

QUALITY STANDARDS

Gender-Affirming Care for Gender-Diverse People: Care for Adults

A New Quality Standard



**Ontario
Health**

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Need to **complete the evaluation through the QR code** and then Matt Graveline from **Ottawa West Four Rivers OHT will then pass along the certificate of attendance** for you submit for your credits via www.cfpc.ca/login

However, we would ask for all participants to complete this evaluation so we can take the feedback and continue to improve!

Ottawa West Four Rivers Primary Care Lunch & Learn Evaluation



Today's speakers



Holly Brown (they/she/elle)

- Trans Health Team Lead, Centretown Community Health Centre
 - Directs the Regional Planning Table for Trans Health
 - Champlain Region
- Member of the Gender-Affirming Care Quality Standard Advisory Committee

Learning objectives



Following the presentation, attendees will be able to:

- Describe why improving gender-affirming care for gender-diverse people is an important priority for Ontario
- Identify opportunities in their own practices to improve gender-affirming care for gender-diverse people
- Access useful tools and resources for use within the clinical setting and to share with gender-diverse people



Why do we need a quality
standard for gender-affirming
care?



Gender-affirming care refers to health care that recognizes and affirms the gender identity and expression of gender-diverse people, whether socially, medically, legally, or some combination of these.^{1,2}



1 in 300 people in Ontario (0.33%) identified as gender diverse in the 2021 census,³ and the need for gender-affirming care is growing.⁴

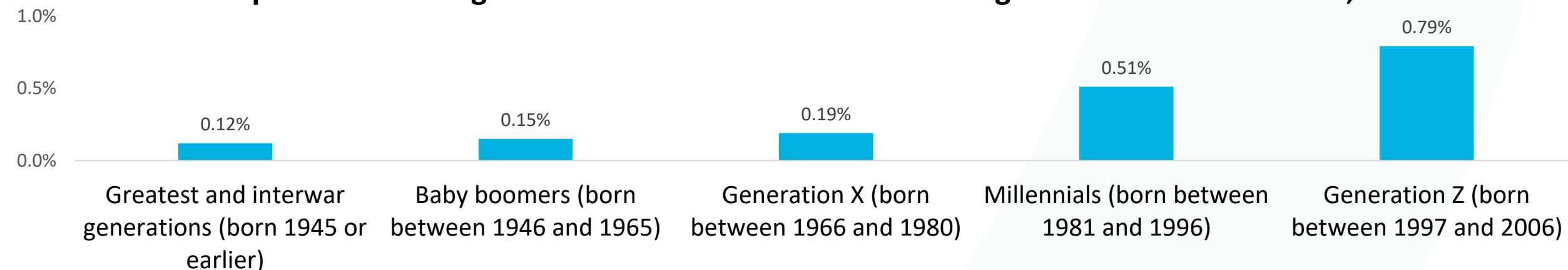


Gender-diverse people experience discrimination, minority stress, and barriers to accessing health care, all of which contribute to worse physical and mental health outcomes compared with their cisgender peers.^{5,6}

1. Coleman et al, 2022, [Standards of care for the health of transgender and gender diverse people, version 8](#).
2. Reisner and Murchison, 2016, [A global research synthesis of HIV and STI biobehavioural risks in female-to-male transgender adults](#).
3. Statistics Canada, 2021 Canadian census, *The Daily*, April 27, 2022: [Canada is the first country to provide census data on transgender and nonbinary people](#).
4. Vandermorris and Metzger, 2023, [An affirming approach to caring for transgender and gender-diverse youth](#).
5. Flentje et al, 2022, [Minority stress, structural stigma, and physical health among sexual and gender minority individuals: examining the relative strength of the relationships](#).
6. Hendricks and Testa, 2012, [A conceptual framework for clinical work with transgender and gender nonconforming clients: an adaptation of the Minority Stress Model](#).

To meet the needs of the growing gender-diverse community, access to gender-affirming care will need to be made more widely available

Proportion of each generational cohort that identified as gender-diverse in Canada, 2021¹



Gender diversity is increasing; the rise may be associated with the dismantling of societal stigmas.^{1,2} As a result, the gender-diverse community in Canada is younger, with an average age of 39.4 years, compared to 48.0 years among the cisgender population.¹

1. Statistics Canada, 2021 Canadian census, *The Daily*, April 27, 2022: [Canada is the first country to provide census data on transgender and nonbinary people](#).

