

Service Mapping Exercise - Exploring geographical variation in the NHS services for the trans population

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V1.0



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Introduction

Transgender people are people whose gender identity (their sense of being 'male', 'female', or 'other') differs from that of the sex they were assigned at birth. Some transgender people experience gender dysphoria, an accordant distress arising from of this tension between assigned sex and personal, gender identity.

According to a review by the Scottish Public Health Network¹ in 2017, there are an estimated 24,000 trans adults in Scotland. The report notes that the number of people accessing NHS services is much smaller than this (around 3,000 people had used the adult gender identity clinics (GICs)) at the time of writing. However, demand is continuing to increase on GICs and associated care. There are proportionally more young people accessing services; with the average age of people referred dropping to 26 (adults) and 14 (young people). There are also an increasing number of non-binary people who may not identify as either male or female, and an increase in people accessing GICs who were at the stage of questioning their gender identities.¹

The Gender Reassignment Protocol (GRP)² was developed in 2012 to improve and standardise gender reassignment healthcare in Scotland. It is underpinned by The World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) Standards³ and details the services, both specialist and generic, that NHS Boards in Scotland are encouraged to provide.

Gender identity clinics deliver many aspects of the protocol; assessment and diagnosis, endocrinology support and ongoing referrals for surgeries and other services, as well as signposting to psychological and other support groups. Primary care plays a valuable role in supporting service users both as a first point of contact for referral to a GIC, and in providing continued holistic healthcare support. Other services are often available within NHS Boards, such as the provision of wigs, some feminising surgeries, speech therapy, hair removal, fertility preservation and endocrinology.

The National Gender Identity Clinical Network Scotland (NGICNS) was launched 2014 to facilitate the implementation of the GRP on behalf of NHS Boards and Scottish Government. Since inception, the network has worked to achieve the service improvement aims endorsed by NHS Boards.

NGICNS was asked, as an outcome of NHS National Services Scotland's review of the network to map the services provided by Boards; the results of which will then be used to highlight areas of good practice, and identify areas where more work needs to be done to support services. This review of services across Scotland was undertaken by the NGICNS network in 2018 and 2019.

Service Mapping process

Semi-structured interviews were held with staff in each NHS Board, with responses recorded against each question. The data supplied was sent back to the clinical staff for checking to ensure accuracy, although not all Boards returned a corrected version.

The questions were based on the areas of care detailed in the gender reassignment protocol. In addition, Board staff were asked to comment on the area of care most in need of improvement.

The completed report will be shared with Board Equalities Leads in Spring 2020.

Mapping by Board

NHS Ayrshire & Arran

1. Gender identity clinic

NHS Ayrshire and Arran does not have a Gender Identity Clinic (GIC) based within the NHS Board; patients are referred to NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde ('the Sandyford Clinic'), and individuals can self-refer, (or be referred by their GP or other health professional).

Sandyford Clinic, Glasgow
6 Sandyford Place, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G3 7NB

A Service Level Agreement is in place between the two NHS Boards to manage this flow of patients.

2. Assessment, diagnosis and discussion re. treatment options

NHS Ayrshire and Arran does not, therefore, offer assessments, diagnosis of gender dysphoria/gender incongruence, or discussions regarding specialist treatments within the NHS Board area.

3. Ongoing referral

Referrals for some local, non-specialist services are available. These are covered below.

4. Continued treatment plan discussions / follow up appointments as agreed with GIC / suitably qualified individual?

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

5. Second opinions

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

6. Follow up appointment with GIC within 6 months of surgery, discuss if further treatments are needed?

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

7. Referral to specialist endocrinology

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

8. Referrals to speech therapy

The Board provides local services within all three Health and Social Care Partnership areas (Crosshouse for East, Ayr for South and Ayrshire Central Hospital for North). Patients are referred directly to Speech and Language Therapy (as out-patients) via their GP or from the Sandyford Clinic and can also self-refer. They will be seen by voice specialists for specific voice therapy work (including possible referral to ENT locally for surgical intervention). Group speech therapy is not available.

9. Referral for Upper Surgery (Chest reconstruction), and Lower Surgeries (Feminising and Masculinising Gender Reassignment Surgeries)

Chest reconstruction is available for all patients in Scotland via the NHS Scotland national contract, and the provider is at present Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Manchester.

New providers have been awarded and will be announced in due course. Access is via the GIC in the first instance.

Lower surgeries are currently provided via the Nuffield Hospital in Brighton and St Peter's Andrology in London. Again, access is via referral from the GIC in the first instance.

10. Referral to NHS counselling services

Local Mental Health Service do not provide NHS counselling service for gender patients, as there is a specialist regional service (including psychiatrists) at Sandyford.

For young people, CAMHS support young people reassigning their gender; referral is on a case by case basis.

Additionally, some GP practices within the Board have counsellors available.

11. Genital (surgical donor-site) hair removal

The current provider is via a commissioned private provider ('About Face'). The provider follows the guidelines given to each patient by their surgeon i.e. the patient passes on to the provider the instructions from the surgeon. This is done verbally (there is no letter). There is no policy document that the provider is aware of.

15 hours of hair removal is offered irrespective of the hair type, but on surgical recommendation this would be increased. There is an initial allotment of funding, thereafter surgeon make an assessment and guidance. There is no cap on this – it is needs-led.

12. Facial hair removal

This is available and provided via commissioning from a local private provider (About Face). Sessions have also been arranged at Ayrshire College. Fifteen hours is offered of electrolysis / laser, or a combination of both. This is not capped - if it is not enough, Sandyford clinicians would make an exceptional case application, including stating why this is required, hair growth / hair type.

Facial hair removal post-initial clearance would only be offered for pre-operative cases.

More clarity would be welcomed;

- National funding for hair removal and how to resource this is an issue
- It would be useful to have a definition of at what point the responsibility for hair removal moves to the patient.

13. Referral for breast augmentation

This is not offered routinely. Any request would go through the Multi-disciplinary team at Sandyford and be via an Exceptional case application.

14. Facial feminisation surgery

This is not offered routinely. Any request would go through the MDT at Sandyford and be via an Exceptional case application.

15. Is Lipoplasty / Body contouring available?

There has never been an application for this but it would be the same process of application as per facial feminisation surgery.

16. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

No, it is available via Greater Glasgow and Clyde, referral via the Sandyford service in the first instance.

17. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

- Clarification around what services can be provided locally would be helpful, as patients are waiting for months to be seen at the GIC. Anything that could be done to alleviate the time the patients spent waiting. The use of in-house chaplains / staff care team - during 12-18 month wait has been explored
- In the case of hair removal – if the patient is refused access they can be left in limbo
- Expenses paid to Glasgow for each trip
- More information for GP Practices.

18. Provision for wigs

Provision of wigs is via the Allied Health Professions' Prosthetics and Orthotics Service. The Sandyford clinicians make a request to the Surgical Appliance Department for the patient by letter.

19. Weight loss programmes and smoking cessation

There is referral into mainstream weight loss clinics; there are several, including within primary care. It is possible to be prescribed weight loss / exercise classes, though provision may be ad hoc. The 'Quit Your Way' smoking cessation programme is available to help and support people to stop smoking.

20. Patient information to take away

Not available at present.

21. Vocal cord surgery

It is thought this may be available via the ENT department, Crosshouse Hospital.

22. Tracheal shaving

This is not available in the Board.

23. Signposting to patient support groups / self help groups

There is a pan-Ayrshire LGBT+ development group. Some conversation cafes have been held to engage with staff and service users. There is an Ayrshire LGBTQ group, mainly held in Ayr and occasionally in other localities. For young people, there are a lot of youth groups – some via council youth offices. North Ayrshire has a particularly well established group that welcomes trans and non-binary individuals.

24. Aspects of care most needing improvement

- Hair removal - the lack of consistency around this
- Also, what can we do locally, to help patients while they wait to be seen. Waiting times are so long
- The time it takes to get bloods results from Sandyford - 3 months plus.

25. Information received from:

Rossana Ralston, Head of Unplanned Activity (UNPAC), NHS Ayrshire & Arran
Elaine Savory, Equality and Diversity Adviser, NHS Ayrshire & Arran

NHS Borders

1. Gender Identity Clinic

NHS Borders does not have a Gender Identity Clinic (GIC); the nearest clinic is in NHS Lothian ('the Chalmers Clinic'). Individuals cannot self-refer, they require to be referred by their GP or other health professional).

Lothian Sexual Health Clinic

2A Chalmers Street, Edinburgh, EH3 9ES

2. Assessment, diagnosis and discussion re. treatment options

NHS Borders does not, therefore, offer assessments, diagnosis of gender dysphoria/gender incongruence, or discussions regarding treatments within the Board.

3. Ongoing referral

Referrals for some local services are available. Facial feminisation and breast augmentation are considered on a case by case basis, and for facial hair removal (currently contracted with SK:N), there is also provision for genital hair removal. Patients were previously asked to see Dr Johanna Smith, a psychiatrist at Borders General Hospital, prior to onward referral, however she is now not in post.

