



Canadian Professional Association
for Transgender Health

Association Canadienne des professionnels en santé
des personnes transsexuelles

June 24, 2013

Honourable David Wilson
Minister of Health and Wellness
Department of Health and Wellness
Province of Nova Scotia
PO Box 488
Halifax, NS B3J 2R8

Dear Minister Wilson,

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Professional Association for Transgender Health (CPATH). CPATH is the sole interdisciplinary Canadian professional organization devoted to the health of individuals who are transgender, transsexual or who express their gender in non-stereotypical ways from the sex assigned to them at birth. Our membership includes a range of medical specialties, various health disciplines, lawyers, researchers and more.

As you can see from the attached appendix, there is a clear consensus amongst the psychiatric, psychological, medical and other health care professions that transition related medical care, when indicated, is medically necessary, beneficial and effective to address and contribute to the health and wellbeing of trans people. Your recent decision in support of funding transition related medical procedures and to remove Article 4.8 of the MSI Physician's Manual is, therefore, significant news which will be of great benefit to the health and wellness of Nova Scotians.

Your admirable leadership on this issue will, no doubt, bring Nova Scotia in line with its Canada Health Act obligations to provide publicly administered, comprehensive, universal, portable, and accessible health care, and is consistent with the recent amendments to the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act to include gender identity and gender expression as prohibited grounds of discrimination. We would also like to applaud the efforts of the Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project, in bringing the ongoing health care needs of trans and gender diverse Nova Scotians to the Department of Health and Wellness's attention and trust that they will continue to be an excellent resource on a go forward basis.

CPATH recently conducted a very successful trans care provider training in Halifax, and we have a number of active members in Nova Scotia. We would be very happy to lend our assistance and consultation on design and implementation as a formal plan for care is developed.

Respectfully yours,

Jim Oulton
President
Canadian Professional Association for Transgender Health

Cc. NSRAP Health Committee

APPENDIX¹

World Professional Association for Transgender Health

Sex reassignment, properly indicated and performed as provided by the Standards of Care, has proven to be beneficial and effective in the treatment of individuals with transsexualism, gender identity disorder, and/or gender dysphoria. Sex reassignment plays an undisputed role in contributing toward favorable outcomes...

The medical procedures attendant to sex reassignment are not 'cosmetic' or 'elective' or for the mere convenience of the patient. These reconstructive procedures are not optional in any meaningful sense, but are understood to be medically necessary for the treatment of the diagnosed condition.

(<http://www.wpath.org/documents/Med%20Nec%20on%202008%20Letterhead.pdf>)

American Medical Association

Resolution: Removing Financial Barriers to Care for Transgender Patients

An established body of medical research demonstrates the effectiveness and medical necessity of mental health care, hormone therapy and sex reassignment surgery as forms of therapeutic treatment for many people diagnosed with GID ... Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the AMA supports public and private health insurance coverage for treatment of gender identity disorder.

(<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama1/pub/upload/mm/471/122.doc>)

American Psychiatric Association

Position Statement on Access to Care for Transgender and Gender Variant Individuals

The American Psychiatric Association:

1. Recognizes that appropriately evaluated transgender and gender variant individuals can benefit greatly from medical and surgical gender transition treatments.
2. Advocates for removal of barriers to care and supports both public and private health insurance coverage for gender transition treatment.
3. Opposes categorical exclusions of coverage for such medically necessary treatment when prescribed by a physician.

(www.psychiatry.org/File%20Library/Advocacy%20and%20Newsroom/Position%20Statements/ps2012_TransgenderCare.pdf)

The American Psychological Association

APA recognizes the efficacy, benefit and medical necessity of gender transition treatments for appropriately evaluated individuals and calls upon public and private insurers to cover these medically necessary treatments.

(<http://www.apa.org/about/governance/council/policy/transgender.aspx>)

¹ Statements selected from Lambda Legal, Professional Organization Statements Supporting Transgender People in Health Care

http://www.lambdalegal.org/sites/default/files/publications/downloads/fs_professional-org-statements-supporting-trans-health_2.pdf