2. Zhang et al, 2020, [Epidemiological considerations in transgender health: a systematic review with focus on higher quality data](#).

Gender-diverse adults have lower self-reported health and more unmet health care needs than cisgender adults

- **42.3%** of gender-diverse respondents in Ontario reported having unmet health care needs in the past year,² compared to **4.8%** in the general Ontario population
- **61%** of Trans Ontarians do not receive Primary Care annually due to fear of “what the doctor might say or do”
- Up to **50%** of transgender youth have unmet health needs in Canada



1. Canadian Community Health Survey, Ontario Share File, 2019 and 2020 combined.
3. Bauer et al., 2017, Availability, quality, and unmet need: a comparison of transgender and cisgender residents of Ontario.
4. Bauer et al., 2021, Health care access among transgender and nonbinary people in Canada 2019: a cross-sectional survey

Gender Affirming Care is life saving, but difficult to access



- Providing gender-affirming care is associated with **60%** lower risk of depression and **73%** lower risk of suicidality
- **43%** of those planning but have not begun experience suicidality, upon completion of their unique medical transition goals, suicidality is reduced by **50%**
- **55%** of gender-diverse individuals from Ontario had a primary care provider with whom they were comfortable discussing their gender



What does gender affirming care access look like in our clinics?

1. Bauer et al., 2021, Health care access among transgender and non-binary people in Canada 2019: a cross-sectional survey

2. Trans Pulse, 2013

3. Bauer et al., 2023, Expert Opinion: Cuts to telehealth in Ontario mean fewer trans and non-binary people will have access to life-saving health care

Unmet health care needs and health disparities for gender-diverse individuals

- Up to **25%** of individuals turned to “do-it-yourself” transitions¹
- Primary care experiences, access issues and minority stress factor into a patient’s decision to seek subsequent care, for example Emergency Departments (E.D.)
 - **52%** of Trans Ontarians have reported discrimination/care refusal at an E.D.; **21%** avoid these spaces due to fear²



~67% experience silent harassment, physical violence, or verbal harassment in their daily lives, due to their gender identity³.

1.Bauer et al., 2013, Nonprescribed Hormone use and Self-performed Surgeries: "do-it-yourself" Transitions in Transgender Communities in Ontario, Canada.

2.Bauer et al., 2014, Reported Emergency Department Avoidance, Use, and Experiences of Transgender Persons in Ontario, Canada: Results From a Respondent-Driven Sampling Survey

3.Cameron et al., 2021, Experiences of Transgender Participants in Emergency Departments: Findings from the OutLook Study.

Gender-diverse adults rate their mental health considerably worse than cisgender adults

- 49.7% of gender-diverse adults rated their mental health positively (good, very good, or excellent)*, compared to 85.5% of cisgender adults¹
- Systemic discrimination, lack of access to gender-affirming care, marginalization, and economic insecurity may be associated with negative mental health outcomes among gender-diverse people²⁻⁴

Percentage of gender-diverse and cisgender adults in Ontario who rated their mental health positively, 2019, 2020, and 2021¹