4. Continued treatment plan discussions / follow up appointments as agreed with GIC / suitably qualified individual?

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

5. Second opinions

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

6. Follow up appointment with GIC within 6 months of surgery, discuss if further treatments are needed?

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

7. Referral to specialist Endocrinology

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

8. Referrals to speech therapy

SALT is available locally, otherwise referral has been until recently via Dr Joanna Smith, consultant liaison psychiatrist at Huntleyburn and the assumption is the liaison psychiatry team is continuing this work. This provides an opportunity to discuss experience and access local support.

9. Referral for Upper Surgery (Chest reconstruction), and Lower Surgeries (Feminising and Masculinising Gender Reassignment Surgeries)

Chest reconstruction is available for all patients in Scotland via the national contract, currently with Pennine Acute in Manchester, tender being re-advertised at present. Access is via referral from the GIC.

Lower surgeries are currently provided via the Nuffield Hospital in Brighton and St Peter's Andrology in London. Access is via the GIC.

10. Referral to NHS counselling services

Counselling is available from LGBT Health via Chalmers GIC, and local, general counselling is available as part of the NHS Borders Wellbeing service.

11. Genital (surgical donor-site) hair removal

This would be provided in Edinburgh.

12. Facial hair removal

This is provided via commissioning from a private provider, SK:N, in Edinburgh.

13. Facial hair removal post-initial clearance

Not known.

14. Referral for breast augmentation

Not offered within Board. Any request would go through the Multi-disciplinary team at Chalmers.

15. Facial feminisation surgery

Not offered within Board. Any request would go through the Multi-disciplinary team at Chalmers.

16. Is Lipoplasty / Body contouring available?

Not offered within Board. Any request would go through the Multi-disciplinary team at Chalmers.

17. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

No, it is available via NHS Lothian, via the Chalmers Street Service.

18. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

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19. Provision for wigs

The prescription of wigs in NHS Borders is via the Dermatology Department. They apply the national guidance.

20. Weight loss programmes and smoking cessation

Support is available for people who want to lose weight; this includes advice and monitoring. Smoking cessation is available – a 12 week programme. These are delivered as part of the NHS Borders wellbeing service.

21. Patient information to take away

Not available from NHS Borders

22. Vocal cord surgery

Not available from within Board.

23. Tracheal shaving

Not available from within Board.

24. Signposting to patient support groups / self help groups

Not available from within Board.

25. Aspects of care most needing improvement

-

26. Information received from:

David Parker, Senior Clinical Nurse Specialist, Chalmers GIC
NHS Borders Wellbeing team

Pauline Burns, Clinical Service Manager, Unscheduled Care

NHS Dumfries and Galloway

1. Gender Identity Clinic

NHS Dumfries and Galloway does not have a Gender Identity Clinic (GIC) based within the Board; the nearest clinic is in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde ('the Sandyford Clinic'), and individuals can self-refer, (or be referred by their GP or other health professional).

Sandyford Clinic, Glasgow
6 Sandyford Place, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G3 7NB

2. Assessment, diagnosis and discussion re. treatment options

NHS Dumfries and Galloway does not, therefore, offer assessments, diagnosis of gender dysphoria/gender incongruence, or discussions regarding specialist treatments within the Board.

3. Ongoing referral

Referrals for some local, non-specialist services are available, see below.

4. Continued treatment plan discussions / follow up appointments as agreed with GIC / suitably qualified individual?

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

5. Second opinions

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

6. Follow up appointment with GIC within 6 months of surgery, discuss if further treatments are needed?

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

7. Referral to specialist endocrinology

Patients are referred to Sandyford Transition service. Once stable on therapy the person may be given the option to have local endocrine follow-up, following the pre-specified treatment pathway defined by the Sandyford team. The endocrinology team in NHS D&G in line with other Scottish services has had no specific training in managing the process of transition. They have agreed to share the care of those who have completed the transition process and act on the treatment plans shared with us from the Sandyford team if the patient requests local follow-up, with the caveats that there is no access to the extended team such as psychology to help manage these individuals holistically.

8. Referrals to speech therapy

Speech therapy is available within the Board. Group speech therapy would be available, though in reality due to rural nature of D&G and limited numbers this is often not feasible. Communication and voice alignment therapy is available on referral. Therapy focuses on goals set with person to work toward their aligned gender. SALT service has achieved Gold charter of rights with LGBT Youth Scotland award. Links and membership with National Transgender Voice & Communication Therapy Clinical Excellence Network (SALTs from around the UK who share knowledge and expertise) and attendance at conferences by the British Association of Gender Identity Services (BAGIS)

9. Referral for Upper Surgery (Chest reconstruction), and Lower Surgeries (Feminising and Masculinising Gender Reassignment Surgeries)

Chest reconstruction is available for all patients in Scotland via the NHS Scotland national contract, currently with Pennine Acute in Manchester, tender being re-advertised at present. Access is via the GIC.

Lower surgeries are currently provided via the Nuffield Hospital in Brighton and St Peter's Andrology in London. Access is via the GIC.

10. Referral to NHS counselling services

Our SALT is working collaboratively with LGBT Youth Scotland and older LGBT adults on a needs lead basis.

11. Genital (surgical donor-site) hair removal

This is available, and as many sessions as required are funded.

12. Facial hair removal

Fifteen sessions are available. The same is available for all patients irrespective of their hair type / hair removal device suitable for their hair.

Facial hair removal may be offered to patients post-initial clearance on recommendation from Sandyford.

13. Is there any way the NGICNS can assist your Board in relation to hair removal for transgender patients?

We would like to set up a tender exercise to be able to point our patients in the right direction as just now they need to find the salon themselves.

14. Referral for breast augmentation

All such requests come under the Aesthetic Protocol for all D&G patients.

15. Facial Feminisation Surgery

This is available at Dumfries & Galloway Royal Infirmary.

16. Is Lipoplasty / body contouring available?

All such requests come under the Aesthetic Protocol for all D&G patients.

17. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

Yes, at Dumfries & Galloway Royal Infirmary.

18. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

No answer

19. Provision for wigs

No answer

20. Weight loss programmes & smoking cessation

There are local weight loss programmes such as the 'Healthy Connections Programme' and smoking cessation support programmes ('quite your way D&G').

21. Patient information to take away

No answer

22. Vocal cord surgery

The ENT Consultant advises all people referred to Edinburgh or Glasgow.

23. Tracheal shaving

The ENT Consultant advises all people referred to Edinburgh or Glasgow

24. Signposting to patient support groups / self help groups

Yes, there is signposting to LGBT youth and older adults LGBT groups

25. Aspects of care most needing improvement

There is a Transgender working group (of professionals involved in carrying out the LGBT charter of rights with LGBT Youth Scotland for their own service), who got together to form a collective group with the vision of improving the transgender persons journey through health and social care as opposed to each service working individually for their own service improvement. This comprised of people from Sexual Health, Equality and Diversity and SALT within NHS D&G, this group undertook a “what matters to you” survey in December 2017 to transgender people in D&G. Themes were:

- Limited of support/facilities for trans people, however the exception to this was noted as local provision of speech therapy
- Variation - some people feel their GP is supportive, others do not
- Issues around personal care in hospital
- Lack of general awareness by some health professionals around the diversity of being transgender i.e. not just male/female
- Suggestion that contact staff such as telephonists, receptionists would benefit from improved awareness

Care of trans patients has been an area of controversy in the Scottish Endocrine community as it is not something that most endocrinologists have the specialist knowledge or skills to manage and whilst the numbers are increasing they remain very small and as such there is probably merit in a highly specialist Scottish MDT hub.

26. Information received from:

Dr Fiona Green, Consultant Physician, Dumfries Royal Infirmary

Joan Pollard, Associate Director of Allied Health Professions, NHS Dumfries & Galloway

Other input from D&G staff members arranged via Mary Watson, Executive Assistant to the Medical Director, NHS Dumfries & Galloway

NHS Fife

1. Gender Identity Clinic

NHS Fife does not have a Gender Identity Clinic (GIC); the nearest clinic is in NHS Lothian ('the Chalmers Clinic'). Individuals cannot self-refer, they require to be referred by their GP or other health professional).

Lothian Sexual Health Clinic

2A Chalmers Street, Edinburgh, EH3 9ES

2. Assessment, diagnosis and discussion re. treatment options

NHS Fife does not, therefore, offer assessments, diagnosis of gender dysphoria/gender incongruence, or discussions regarding treatments within the Board.

3. Ongoing referral

Referrals for some local services are available.

4. Continued treatment plan discussions / follow up appointments as agreed with GIC / suitably qualified individual?

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

5. Second opinions

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

6. Follow up appointment with GIC within 6 months of surgery, discuss if further treatments are needed?

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

7. Referral to specialist Endocrinology

This is not offered within the Board. These would be accessed via the GIC.

8. Referrals to speech therapy

This is available locally. There are speech and language therapists working throughout Fife based in Health and social care partnerships.

