



# Managing disclosure of gender dysphoria

It can be very distressing for a person to tell a health professional about conflict between their sense of self and the sexual characteristics they were born with. They will need reassurance, and careful guidance about what kinds of treatment are available.

## 1 Acknowledge disclosure

Common fears for those expressing distress about their gender identity:

- Ridicule
- Being judged mentally unwell
- Dismissal
- Judgement

Acknowledge the person's disclosure, and explain that people can find it hard to raise and often have reservations about disclosure.

Thank you for letting me know about this

A lot of people in your situation find it hard to share this information

## 2 Explore patient's background

How long have they felt this way?

Have they disclosed to:

- Family
- Friends
- Others

Have they changed name or sex on official documents?

How would you like me to address you? (name, title, pronoun)

## 3 Update records

Clarify how a patient with a new role would like to be addressed

Amend records accordingly

Would you like us to update our records?

Will it be okay if letters arrive at your home addressed this way?

## 4 Ask about self medication

Ask if they are self medicating with hormones from online "pharmacies."

- What are they taking?
- How much/often?
- Are there side effects?

Advise about the risks of self-medication sensitively

Encourage openness about self-medication if they want to continue despite risks

Have you been taking any hormone treatments already?

It would be safer to wait until your appointment at the clinic, but if you intend to continue, let's keep an eye on any side effects

## 5 Consider Referral

Refer to a Gender Identity Clinic quickly, especially if person is experiencing distress

Explain safe, well-established treatment is available, although there may be a long wait

Consider referral even if the person isn't sure whether they want medical or surgical treatment

Alert patients to informal support groups to explore while awaiting specialist assessment

## Gender identity clinic

**Assessment** Normally 2–3 appointments

**Investigations** Psychological and endocrine

### Investigation of circumstances

- Social
- Occupational
- Psychological
- Family

### Advice about consequences

- Medical
- Legal
- Other

## Management (if indicated)

- Hormone treatment
- Speech + communication therapy
- Facial hair removal
- Psychological therapy

### Discussions about surgical options

- Mastectomy
- Hysterectomy
- Oophorectomy
- Genital reconstruction
- Augmentation mammoplasty
- Ear, nose, and throat surgery
- Facial surgery