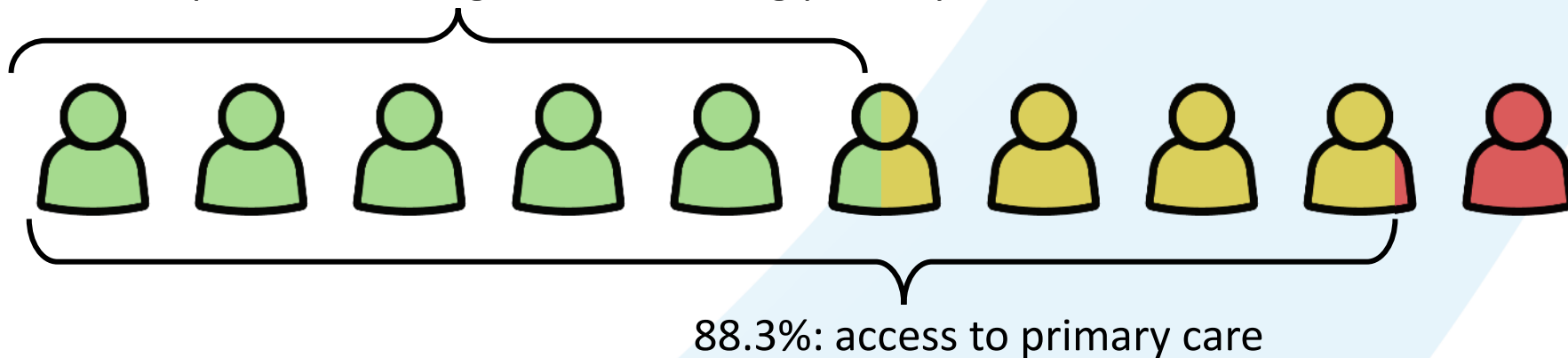
1. Canadian Community Health Survey, Ontario Share File; 2019, 2020, and 2021 combined.
2. Statistics Canada, 2020, [Experiences of violent victimization and unwanted sexual behaviours among gay, lesbian, bisexual and other sexual minority people, and the transgender population, in Canada, 2018](#).
3. Statistics Canada, 2021 Canadian census, *The Daily*, April 27, 2022, [Canada is the first country to provide census data on transgender and nonbinary people](#).
4. Bhatt et al., 2022, [Gender-affirming care for transgender patients](#).

*Interpret these findings with caution as there was a high sampling variability in the estimate.

Gender-affirming primary care is not currently accessible to all gender-diverse adults in Ontario

- Between 2019 and 2021, 88.3% of gender-diverse adults and 88.5% of cisgender adults in Ontario reported having a regular primary care clinician (a family doctor, general practitioner, or nurse practitioner)¹
- In the 2019 Trans PULSE Canada survey,² only 54.6% of gender-diverse respondents in Ontario reported having a primary care clinician with whom they felt comfortable discussing issues related to their gender identity

54.6%: comfortable experience with gender-affirming primary care



1. Canadian Community Health Survey, Ontario Share File, 2019 and 2020 combined.

2. Scheim et al, 2021, [Health care access among transgender and nonbinary people in Canada, 2019: a cross-sectional survey](#).



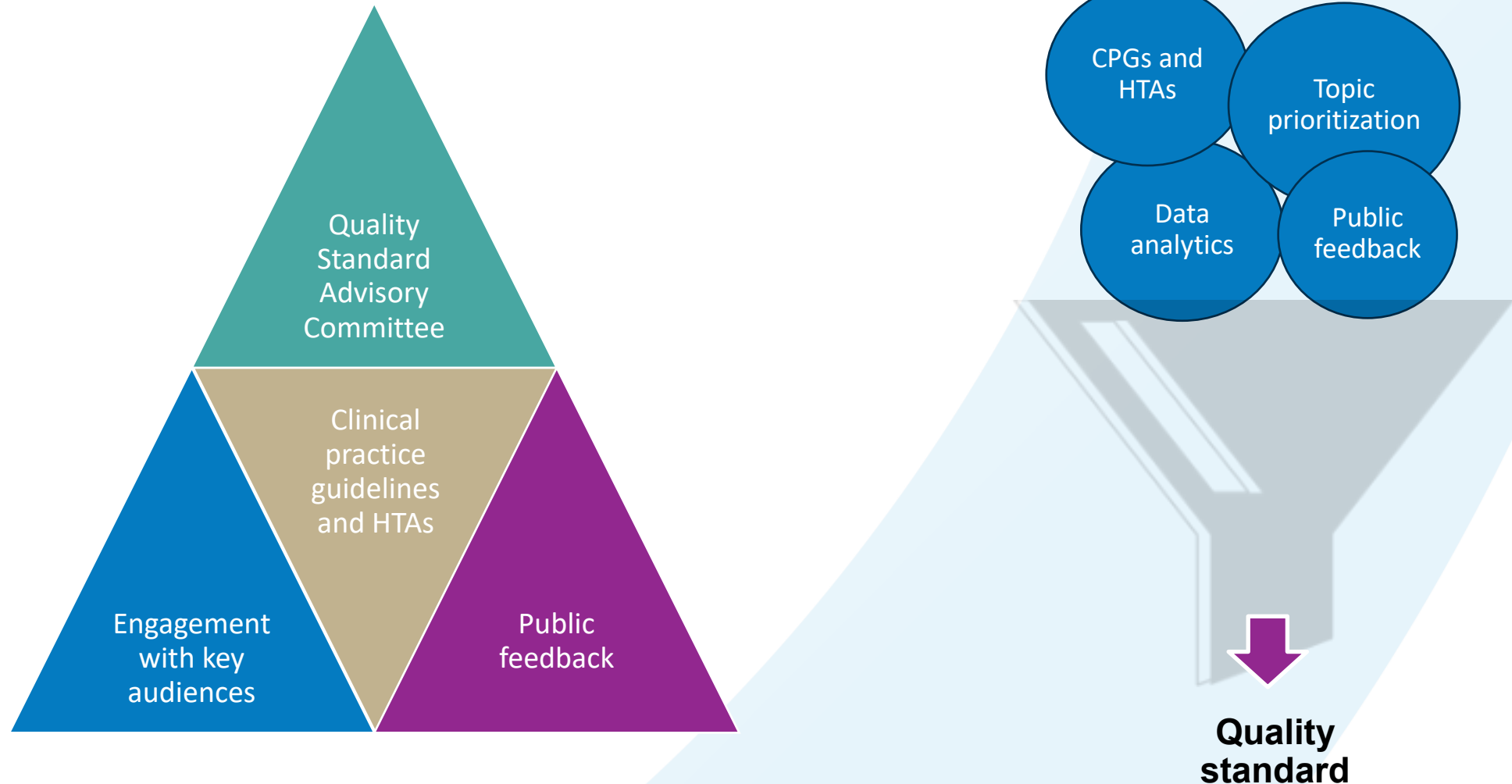
Introducing the *Gender-Affirming
Care for Gender-Diverse People:*
Care for Adults quality standard