9. Referral for Upper Surgery (Chest reconstruction), and Lower Surgeries (Feminising and Masculinising Gender Reassignment Surgeries)

Chest reconstruction is available for all patients in Scotland via the national contract, currently with Pennine Acute in Manchester, tender being re-advertised at present. Access is via the GIC.

Lower surgeries are currently provided via the Nuffield Hospital in Brighton and St Peter's Andrology in London. Access is via the GIC.

10. Referral to NHS counselling services

-

11. Genital (surgical donor-site) hair removal

This is available if required. Decision to be made by surgeon performing surgery as to whether genital hair removal is required. NHS Fife will pay for this if required.

12. Facial hair removal

Yes. Up to 15 sessions of laser hair removal. There is no electrolysis provision at the moment. Provision of electrolysis currently under discussion following recent SLWG review document. Facial hair removal is via Dermatology, to Spire Murrayfield or Ninewells for laser.

Dr Mowbray was a member of the NGICNS review panel which looked at hair removal for transgender patients. Dr Mowbray is clinical lead for the hair service in NHS Fife. All requests for hair removal are seen by Dr Mowbray.

13. Facial hair removal post-initial clearance

This can be performed at any stage following commencement of hormone treatment.

14. Referral for breast augmentation

Breast augmentation is available at Ninewells, NHS Tayside.

15. Facial feminisation surgery

The Board is offering feminising surgeries in Fife - plastic surgeons or ENT - centralised plastics (chest feminising, tracheal shave, facial feminising, laryngeal procedures to alter pitch of voice). This is a collaboration between Plastics, ENT and Maxillofacial surgery.

16. Is Lipoplasty / body contouring available?

-

17. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

It is available via NHS Lothian, via the Chalmers Street Service. Ovarian preservation would need to be discussed with Richard Anderson, Consultant in NHS Lothian. There is no capability for sperm preservation in Fife, referral is made to NHS Tayside.

18. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

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19. Provision for wigs

-

20. Weight loss programmes and smoking cessation

Yes, however patients would access as all other people within Fife

21. Patient information to take away

-

22. Vocal cord surgery

Yes

23. Tracheal shaving

Yes

24. Signposting to patient support groups / self help groups

-

25. Aspects of care most needing improvement

-

26. Information received from:

David Parker, Senior Clinical Nurse Specialist, Chalmers GIC

Heather Bett, Clinical Services Manager, Whytemans Brae Hospital

Punukollu Durgaderi, Consultant Lead in Fertility Services, NHS Fife

NHS Forth Valley

1. Gender Identity Clinic

NHS Forth Valley does not have a Gender Identity Clinic (GIC); the nearest clinics are in NHS Lothian ('the Chalmers Clinic') or NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, ('the Sandyford Clinic'). Individuals cannot self-refer to Lothian, they require to be referred by their GP or other health professional, but may self-refer to Sandyford).

Lothian Sexual Health Clinic
2A Chalmers Street, Edinburgh, EH3 9ES

Sandyford Clinic, Glasgow
6 Sandyford Place, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G3 7NB

2. Assessment, diagnosis and discussion re. treatment options

This would be via the GIC. There is no-one qualified within NHS Forth Valley to confirm this diagnosis. Diagnosis would be given by suitably qualified professional in Chalmers or Sandyford.

3. Ongoing referral

This would be via the GIC.

4. Continued treatment plan discussions / follow up appointments as agreed with GIC / suitably qualified individual?

This would be via the GIC.

5. Second opinions

This would be via the GIC.

6. Follow up appointment with GIC within 6 months of surgery, discuss if further treatments are needed?

This would be via the GIC.

7. Referral to specialist Endocrinology

This would be managed via the GIC.

8. Referrals to speech therapy

Chalmers or Sandyford would refer for speech therapy which would be delivered locally in Forth Valley. The service is based at Forth Valley Royal Hospital.

9. Referral for Upper Surgery (Chest reconstruction), and Lower Surgeries (Feminising and Masculinising Gender Reassignment Surgeries)

Chest reconstruction is available for all patients in Scotland via the national contract, currently with Pennine Acute in Manchester, tender being re-advertised at present. Access is via the GIC.

Lower surgeries are currently provided via the Nuffield Hospital in Brighton and St Peter's Andrology in London. Access is via the GIC.

10. Referral to NHS counselling services

Not available within Board.

11. Genital (surgical donor-site) hair removal

NHS Forth Valley has been funding sessions as required clinically via an arrangement with About Face in Glasgow. A clinician at the Sexual Health Clinic requests funding from the Board of Residence of the patient, in this case Forth Valley for genital hair removal based on clinical need. Funding would then be approved. A response would be sent to the clinician who we expect to inform the patient and they arrange their own appointment with About Face.

12. Facial hair removal

Yes. NHS Forth Valley has been funding continuing sessions as required clinically with About Face in Glasgow. A clinician at the Sexual Health Clinic requests funding for facial hair removal based on clinical need from the Board of Residence of the patient. There is then approved funding, as '11' above.

We would expect the hair removal provider to provide electrolysis. Electrolysis would be our chose method of hair removal due to failure of IPL in an individual in the past. We are confident in the standards of About Face to offer the most suitable form of hair removal to their individual clients.

Clearer guidance would be helpful. This would make it fairer across Scotland as some places are limiting the number of sessions provided while others provide continuing sessions as required by the patients. Requests have been made to approve hair removal at another practitioner but this was declined.

13. Facial hair removal post-initial clearance

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14. Referral for breast augmentation

Not sure.

15. Facial Feminisation Surgery

No requests have been made and no knowledge of a service.

16. Is Lipoplasty / body contouring available?

No requests have been made and no knowledge of a service. We would look to NSD for guidance.

17. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

We have not received any requests for this. We would look to national guidance for a steer.

18. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

Clearer guidance would be helpful. Perhaps a list of approved hair removal providers would be helpful as there was a complaint in the past due to a refusal to fund hair removal at an individual's chosen provider.

This continues to be a developing area experiencing increasing demand and difficult ethical situations. Absolutely requires a notional steer to ensure equity and fairness across Scotland and further across UK.

19. Provision for wigs

Yes. If specialist clinician based in sexual health clinic prescribes wig then NHS Forth Valley have a list of approved suppliers within the Board area. The list would be given to the individual who can choose which provider to go to. We try to allow funding in accordance with guidance so if this could be made clearer it would be very helpful.

20. Weight loss programmes & smoking cessation

All individuals can access these if they require them. Forth Valley offers 12 weeks free nicotine replacement therapy available from Pharmacies to any smokers over 12 who wish it.

21. Patient information to take away

No.

22. Vocal cord surgery

No knowledge of referrals for this.

23. Tracheal shaving

No knowledge of referrals for this.

24. Signposting to patient support groups / self help groups

Not known.

25. Aspects of care most needing improvement

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26. Information received from:

Aileen Holliday, Health Effectiveness Coordinator, NHS Forth Valley

NHS Grampian

1. Gender Identity Clinic

NHS Grampian has a gender identity clinic (GIC), based at present at the Royal Cornhill Hospital, Aberdeen. GP referrals are accepted for service users residing within Grampian NHS Board area. Self-referrals are not accepted.

Adult Psychiatry, Royal Cornhill Hospital, Cornhill Road, ABERDEEN, AB25 2ZH

2. Assessment, diagnosis and discussion re. treatment options

This is provided within the gender identity clinic in Grampian.

3. Ongoing Referral

This is provided from the gender identity clinic in Grampian.

4. Continued treatment plan discussions / follow up appointments as agreed with GIC / suitably qualified individual?

This is provided within the gender identity clinic in Grampian.

5. Second opinions

Yes

6. Follow up appointment with GIC within 6 months of surgery, discuss if further treatments are needed?

This is provided within the gender identity clinic in Grampian.

7. Referral to specialist Endocrinology

This is now available within NHS Grampian.

8. Referrals to speech therapy

Speech therapy is available at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary and at Dr Gray's in Elgin.

9. Referral for Upper Surgery (Chest reconstruction), and Lower Surgeries (Feminising and Masculinising Gender Reassignment Surgeries)

Chest reconstruction is available for all patients in Scotland via the national contract, currently with Pennine Acute in Manchester, tender being re-advertised at present. Access is via the GIC.

Lower surgeries are currently provided via the Nuffield Hospital in Brighton and St Peter's Andrology in London. Access is via the GIC.

10. Referral to NHS counselling services

For counselling is supplied via 'third level foundation' and this is specific, gender-related counselling - free for certain groups. People can also access more general free counselling via GP ACIS or other schemes.

11. Genital (surgical donor-site) hair removal

Not at present. A bid is underway, which, if successful, will enable the NHS Board to provide the service.

12. Facial hair removal

This is not currently available. A bid is underway, which, if successful, will enable the NHS Board to provide the service.

13. Referral for breast augmentation

This is carried out in Plastic Surgery at ARI.

14. Facial feminisation surgery

This is carried out at ARI.

15. Is Lipoplasty / body contouring available?

No

16. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

Yes, this is available within the fertility centre at the maternity hospital site.

17. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

Hair removal guidelines

General guidance

18. Provision for wigs

This is available within NHS Grampian.

