response.

Yours sincerely



Carolyn Gullery  
**Executive Director**  
**Planning, Funding & Decision Support**