What are quality standards?



- Inform clinicians and patients what high-quality care looks like
- Focus on conditions or processes where there are large variations in how care is delivered or where there are gaps between the care provided in Ontario and the care patients should receive
- Are grounded in the best-available evidence

Key inputs for quality standard development



Scope of this quality standard

- This quality standard addresses care for gender-diverse adults aged 18 years and older. The quality standard focuses on gender-affirming care and the primary care needs of gender-diverse adults, including assessment, screening, treatment, and follow-up. It addresses primary care referral for gender-affirming surgical assessment, based on clinical evidence, but not specific surgical procedures.



Quality statement topics

1. Gender-affirming education and training for health care teams
2. Gender-affirming primary care
3. Gender-affirming hormone therapy
4. Gender-affirming mental health care
5. Gender-affirming health care environments

Quality standard resources



Quality Standard



Patient Guide



Placemat



Case for Improvement Deck



Measurement Guide



Technical Specifications



Getting Started Guide

Find these resources here:

<https://www.hqontario.ca/evidence-to-improve-care/quality-standards/view-all-quality-standards/gender-affirming-care-for-gender-diverse-people>



Statements and Resources

Exploring the quality standard

Gender-Affirming Care for Gender-Diverse People: Care for Adults placemat

- A two-page resource for clinicians that summarizes content from the Quality Standard

QUALITY STANDARDS

Placemat for Gender-Affirming Care for Adults

This document is a resource for clinicians and summarizes content from the [Gender-Affirming Care for Gender-Diverse People: Care for Adults](#) quality standard.

Quality Statement (QS) 1: Gender-Affirming Education and Training for Health Care Teams

Gender-diverse adults receive care from clinicians who have the clinical and cultural competency and cultural humility to provide safe and appropriate gender-affirming care. Health care organizations provide ongoing gender-affirming education and training for health care teams to build organizational capacity to deliver equitable care.

Treat gender-diverse adults with respect, dignity, and compassion, and work to establish trust with them. Ensure that you are equipped with the appropriate knowledge and skills to provide safe and appropriate gender-affirming care with clinical and cultural competency and cultural humility, for example, by pursuing ongoing gender-affirming education and training. See each person as an individual. Practice active listening, work to understand their needs, and provide timely, affirming care. Be an advocate and an agent of change if discrimination need to be

Affirming Primary Care

Receive appropriate and affirming primary care including, treatment, and based on their needs and appropriate for their age, anatomy.