19. Weight loss programmes & smoking cessation

Weight loss programmes such as Healthy Weight Grampian and community dieticians are available, and smoking cessation help is provided – information from the Health Information Resource service or GP.

20. Patient information to take away

At present, no.

21. Vocal cord surgery

This is not available.

22. Tracheal shaving

Yes, this is available.

23. Signposting to patient support groups / self help groups

Yes, a local mental health support charity – ‘four pillars’ can provide support, and a two LGBT groups; Transparentsees, and Grampian T folk both meet monthly in Aberdeen. There was in the past support in Elgin but this is no longer available.

24. Aspects of care most needing improvement

Hormone prescribing (since the interview, however, arrangements have been made to access local endocrinology services).

25. Information received from:

Dr Amber Keenan, CPsychol Principal Clinical Psychologist, NHS Grampian
Liz McPhail, Secretary, Gender Identity Clinic, NHS Grampian

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde – Adult Service

1. Gender Identity Clinic

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde houses a Gender Identity Clinic (GIC) ('the Sandyford Clinic'), and individuals can self-refer, (or be referred by their GP or other health professional).

Sandyford Clinic, Glasgow
6 Sandyford Place, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G3 7NB

2. Assessment, diagnosis and discussion re. treatment options

This is provided within the gender identity clinic in Glasgow.

3. Ongoing referral

Yes, there is in-house counselling and signposting to third sector.

4. Continued treatment plan discussions / follow up appointments as agreed with GIC / suitably qualified individual?

This is provided within the gender identity clinic in Glasgow.

5. Second opinions

This is provided within the gender identity clinic in Glasgow, by a different person within the same NHS Board.

6. Follow up appointment with GIC within 6 months of surgery, discuss if further treatments are needed?

This is provided within the gender identity clinic in Glasgow.

7. Referral to specialist Endocrinology

GG&C patients are seen at the Endocrinology unit at Queen Elizabeth University Hospital.

8. Referrals to speech therapy

Referrals are made to local speech and language therapy - one in the north and one in south of city (Stobhill hospital and Victoria hospital).

9. Referral for Upper Surgery (Chest reconstruction), and Lower Surgeries (Feminising and Masculinising Gender Reassignment Surgeries)

Chest reconstruction is available for all patients in Scotland via the national contract, currently with Pennine Acute in Manchester, tender being re-advertised at present. Access is via the GIC.

Lower surgeries are currently provided via the Nuffield Hospital in Brighton and St Peter's Andrology in London. Access is via the GIC.

10. Referral to NHS counselling services

Yes, this is provided in-house.

11. Genital (surgical donor-site) hair removal

This is provided by the local NHS Board, and as much as is required will be provided. The unit is sited within the old Yorkhill hospital.

12. Facial hair removal

15 sessions are available within the old Yorkhill Hospital.

For patients with grey, blonde or ginger hair unresponsive to IPL/laser hair removal, additional funding is requested from the NHS Board. It is a difficult area, and patients struggle to access electrolysis. The clinician will appeal to the Board on behalf of the patient. In Sandyford the budget is very small, and electrolysis is costed at around £60 per hour.

13. Facial hair removal post-initial clearance

This is rarely available. Five sessions would be provided at a time, in exceptional circumstances. The Board will offer hair removal after lower surgery if required.

14. Referral for breast augmentation

This is available from Canniesburn.

15. Facial feminisation surgery

This is available from Queen Elizabeth University Hospital.

16. Is Lipoplasty / body contouring available?

This had been requested once at Canniesburn. There was a reluctant response from the surgeon.

17. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

Yes, at the conception unit at the Royal Infirmary in Glasgow. There are no known issues with the service.

18. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

15 sessions of facial hair removal is not enough for some people. Support from the network could be helpful. A mention of the need for electrolysis for some people with grey/ginger hair in any legislative documents would be helpful.

19. Provision for wigs

Yes, wigs are available in NHS GG&C. The clinician completes a wig prescription and the patient takes this to the list of service providers on the back of the prescription.

20. Weight loss programmes and smoking cessation

There are weight management services in GGC which patients can be referred to. Psychology and other medical staff are involved in this. There is the 'Quit Your Way' smoking cessation service.

21. Patient information to take away

No leaflets are available at the moment. [Since writing, the Sandyford service had issued a leaflet on the young people's service].

22. Vocal cord surgery

It is possible to refer to Newcastle for this.

23. Tracheal shaving

This is available in NHS GG&C.

24. Aspects of care most needing improvement

Capacity Issues. Patients mainly complain about waiting times and hormones.

25. Information received from:

Dr David Gerber, Consultant Psychiatrist and Clinical Lead for Sandyford GIC

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde – The National Young People’s Gender Service

1. Gender Identity Clinic

The Young People’s Gender Service (YPGS) is based within the Sandyford service. It is a national service and accepts referrals of young people up to the age of 17 from across Scotland. Individuals can self-refer or be referred by their GP or any other professional working with the child. The service does, however, encourage referrals from GP, as this can enable parallel referrals if these are required, e.g. for mental health support.

Young People’s Gender Service

Sandyford Central,

6 Sandyford Place, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G3 7NB

For detailed information about the service, see: <https://www.ngicns.scot.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Sandyford-YP-Gender-Service-Information.pdf>

2. Assessment, diagnosis and discussion re. any suitable treatment options

Young People

Whilst some young people will only attend for one appointment, most will enter – as a first step – into a process of therapeutic exploration and assessment. This assessment takes place over a number of appointments with time in between appointments for time to reflect upon this process. This assessment is comprehensive and may lead to a diagnosis, as well as discussion about intervention pathways.

Children

There is no set lower age limit at the YPGS. However for children younger than five the service will, in the first instance, attempt to signpost the family to local services and supports. If the child is five years old and prepubertal they will be seen, along with their parents / carers, for a one off appointment. Following this appointment the family will be offered the opportunity to move to a position of “no active involvement.” This means that no further appointments will be arranged but the child is not discharged. They can access the service at a later point when they feel they need it. This is often in circumstances where gender incongruence or dysphoria persists and they enter into adolescence

3. Ongoing referral

When the assessment is complete, there may be a number of outcomes, including individual or family work, referral to another service, referral to a specialist in hormone treatments for children (Paediatric Endocrinology) or referral for further assessment for hormone therapy. Sometimes all of these things are suggested. Each person's care is tailored to their needs.

4. Referral to NHS counselling services

Sandyford Counselling & Support Services (SCASS) provides a Counselling Service for young people, aged 13-17 years, who are exploring / questioning their Gender Identity or considering transition. SCASS works alongside the YPGS and provides a safe space for young people to explore their Gender concerns and issues with a qualified counsellor.

5. Referral to Endocrinology

The YPGS can refer young people to Endocrinology (hormone) services, and will try and prioritise 10-14 year olds, as this is a critical phase in their development. All young people referred to Endocrinology will have completed a period of assessment in the YPGS. The YPGS refers to Endocrinology services in Glasgow and Edinburgh and maintains close links with clinicians in these services.

In Glasgow, there is a Gender Development Clinic - started in April 2018 - every second and third Friday afternoon of the month, integrating the YPGS and Endocrinology services. If a young person is prescribed hormone blockers their care will then be co-ordinated through this multi-disciplinary clinic at the Royal Hospital for Children.

6. Referral to speech therapy

Referrals can be made to local speech and language therapy services – this tends to be for older patients.

7. Support Groups

When a young person is placed on the waiting list they receive information signposting them to various sources of support including TransparenTsees, Mermaids, Rainbow families (part of LGBT Health and wellbeing), LGBT Youth Scotland.

8. Referral for Upper Surgery (Chest reconstruction), and Lower Surgeries (Feminising and Masculinising Gender Reassignment Surgeries)

Referral for chest reconstruction surgery can be made from 16 years of age. Most young people will progress with hormone therapy for a period of time before this is considered.

Lower surgery is available to people aged 18 and over (as per the Scottish Gender Reassignment Protocol) - this is out with the age range for the YPGS. When a young person is approaching their 18th birthday, there is a seamless transfer to local gender services for ongoing review, a part of which may include discussion about referral for Lower Surgeries.

9. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

Yes, it is possible to refer on for this; however, recognising that the YPGS works with young people from across Scotland, there is still some inconsistency about provision in different localities.

10. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

Sandyford staff have provided CPD sessions to CAHMS and other staff. This training enables professionals to improve their knowledge and skills in working with children and

young people who are questioning their gender or are trans. This training has been well received and the evaluation of it has demonstrated that staff report an improvement in confidence and knowledge. However the service is not well resourced or structured to provide ongoing training and support – despite frequent requests for this – and so support to do this would be helpful. Helping the service to establish biannual CPD events for staff to attend would be very helpful.

Helping us to support for people who are waiting to be seen for assessment would be beneficial - this is a struggle in terms of referrals.

11. Physical health needs

Weight can be an issue for a number of the young people who attend the YPGS, as well as for some of the young people who go onto puberty blockers. There are some weight management services, such as the Get Going programme in NHS Lothian. Linking young people in with primary care weight loss programmes would be helpful.

