

NSW health response:

NSW Health is committed to providing evidence-based, holistic, age appropriate and developmentally informed care for trans and gender diverse young people. Trans and gender diverse young people are at high risk of mental and emotional distress caused by stigma, discrimination, bullying and social exclusion, with higher rates of depression, self-harm, attempted suicide and actual suicide.

In recent years, NSW Health has seen an increase in demand for health services supporting trans and gender diverse young people and their families. Health services for trans and gender diverse young people are currently being delivered by the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network (SCHN) at The Children's Hospital at Westmead and Maple Leaf House in Newcastle.

Maple Leaf House is one of two hubs that form NSW Health's statewide Specialist Trans and Gender Diverse Health Service for young people under 25 years. Maple Leaf House has been established to service young people and families in rural and regional areas of NSW. The Trans and Gender Diverse Service at The Children's Hospital at Westmead cares for young people up to 16 years.

To enhance existing services, NSW Health is developing a coordinated, statewide Specialist Trans and Gender Diverse Health Service for people aged under 25, linked to a broader network of primary and community-based services. The service will be delivered through two specialist hubs.

The first hub will be the existing Maple Leaf House. SCHN and South Eastern Sydney Local Health District are working in partnership to form the second hub of the statewide specialist service. This hub is under development and will enhance the services currently available to young people and families in Sydney metropolitan areas.

NSW Health's expert clinicians work with families and young people to determine the best individual treatment and care pathway, which may or may not include medical treatment. All patients referred to the service undergo a specialised and comprehensive assessment involving consultation with specialists in psychological medicine, adolescent medicine and endocrinology.

Only once a longitudinal assessment and diagnosis has taken place are young people considered for gender affirming medical treatment, such as puberty suppression treatment or gender affirming (sex) hormone treatment. This occurs in close consultation with the patient, parents and treating clinical teams, who must all agree the treatment is in the best interest of the patient. Clinicians operate within relevant Australian and NSW laws, policies and safeguards, including appropriate consent procedures.

The service operates under international and national clinical guidance, including the Standards of Care for the Health of Trans and Gender Diverse People Version 8 and the Australian Standards of Care and Treatment Guidelines for Trans and Gender

Diverse Children and Adolescents.

At the launch of the NSW LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy in March 2022, \$3.4m was committed annually to support implementation of the Specialist Trans and Gender Diverse Health Service. Subsequently, the annual budget was increased to \$4.9 million Annually.

In 2022, \$2.6 million was committed to non-government organisations providing mental health support, family support and capacity building to trans and gender diverse people across NSW. The funding is intended to enhance community-based services that are essential to the delivery of the Trans and Gender Diverse Health Service.

In addition, \$1.78 million was committed to ACON and Twenty10 for mental health and suicide prevention initiatives supporting LGTBIQ+ people, including a Towards Zero Suicides initiative to develop a suicide prevention program for the trans and gender diverse community.