1 compassionate gender-diverse adults. Health assessments, screening, and according to clinical

practice guideline recommendations, in line with their needs, preferences, and goals, and as appropriate for their age, gender, and current anatomy. Discuss plans for ongoing and further gender-affirming care, and maintain up-to-date records of people's past and present use of gender-affirming hormone therapy, gender-affirming surgeries, and current anatomy. Consult with other primary care clinicians with knowledge and experience in gender-affirming care as needed. Provide referrals to specialist care only as needed. Do not respond to health concerns that are unrelated to gender as though there is a connection with gender.

QS 3: Gender-Affirming Hormone Therapy

Gender-diverse adults have access to gender-affirming hormone therapy from a primary care clinician. Gender-affirming hormone therapy meets the needs and preferences of gender-diverse adults.

Following a health assessment, provide gender-affirming hormone therapy that meets people's needs and preferences and is in line with current clinical practice guideline recommendations and Rainbow Health Ontario's [Guidelines for Gender-Affirming Primary Care With Trans and Non-binary Patients](#). Use a collaborative, trauma-informed, and person-centred approach that focuses on psychosocial preparation and informed consent. Provide people with the information they need to engage in informed, shared decision-making, including the potential risks of hormone therapy:

- People receiving testosterone may experience an increase in blood pressure; therefore, blood pressure and lipid profile should be assessed before starting testosterone and then monitored regularly after a person has begun taking testosterone



Gender-affirming education and training for health care teams



Gender-diverse adults receive care from clinicians who have the clinical and cultural competency and cultural humility to provide safe and appropriate gender-affirming care. Health care organizations provide ongoing gender-affirming education and training for health care teams to build organizational capacity to deliver equitable care.