12. Aspect of care most needed improvement?

Increase clinical capacity. In 2019 the service received 559 referrals and does not have adequate staff to meet this demand. This results in a long, and increasing, wait for appointments at a time when ongoing physical development causes mounting anxiety and contributes to possible psychiatric co-morbidity.

More developmentally-appropriate accommodation is needed to see children and young people. A service evaluation which sought the views of service users concluded that whilst parts of the Sandyford building were appropriate, other areas were not.

Staff have tried to more actively manage the wait for service users. Once individuals are referred a letter with lots of links to organisations that might be helpful is sent to them.

Staff are also trying to feed back into organisations such as LGBT Youth and Mermaids, to try to help young people feel less isolated. Work has been ongoing on a care pathway that will try and ensure young people are healthy in a holistic way, promoting individual development and connection with others.

13. Information received from

Dr Simon Smith, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, and Dr Gordon Wilkinson, Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist, YPGS

NHS Highland

1. Gender Identity Clinic

Highland GIC is based within the sexual health service in Raigmore Hospital . It accepts GP and self-referrals from service users residing within Highland NHS Board area.

Gender Identity Service
Highland Sexual Health Clinic
Zone 14, Raigmore Hospital, Old Perth Road, Inverness, IV2 3UJ

2. Assessment, diagnosis and discussion re. treatment options

At present patients come to the highland centre for initial assessment, and are then referred to Sandyford for an assessment prior to starting hormones or other treatments.

3. Ongoing referral

Psychology referrals would be made if appropriate. If there were concerns, GIC staff would ask the patient's GP to refer to the community mental health team. Potentially there will be closer endocrinology links in the future.

4. Continued treatment plan discussions / follow up appointments as agreed with GIC / suitably qualified individual?

Yes, this is in place, and service users are seen every three to four months.

5. Second opinions

These are not offered within the Highland service. Patients travel to the Sandyford clinic

6. Follow up appointment with GIC within 6 months of surgery, discuss if further treatments are needed?

These are offered.

7. Referral to specialist Endocrinology

This is not available locally.

8. Referrals to speech therapy

Service users are referred to a clinician at Raigmore Hospital.

9. Referral for Upper Surgery (Chest reconstruction), and Lower Surgeries (Feminising and Masculinising Gender Reassignment Surgeries)

Chest reconstruction is available for all patients in Scotland via the NHS Scotland national contract, and the provider is at present Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Manchester. New providers have been awarded and will be announced in due course. Access is via the GIC in the first instance.

Lower surgeries are currently provided via the Nuffield Hospital in Brighton and St Peter's Andrology in London. Again, access is via referral from the GIC in the first instance.

10. Referral to NHS counselling services

Referrals are made to a psychologist in the Inverness community mental health team. Services are provided in house and via a local therapist.

11. Genital (surgical donor-site) hair removal

This is available.

12. Facial hair removal

This is available. The GIC requests this on behalf of patient, and referrals are made to Dundee laser unit or to a local salon for electrolysis. 40 hours electrolysis is offered initially.

13. Facial hair removal post-initial clearance

This would have to be requested.

14. Referral for breast augmentation

Not sure.

15. Facial Feminisation Surgery

Yes, referrals would be to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

16. Is Lipoplasty / Body contouring available?

No

17. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

This is not funded at present, but there is some provision, so it may be possible to refer but with a cost associated. Referrals are made to the Assisted Conception Unit at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital.

18. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

- signposting for support groups,
- establishing family support,
- third sector engagement

19. Provision for wigs

Yes, this is available in NHS Highland.

20. Weight loss programmes and smoking cessation

There are a variety of council run weight loss programmes such as 'Well now' and face to face courses for service users to access. Help with smoking cessation is available in house and via the Smoke Free Highland initiative.

21. Patient information to take away

Information is provided on Scottish Trans Alliance and NGICNS resources.

22. Vocal cord surgery

This is not available.

23. Tracheal shaving

Referrals are made to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary at NHS Grampian.

24. Signposting to patient support groups / self help groups

Yes

[Highland LGBT forum](#) also provides signposting to local events and support.

25. Aspects of care most needing improvement

More of a holistic service, with support provided by a team.

26. Information received from:

Fiona Gibson, Specialty Doctor, NHS Highland.

NHS Lanarkshire

1. Gender Identity Clinic

Service users are referred to NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's Gender Identity Clinic (GIC) ('the Sandyford Clinic'), and individuals can self-refer, (or be referred by their GP or other health professional).

Sandyford Clinic, Glasgow
6 Sandyford Place, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G3 7NB

2. Assessment, diagnosis and discussion re. treatment options

Yes, the Sandyford clinic provides this service for NHS Lanarkshire residents (there is a Service Level Agreement in place).

3. Ongoing referral

Yes, the Sandyford clinic provides this service for NHS Lanarkshire residents.

4. Continued treatment plan discussions / follow up appointments as agreed with GIC / suitably qualified individual?

Yes, the Sandyford clinic provides this service for NHS Lanarkshire residents.

5. Second opinions

The Sandyford clinic provides this service for NHS Lanarkshire residents.

6. Follow up appointment with GIC within 6 months of surgery, discuss if further treatments are needed?

The Sandyford clinic provides this service for NHS Lanarkshire residents.

7. Referral to specialist Endocrinology

Yes, referral would be made by the Sandyford clinic to the appropriate local service.

8. Referrals to speech therapy

Service users would be referred to NHS Lanarkshire speech and language therapists by Sandyford clinicians.

9. Referral for Upper Surgery (Chest reconstruction), and Lower Surgeries (Feminising and Masculinising Gender Reassignment Surgeries)

Chest reconstruction is available for all patients in Scotland via the NHS Scotland national contract, and the provider is at present Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Manchester. New providers have been awarded and will be announced in due course. Access is via the GIC in the first instance.

Lower surgeries are currently provided via the Nuffield Hospital in Brighton and St Peter's Andrology in London. Again, access is via referral from the GIC in the first instance.

10. Referral to NHS counselling services

This would be managed via the Sandyford service.

11. Genital (surgical donor-site) hair removal

Referral would be made via Sandyford to their local hair removal services, for up to a maximum of 15 sessions on surgeon's recommendation.

12. Facial hair removal

Up to a maximum of 15 sessions would be funded and referral would be via Sandyford to NHS GG&C hair removal service or to About Face; whichever was the more appropriate provider for the individual. As part of this service, Electrolysis is available for people with grey, blonde or ginger hair unresponsive to IPL/laser hair removal.

13. Facial hair removal post-initial clearance

-

14. Referral for breast augmentation

The Sandyford clinician would refer where appropriate to plastic surgery at NHS GG&C.

15. Facial feminisation surgery

The Sandyford clinician would refer where appropriate to Mr Koppel at Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

16. Is Lipoplasty / Body contouring available?

No.

17. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

Yes, the assisted conception unit at the Royal Infirmary in Glasgow provides this service and referral would be via the Sandyford clinic.

18. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

Not known.

19. Provision for wigs

Yes, this is available.

20. Weight loss programmes and smoking cessation

Individuals would be referred on to 'Weigh to go' a free 15 week adult weight management programme. <http://www.nhslanarkshire.org.uk/HealthyLiving/weigh-to-go/Pages/default.aspx>
There is a NHS Lanarkshire stop smoking pharmacy service.

21. Patient information to take away

This would be provided via the Sandyford service.

22. Vocal cord surgery

This is not available.

23. Tracheal shaving

Yes, this is available.

24. Signposting to patient support groups / self help groups

This would be managed via the Sandyford service.

25. Aspects of care most needing improvement

-

26. Information received from:

Yvonne Allan, Safehaven Manager, NHS Lanarkshire

NHS Lothian

1. Gender Identity Clinic

The Gender Identity Clinic (GIC) for NHS Lothian is 'the Chalmers centre'. Access to the service is via referral by a health professional.

The Gender Identity Clinic at the Chalmers Centre
2a Chalmers Street, Edinburgh EH3 9ES

2. Assessment, diagnosis and discussion re. treatment options

Yes, this is offered based on a MDT discussion.

3. Ongoing referral

Yes, this is offered at the gender identity clinic.

4. Continued treatment plan discussions / follow up appointments as agreed with GIC / suitably qualified individual?

Yes, this is offered at the gender identity clinic.

5. Second opinions

Yes, this is offered, and where this cannot be arranged locally, this a second opinion outwith Lothian is arranged.

6. Follow up appointment with GIC within 6 months of surgery, discuss if further treatments are needed?

Yes, this is offered at the gender identity clinic.

7. Referral to specialist Endocrinology

Yes this is available, an Endocrinologist is attached to the service and 2 clinics per month are offered.

8. Referrals to speech therapy

Yes referrals are made to speech therapy at St John's and at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh. Group speech therapy is not available at present.

9. Referral for Upper Surgery (Chest reconstruction), and Lower Surgeries (Feminising and Masculinising Gender Reassignment Surgeries)

Chest reconstruction is available for all patients in Scotland via the NHS Scotland national contract, and the provider is at present Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Manchester. New providers have been awarded and will be announced in due course. Access is via the GIC in the first instance.

