

November 22nd, 2021

Dear Children's Health and UT Southwestern leadership,

As Texan health care providers, we are writing to you to express grave concerns regarding recent news that there are plans to shut down the GENECIS clinic, which provides treatment for transgender and gender-diverse youth.

Children's Health and UT Southwestern are nationally recognized, well-regarded institutions committed to excellent healthcare. If the leadership at these institutions follows through with this plan, you will be failing in this commitment. You will be directly responsible for jeopardizing the lives of hundreds if not thousands of transgender youth in Texas and across the Southwest.

As you know, GENECIS is the only clinic providing gender affirming care in the region. Patients and their families drive to the clinic from as far as the border. With the removal of GENECIS from the Children's Health website and rumors that the clinic will not be able to accept new patients or prescribe critical medical treatment, young people and their families will have nowhere to turn for life-saving care.

We say life-saving -- and we mean life-saving. The American Academy of Pediatrics, The American Medical Association, and The American Psychiatric Association agree that gender affirming care is not only necessary but critical. Transgender and gender diverse patients are at risk for eating disorders, depression, anxiety and suicidality. The rate of suicidal ideation is double and the rate of suicidal attempts is three times as high in transgender and gender diverse youth than in their age matched counterparts. We know that when these children receive gender affirming care, their rates of suicidal thoughts and attempts are comparable to age matched controls.

The mission of Children's Health is to make life better for children. How can this decision possibly be in line with your mission?

The values of UT Southwestern are excellence, innovation, teamwork and compassion. How can this decision possibly be in line with your values?

The closure of GENECIS not only places a significant burden on families; it also burdens Texas medical providers who rely on the clinic for their experience and expertise. Many of us routinely and confidently refer patients to GENECIS specifically because you are the expert on gender-affirming care. Patients and their families may now have no alternative but to seek care

from those who do not have the expertise needed to provide the care they deserve. Worse still, these children may not receive gender affirming care anywhere and will be sentenced to a childhood of suffering.

The closure of this clinic violates not only your mission, not only your professional responsibilities and values, but also the trust placed in you by your patients and communities. We urge you and other Children's Health and UT Southwestern leadership to reverse course immediately.