Primary care toolkit for trans and gender-diverse clients

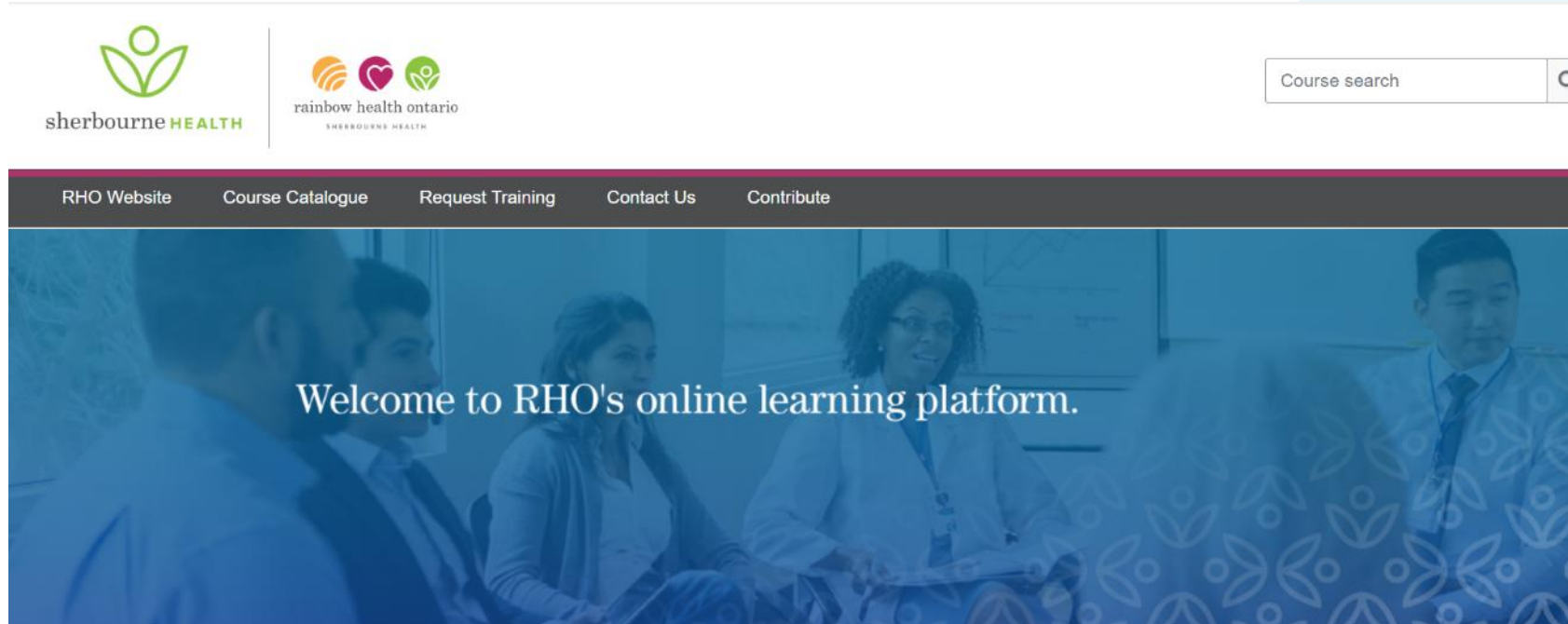


My guide to caring for trans and gender-diverse patients

- A comprehensive guide for primary care clinicians from Sherbourne Health and Rainbow Health Ontario
- Includes an overview of trans and gender-diverse health issues, terminology, how to assess new clients, and clinical guidance on providing gender-affirming hormone therapy

RainbowHealthOntario.ca/TransHealthGuide/index.html

2SLGBTQ Health Connect



- An online learning platform from Rainbow Health Ontario
- Provides low-cost, on-demand and facilitated virtual courses to help clinicians build competence in providing gender-affirming care

Learn.RainbowHealthOntario.ca

Opportunities to connect with experts

- [Trans Health Mentorship Call](#): A teleconference held twice a month for Ontario clinicians to connect with peers with experience caring for trans and nonbinary service users, facilitated by Rainbow Health Ontario
- [eConsult Ontario](#): A secure web-based tool that allows primary care clinicians timely access to specialists, including those with expertise in gender-affirming care, often eliminating the need for an in-person specialist visit

RHO Mentorship call Yes, we are moving to the Zoom platform starting January 22nd (the next call). Update: Going forward anyone joining the mentorship call must have taken the foundations course (self led).

ANY CLINICIAN can also use this option for Q&A, and they do not require the foundations course to use it:

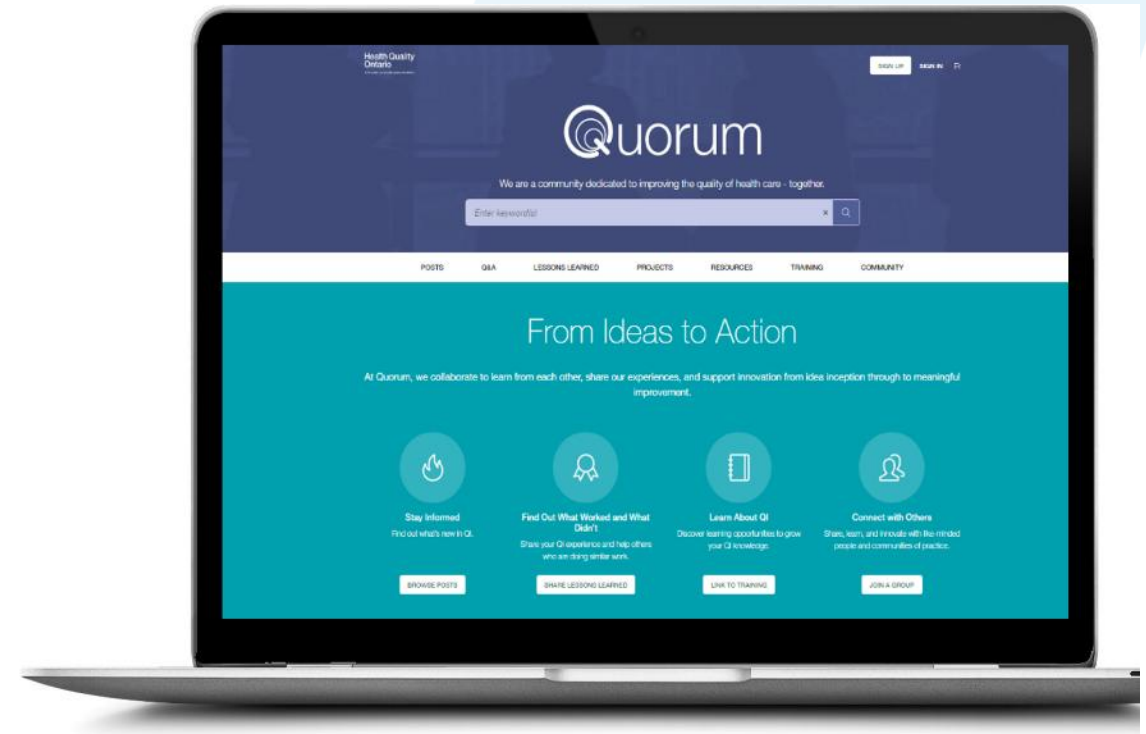
systemnavigation@rainbowhealthontario.ca

Find resources on Quorum



Quorum is an online community dedicated to improving the quality of health care in Ontario.