Lower surgeries are currently provided via the Nuffield Hospital in Brighton and St Peter's Andrology in London. Again, access is via referral from the GIC in the first instance.

10. Referral to NHS counselling services

Yes, service users can self refer and the GIC will support access to NHS mental health services.

11. Genital (surgical donor-site) hair removal

Yes, this is available via Irmani, referral is via the GIC.

12. Facial hair removal

This is available from Sk:n, referral is via the GIC, assessment is made at St John's Hospital, Livingston.

13. Facial hair removal post-initial clearance

If further clearance required, this is reviewed on a case by case basis.

14. Referral for breast augmentation

Yes, referrals are made to St.John's.

15. Facial feminisation surgery

Some procedures can be done by NHS Lothian, others would be reviewed on a case by case basis.

16. Is Lipoplasty / body contouring available?

No

17. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

Yes, this is available via the gender clinic from Edinburgh Fertility and Reproductive Endocrine Centre at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh.

18. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

-

19. Provision for wigs

Not at present.

20. Weight loss programmes and smoking cessation

There are many weight loss programmes in NHS Lothian, and good ones provided by Edinburgh Leisure, with referral via GP. Smoking cessation support programmes are also available.

21. Patient information to take away

Patients are directed to online resources, are referred to the ngincs website, and there is lots of written information either in paper form or online resources.

22. Vocal cord surgery

This is not available.

23. Tracheal shaving

This is not carried out within NHS Lothian, an out of board referral would be made.

24. Signposting to patient support groups / self help groups

Yes, service users would be advised about sources of support, such as STA, trans masculine Scotland, LGBT Youth, Beyond gender.

25. Aspects of care most needing improvement

Waiting lists.

26. Information supplied by:

David Parker, Senior Clinical Nurse Specialist, Chalmers GIC, NHS Lothian.

NHS Orkney

1. Gender Identity Clinic (GIC)

Referral is to the GIC in Aberdeen. GP referrals are accepted. Self-referrals are not accepted.

Adult Psychiatry, Royal Cornhill Hospital, Cornhill Road, ABERDEEN, AB25 2ZH

2. Assessment, diagnosis and discussion re. treatment options

This service is provided via the Gender Identity Clinic in Aberdeen.

3. Ongoing referral

This service is provided via the Gender Identity Clinic in Aberdeen.

4. Continued treatment plan discussions / follow up appointments as agreed with GIC / suitably qualified individual?

This service is provided via the Gender Identity Clinic in Aberdeen.

5. Second opinions

This service is provided via the Gender Identity Clinic in Aberdeen.

6. Follow up appointment with GIC within 6 months of surgery, discuss if further treatments are needed?

This service is provided via the Gender Identity Clinic in Aberdeen.

7. Referral to specialist Endocrinology

This is available via the Grampian Gender Identity Clinic.

8. Referrals to speech therapy

This is available locally from the Balfour Hospital.

9. Referral for Upper Surgery (Chest reconstruction), and Lower Surgeries (Feminising and Masculinising Gender Reassignment Surgeries)

Chest reconstruction is available for all patients in Scotland via the NHS Scotland national contract, and the provider is at present Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Manchester. New providers have been awarded and will be announced in due course. Access is via the GIC in the first instance.

Lower surgeries are currently provided via the Nuffield Hospital in Brighton and St Peter's Andrology in London. Again, access is via referral from the GIC in the first instance.

10. Referral to NHS counselling services

If required, this would be accessed via the Aberdeen GIC.

11. Genital (surgical donor-site) hair removal

The Board had a request for this some time ago and the individual was referred to a local clinic.

12. Facial hair removal

This is funded by the Board.

13. Facial hair removal post-initial clearance

The Board had only received one request for this and it was approved. This would be considered in a case by case basis.

14. Referral for breast augmentation

This would not be locally provided, any service would be accessed via Aberdeen.

15. Facial feminisation surgery

This is available in Aberdeen.

16. Is Lipoplasty / body contouring available?

This is available in Aberdeen.

17. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

No. NHS Orkney patients receive fertility preservation treatments through the service provided by NHS Grampian.

18. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

-

19. Provision for wigs

No requests have been made, however, there is a service that can be accessed.

20. Weight Weight loss programmes and smoking cessation

The dietetics department assist with weight loss programmes and there is a 'smoking matters' smoking cessation programme.

21. Patient information to take away

No.

22. Vocal cord surgery

If available, this would be accessed via Aberdeen.

23. Tracheal shaving

If available, this would be accessed via Aberdeen.

24. Signposting to patient support groups / self help groups

This would be accessed via Aberdeen.

25. Aspects of care most needing improvement

Not known.

26. Information received from:

Marthinus Roos, Medical Director, NHS Orkney

NHS Shetland

1. Gender Identity Clinic

Access is via the GP then a referral to Grampian Gender Identity Clinic. GP referrals are accepted. Self-referrals are not accepted.

Adult Psychiatry, Royal Cornhill Hospital, Cornhill Road, ABERDEEN, AB25 2ZH

2. Assessment, diagnosis and discussion re. treatment options

This is via Grampian Gender Identity Clinic.

3. Ongoing referral

This is via Grampian Gender Identity Clinic.

4. Continued treatment plan discussions / follow up appointments as agreed with GIC / suitably qualified individual?

This is via Grampian Gender Identity Clinic.

5. Second opinions

This is via Grampian Gender Identity Clinic.

6. Follow up appointment with GIC within 6 months of surgery, discuss if further treatments are needed?

This is via Grampian Gender Identity Clinic.

7. Referral to specialist Endocrinology

This is via Grampian Gender Identity Clinic. There are no local services.

8. Referrals to speech therapy

Yes, speech therapy could be accessed locally at Gilbert Bain Hospital.

9. Referral for Upper Surgery (Chest reconstruction), and Lower Surgeries (Feminising and Masculinising Gender Reassignment Surgeries)

Chest reconstruction is available for all patients in Scotland via the NHS Scotland national contract, and the provider is at present Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Manchester. New providers have been awarded and will be announced in due course. Access is via the GIC in the first instance.

Lower surgeries are currently provided via the Nuffield Hospital in Brighton and St Peter's Andrology in London. Again, access is via referral from the GIC in the first instance.

10. Referral to NHS counselling services

This is via Grampian Gender Identity Clinic.

11. Genital (surgical donor-site) hair removal

Not aware of genital hair removal available locally.

12. Facial hair removal

Facial hair removal (electrolysis) can be provided locally, not aware of genital hair removal. Eight one hour sessions are available, or alternatively, services users can go to Aberdeen for laser treatment.

13. Facial hair removal post-initial clearance

This would be privately funded with the same provider.

14. Referral for breast augmentation

This would be via Sandyford.

15. Facial Feminisation Surgery

This would be via Sandyford.

16. Is Lipoplasty / body contouring available?

17. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

18. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

Hair removal guidance.

19. Provision for wigs

Some patients go off island, but there may be a local service.

20. Weight loss programmes and smoking cessation

There is an Adult Health Weight Management Pathway for NHS Shetland, and 'Quit Your Way' support for smoking cessation.

21. Patient information to take away

On weight loss.

22. Vocal cord surgery

This is not available locally.

23. Tracheal shaving

This is not available locally.

24. Signposting to patient support groups / self help groups

Yes, there are some informal self help groups locally.

25. Aspects of care most needing improvement

More choice on hair removal.

26. Information received from:

Hazel Sutherland, Head of Planning and Modernisation

Kim Govier, Public Health Secretary &PA to Director of Pharmacy, NHS Shetland,

NHS Tayside

1. Gender Identity Clinic (GIC)

Tayside is not technically a GIC, however, there is an established gender pathway. Whilst patients can place themselves on GIC waiting lists, there is a process of local assessment in the period whilst they are waiting to be seen.

There is a Service Level Agreement between NHS Tayside and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde for people living in Tayside to access services at the Sandyford Clinic.

Sandyford Clinic, Glasgow
6 Sandyford Place, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G3 7NB

All new patients go to Sandyford, however, if patients are already in treatment at Chalmers, their care remains there.

2. Assessment, diagnosis and discussion re. treatment options

Yes, diagnosis is offered.

3. Ongoing referral

Yes, psychological and psychiatric treatment is offered, if required, speech and language therapy, hair removal and if appropriate, wig provision.

4. Continued treatment plan discussions / follow up appointments as agreed with GIC / suitably qualified individual?

No.

5. Second opinions

Yes.

6. Follow up appointment with GIC within 6 months of surgery, discuss if further treatments are needed?

Not applicable.

7. Referral to specialist Endocrinology

Yes, this is available within Board. Patients are sent to an identified physician who manages trans patients at Ninewells Hospital.

8. Referrals to speech therapy

Speech therapy (including group speech therapy) is available in three different locations in Tayside.

