



Position Statement

November 6, 2015

Access to Gender Affirming Surgery (SRS) in Ontario

Background

The Government of Ontario has acknowledged that trans people are facing extended waits for gender affirming surgery, widely known as Sex Reassignment Surgery, or SRS. The delay is attributed to a backlog at the Adult Gender Identity Clinic at Toronto's Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, the only agency that can approve gender confirmation surgery requests under current regulations. The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, having consulted several stakeholder organizations including Sherbourne Health Centre, has announced its intention to make regulatory changes to address the delay of care experienced by trans people in Ontario.

Our Position

As a health care organization that provides services to over 500 trans clients, we see the effects that delayed gender confirming surgeries can have on people who are left to wait. The Trans PULSE research initiative documented high rates of depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, and self-harm among trans people who are left waiting for surgery.

Sherbourne Health Centre supports a gender affirming surgery assessment process that provides assessments in the right place, at the right time, and in the context of individuals' overall health and wellness. We believe an assessment process that is grounded in a primary care environment should allow clients to access surgery with two assessment letters from primary care providers, such as a family doctor, nurse practitioner or regulated mental health professional.