The **Gender-Affirming Care for Adults Quality Standard: Tools for Implementation** post provides tools and resources to support the implementation of the quality statements.



Gender-affirming primary care

Gender-diverse adults receive appropriate and compassionate gender-affirming primary care health assessments, screening, treatment, and follow-up. This care is based on their needs and preferences and is appropriate for their age, gender, and current anatomy.

Primary care resources on Quorum



The **Gender-Affirming Care for Adults Quality Standard: Tools for Implementation** post on Quorum outlines resources to support the primary care needs of gender-diverse adults, including:

- [Tips for Providing Pap Tests to Trans Men](#)
- [Reproductive Options for Trans People](#)
- [Overarching Policy for the Screening of Trans People in the Ontario Breast Screening Program and the Ontario Cervical Screening Program](#)
- [Transition-related surgical summary sheets](#)



Gender-affirming hormone therapy

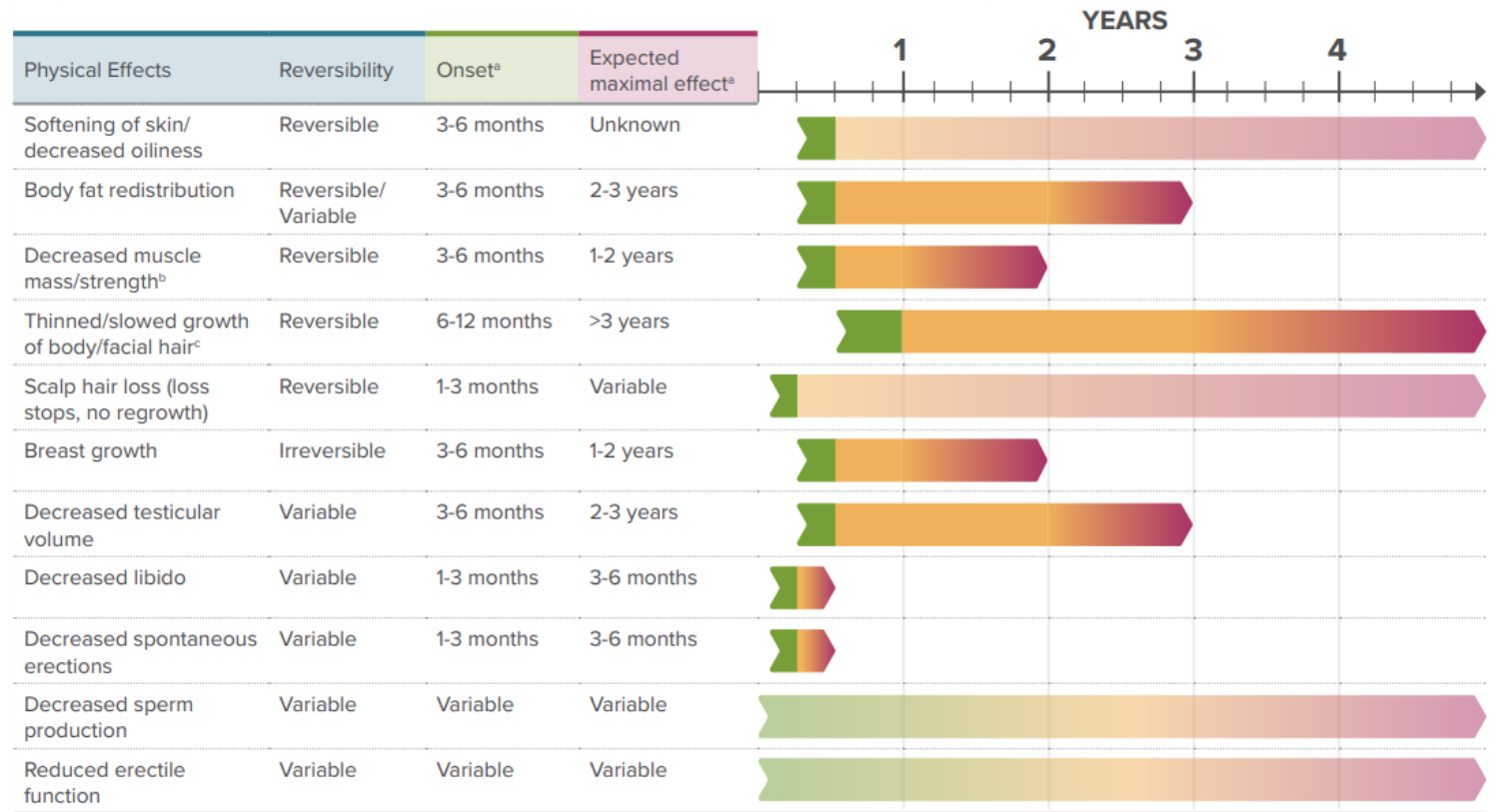
Gender-diverse adults have access to gender-affirming hormone therapy from a primary care clinician.
Gender-affirming hormone therapy meets the needs and preferences of gender-diverse adults.