9. Referral for Upper Surgery (Chest reconstruction), and Lower Surgeries (Feminising and Masculinising Gender Reassignment Surgeries)

Chest reconstruction is available for all patients in Scotland via the NHS Scotland national contract, and the provider is at present Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Manchester. New providers have been awarded and will be announced in due course. Access is via the GIC in the first instance.

Lower surgeries are currently provided via the Nuffield Hospital in Brighton and St Peter's Andrology in London. Again, access is via referral from the GIC in the first instance.

10. Referral to NHS counselling services

No, however, psychological treatment is provided.

11. Genital (surgical donor-site) hair removal

Yes, this is available as required, and it is for the surgeon to manage.

12. Facial hair removal

Yes, this is available as required, via (LHR) at Ninewells, and electrolysis via a number of local private providers.

13. Facial hair removal post-initial clearance

This is available.

14. Referral for breast augmentation

Surgeons at NHS Tayside can offer chest feminisation, tracheal shave, facial feminisation and laryngeal procedures.

15. Facial Feminisation Surgery

Yes.

16. Is Lipoplasty / Body contouring available?

No.

17. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

Yes, this can be accessed at Ninewells Hospital.

18. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

Clear guidance on hair removal would be helpful.

Tackle waiting times at the GICs.

19. Provision for wigs

Yes, this is offered within the Board.

20. Weight loss programmes and smoking cessation

There are general weight management and smoking cessation programmes.

21. Patient information to take away

No.

22. Vocal cord surgery

Possibly.

23. Tracheal shaving

Possibly.

24. Signposting to patient support groups / self help groups

There is nothing available.

25. Aspects of care most needing improvement

Tackle waiting times at the GICs.

Hormone prescribing - primary care / GIC interface

26. Information received from:

Linda Graham, Consultant Clinical Psychologist
Deputy Director, NHS Tayside Psychological Therapies Service

NHS Western Isles

1. Gender Identity Clinic

There are no local services for Gender Reassignment available. Access to a GIC would be via a clinical referral for an Extra Contractual Referral, which would be signed off by NHS Western Isles. An ECR for a gender clinic would be approved. All other services would be accessed via the gender identity clinic.

2. Assessment, Diagnosis and Discussion re. Treatment options

n/a

3. Ongoing Referral

n/a

4. Continued treatment plan discussions / follow up appointments as agreed with GIC / suitably qualified individual?

n/a

5. Second opinions

n/a

6. Follow up appointment with GIC within 6 months of surgery, discuss if further treatments are needed?

n/a

7. Referral to specialist Endocrinology

n/a

8. Referrals to Speech therapy

Anyone who is identified as having a need would be offered a service, which is both hospital and community based. 'Attend anywhere' has been offered for the last two years to facilitate virtual consultations, if that suits the patient.

9. Referral for Chest reconstruction

n/a

10. Referral to NHS counselling services

n/a

11. Genital (surgical donor-site) hair removal

n/a

12. Facial hair removal

n/a

13. Facial hair removal post-initial clearance

n/a

14. Referral for breast augmentation

n/a

15. Facial Feminisation Surgery

n/a

16. Is Lipoplasty / Body contouring available?

n/a

17. Is fertility preservation available within your board?

No

18. Are there any areas that you think the national clinical network help your board in progressing services for gender patients?

n/a

19. Provision for wigs

n/a

20. Weight loss programmes and smoking cessation

'Healthy helpings' weight loss programme is available. A one to one appointment with a dietitian would be available and 'attend anywhere' consultations are available with dietitians. There is a 'Quit Your Way' smoking cessation programme available.

21. Patient information to take away

n/a

22. Vocal cord surgery

n/a

23. Tracheal shaving

n/a

24. Signposting to patient support groups / self help groups

n/a

25. Aspects of care most needing improvement

n/a

26. Information received from:

Angus McKellar, Medical Director, NHS Western Isles
Speech and Language Department, NHS Western Isles
Nutrition and Dietetics Department, NHS Western Isles

Third Sector Support

There are a number of support organisations for trans and non-binary people in Scotland. Whilst this list is not exhaustive, listed below are some organisations that provide support and further information.

LGBT Health & Wellbeing

LGBT Health and Wellbeing is a unique community initiative that promotes the health, wellbeing and equality of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Scotland <http://www.lgbthealth.org.uk/>

LGBT Helpline Scotland

Provided information and emotional support to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and their families, friends and supporters across Scotland. Also offer support to those questioning or wanting to discuss their sexuality or gender identity. <http://www.lgbt-helpline-scotland.org.uk/>

LGBT Youth Scotland

LGBT Youth Scotland is the largest youth and community-based organisation for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Scotland. The charity's mission is: 'to play a leading role in the provision of quality youth work to LGBTI young people that promotes their health and wellbeing, and to be a valued and influential partner in LGBTI equality and human rights.' They currently support 31 groups across Scotland, for more details see <https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/>

Me and T

Me and T is a community group for friends, family and partners of trans people. <https://meandtscotland.wordpress.com/>

Mermaids

Mermaids was established in 1996 as a charity providing information and support for gender variant young people (19 and under), and their families. Mermaids offers a helpline and email support and has online forums for parents and young people 13-19. Mermaids also run residential weekends four times a year so that families can meet other families in a safe and supportive environment. Residential events are run annually in Scotland. <http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk/>

Scottish Trans Alliance

Scottish Trans Alliance is the Equality Network project to improve gender identity and gender reassignment equality, rights and inclusion in Scotland. They assist transgender people, service providers, employers and equality organisations to engage together to improve gender identity and gender reassignment equality, rights and inclusion in Scotland. They strive for everyone in Scotland to be safe and valued whatever their gender identity and gender reassignment status and to have full freedom in their gender expression <http://www.scottishtrans.org/>

Stonewall Scotland

Stonewall Scotland supports individuals to work out how they can make a difference for LGBT people at work, at home and in their communities, and with organisations to ensure they offer inclusive, equal and inspiring environments for LGBT people.

<http://www.stonewallscotland.org.uk/>

Transparentsees

Transparentsees was founded in 2013 by a parent who had found the support of Mermaids useful and sought to provide a similar supportive structure in Scotland. In 2016, three other autonomous groups were established by willing parents in Edinburgh, Perth and Elgin. Transparentsees offers email and telephone support as wanted as well as the opportunity for parents and other family members to meet each other in a safe and supportive environment.

If you would like to find out more, please email transparentsees@gmail.com

Trans Masculine Scotland

Monthly meet-ups and an active online space for the trans masculine community in Scotland. Please see <https://transmascot.wordpress.com/> to access their homepage and get more information.

Summary of findings

Many of the same messages were repeated across the NHS Boards in Scotland.

Access to gender identity services is not equitable across Scotland. As is common with many other NHS services, not all NHS Boards offer all aspects of care, however, NHS Boards were asked by Scottish Government to 'ensure that services were provided in keeping with the [Gender Reassignment] protocol'.²

Several NHS Boards did not have any trans-specific services available, with all the relevant services accessed via the GIC in another NHS Board. Gender Identity services were viewed as a specialist service area.

GICs

There is one service for young people, based in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, that sees people from all across Scotland. Four services see adult patients (people aged over 18); in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Inverness. These four services vary in size but all are small enough in scale to be vulnerable to staff illness, retiral and other absences (with the combined whole time equivalent for adult and young people's services at approximately 13 wte, as at November 2019, delivered by 21 individuals). All adult GICs provide a first assessment and diagnosis, and in addition, NHS Tayside also provides a diagnosis, first assessment and offers other support. Surgical assessments are not carried out in NHS Highland, and second opinions are also not provided outwith the central belt at present.

The Young People's Gender Service

The national service for children and young people is based in Glasgow. It sees young people aged five to seventeen, although there is a 'no active involvement' approach for the younger children; instead, support will be offered by the multi-disciplinary team, CAMHS and third sector support groups as appropriate.

Waiting lists for young peoples' and adult services continue to grow, with 1,268 patients waiting on a first appointment for adult services at the time of writing¹, and an additional 464 people waiting for an appointment with the young people's service. Individuals are waiting between eight and 22 months for an appointment with the adult service, and 20 months for an appointment at the young people's service.

The Sandyford GIC operates on a self-referral as well as clinical referral model, and so takes patients from across Scotland. Other GICs all require a professional referral. See [Appendix 1](#)

¹ Data as at May 2019

Endocrinology

Endocrinology support varies across Scotland, with tertiary care services in Grampian, Greater Glasgow and Clyde (both adults and children), Highland, Lothian and Tayside.

Speech therapy

Speech therapy was noted as available in all Boards.

Gender reassignment surgeries

All gender reassignment surgeries are managed under a contract between NHS National Services and NHS England, and provided in England. Referrals for genital surgery require two clinical opinions, one is required for chest surgery. A snapshot of referrals data ([Appendix 1](#)) for 24 months over 2017-19 shows that referrals were received for gender reassignment surgeries from all NHS Boards bar Orkney. An examination of surgical referrals by Board and surgery type in 2018 shows that all Boards were within three standard deviations of the national average for referral for that surgery. Current providers are in London, Brighton and Manchester. This necessitates long journeys for service users. Travel can be claimed back by service users from their Board of residence.

Other surgeries

Interim guidance^{iv} was issued in March 2017 detailing a revision to the GRP to remove any application of the AEARP to gender reassignment patients in order to address inequities in access.

Counselling services

Provision of 'specialist' counselling was seen in the main as the responsibility of the GICs to provide, although Dumfries and Galloway noted the provision of support linked in with LGBT Youth Scotland, and NHS Tayside provides psychological therapies for service users prior to referral on to the Sandyford service. All GICs provided an in-house or referral for counselling, with Chalmers providing the service in conjunction with LGBT Health, and Grampian in tandem with Third Level Foundation. Sandyford and Inverness provide in-house or within-Board services.

Hair removal

There is considerable inconsistency in the hair removal services offered by Boards. All Boards at the current time offer some form of pathway for hair removal pre-surgery (although

this may not be within the Board area). Facial hair removal is more problematic, with some Boards offering hair removal based on the requirements of the individual patient, while others limit the access to a set amount of hours, or sessions. Some methods of hair removal only work with certain hair colours, and not all Boards can accommodate the range of hair removal options required by some individuals.

Fertility preservation

Fertility preservation services are available in six NHS Boards across Scotland; in Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Lothian, Dumfries and Galloway, Tayside, Grampian and Lanarkshire. HFEA have issued guidance for fertility preservation for trans and non-binary people to help inform their decision making. In addition, HFEA issued a revised code of practice (in April 2017), which introduced guidance on treating trans patients and donors.

Wigs

Boards reported a mixed provision with regard to access to wigs. Scottish Government confirmed in 2018 to NHS Boards that the provision of wigs was covered within current guidelines for long term hair loss, and that Boards facilitate referrals for wigs from the GICs to their wig providers. However, access remains problematic in at least one NHS Board.

Weight loss and smoking cessation

All Boards provide smoking cessation and weight loss advice and support.

Printed information

Printed information to take away was not available in the majority of Boards, however, GICs do offer resources to take away.

Other support and signposting

Half the Boards said that signposting to local services third sector services was available, with others saying that this was provided via the GICs. Some of the support available in Scotland is detailed in the [Third Sector Support](#) pages of this document.

NHS Board contacts were asked about aspects of care most needing improvement. The following areas were seen as a priority:

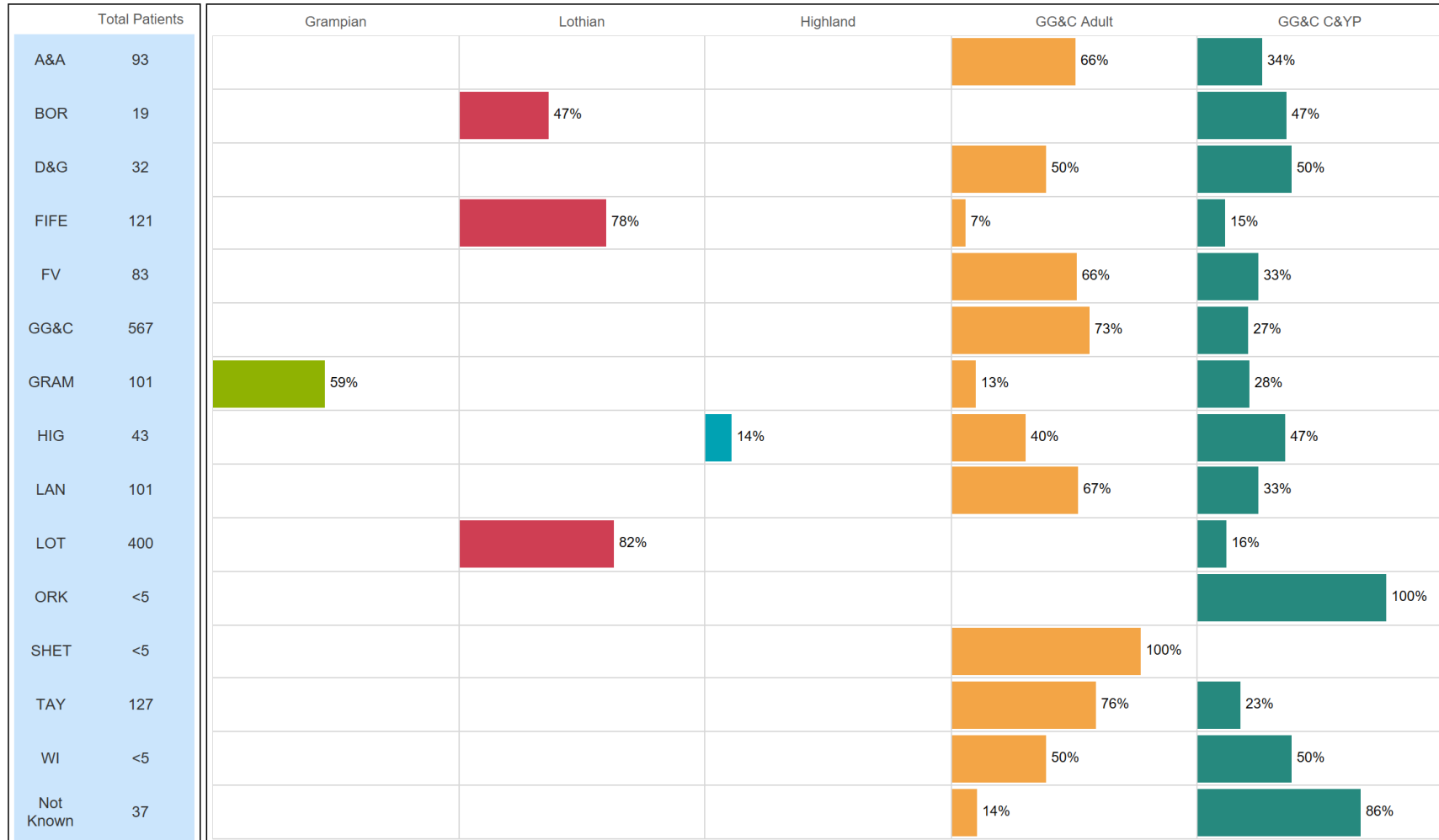
- Waiting lists
- Hair removal services
- Accessing hormones
- Staff training

Recommendations

- There are long waiting times for existing services. Gender services were seen by Boards as a specialist service but there was an acknowledgement in some Boards that more could be done locally, if there was some direction as to how this should be managed. More guidance for Boards about what can be done for patients while they wait to be seen at a GIC for their first appointment would be helpful.
- Existing GIC services are vulnerable to staff absence with no capacity to manage unforeseen absences. Boards hosting GICs should ensure that gender services are set on a more secure setting financially, supported by core funding, possibly routed through sexual health services.
- Consideration should be given to planning gender services on a regional or national basis, to ensure equity of access.
- There was a lack of consistency in the provision of hair removal, so national guidance should be issued as soon as possible around this topic. NHS Boards should ensure that they offer hair removal sessions in line with the guidance – in terms of types of provision and availability of sessions.
- Hormone management was problematic in some areas of Scotland – clarity and consistency around responsibility for these services would be welcomed.
- There was a lack of awareness amongst some health professionals around the diversity of being transgender i.e. not just a binary. Staff, including contact staff such as telephonists and receptionists would benefit from improved awareness around trans issues.
- There was inconsistency in the provision of aesthetic services. Clarification on national pathways would be welcomed via a full review of the GRP.
- There was inconsistency in the requirement for, and availability of, second opinions. This should be standardised and clarified via a full review of the GRP.
- Boards should be encouraged to follow the Scottish Government guidelines around access to wigs for trans patients. Reference to the guidelines should be noted in the revised GRP.
- Fertility providers should be encouraged to adhere to the HFEA revised code of practice when treating trans patients and donors.

Appendix 1 – Waiting List for gender identity clinics by Health Board 2019-20

Total patients waiting on 1st appointment as at 01/07/2019. The graphic shows the % split of patients across each GIC (rounding may produce totals over 100%). Figures under 6% from a Health Board attending a GIC have been removed from the graphic. All NHS Boards have patients wishing to attend (and attending) GICs. Source: Quarterly figures submitted to NGICNS network, and held by NHS National Services Scotland



References

¹Scottish Public Health Network. Healthcare Needs Assessment of Gender Identity Services. Thomson R, Baker J, Arnot J. May 2017, accessed 03/12/2019 from https://www.ngicns.scot.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2018_05_16-HCNA-of-Gender-Identity-Services.pdf

²Scottish Government. The Gender Reassignment Protocol, July 2012, accessed 03/12/2019 from https://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/mels/CEL2012_26.pdf

³The World Professional Association for Transgender Health. Standards of Care Version 7, 2012, accessed 03/12/2019 from https://www.wpath.org/media/cms/Documents/SOC%20v7/Standards%20of%20Care_V7%20Full%20Book_English.pdf

^{iv}Duncan M, Davies S, Renfrew C. Gender Reassignment Protocol: Interim Guidance Scottish Government; 2017.