Guidelines for Gender-Affirming Primary Care With Trans And Non-binary Patients: A Quick Reference Guide for Primary Care Providers

- 9-page summary of transition-related protocols from Sherbourne Health and Rainbow Health Ontario
- Includes information on estrogen and testosterone formulations, dosages, costs, effects and expected time courses, monitoring, dosage adjustments, and precautions

EFFECTS AND EXPECTED TIME COURSE OF FEMINIZING HORMONES

The degree and rate of physical effects are largely dependent on patient-specific factors such as age, genetics, body habitus and lifestyle, and to some extent the dose and route used (selected in accordance with a patient's specific goals and risk profile).⁸



Gender-affirming mental health care

Gender-diverse adults are offered trauma-informed, person-centred, gender-affirming care for mental health and substance use concerns as needed. These concerns are considered concurrently with gender incongruence and gender diversity as needed. Care for all aspects of health and well-being is delivered as part of a comprehensive care plan.

Finding gender-affirming mental health support

The [patient guide](#) contains links to resources to support the mental health needs of gender-diverse adults, including:

- [A service provider directory](#)
- [How having a mental health diagnosis other than gender dysphoria can affect people's care](#)
- [How to find the right counsellor](#)
- [Where to get free counselling](#)



Gender-affirming health care environments



Gender-diverse adults receive care in a safe, trauma-informed, gender-affirming, and culturally responsive environment. Person-centred care is provided throughout their care journeys.

Resources for creating a gender-affirming environment

[Creating Affirming Services](#) is a web page from Trans Care BC with resources for creating culturally safe, affirming clinical environments for gender-diverse people, including:

- [Organizational Assessment Tool for Health Care & Support Services](#)
- [Service Provider Reflection Tool for Individual Service Providers & Support Staff](#)
- [Accessible Care Strategies for Organizations and Programs](#)
- [Making Mistakes and Correcting Them](#)

The screenshot displays the 'Organizational Assessment Tool' from Trans Care BC. The header includes the Trans Care BC logo and the text 'Protocol Health Services Authority'. The main content is divided into two sections: 'Directions' and 'Terminology'. The 'Directions' section lists five steps: 1. Select relevant strategies in each category. 2. Consider the following questions: 3. Where are we currently at? (level) 4. What would enable us to score 1+ level higher? (action items) 5. Who could help us make these changes? (supports) 6. When could we take these steps? (target dates). To the right of the directions are five numbered boxes: 1. Strategy (selected strategies), 2. Where (level), 3. WHAT (action items), 4. WHO (supports), and 5. WHEN (target dates). The 'Terminology' section defines 'Gender Diverse' as individuals who do not identify as the sex they were assigned at birth, 'Client' as all clients, patients, residents, and service users, 'Staff' as anyone employed by the organization, and 'People' as anyone who may be present in the service. The footer shows the page number '2' and the title 'Organizational Assessment Tool'.

TRANS CARE BC
Protocol Health Services Authority

Directions

- 1 Select relevant strategies in each category.

Then, consider the following questions:

- 2 Where are we currently at? (level)
- 3 What would enable us to score 1+ level higher? (action items)
- 4 Who could help us make these changes? (supports)
- 5 When could we take these steps? (target dates)

Terminology

Gender Diverse refers to individuals who do not identify as the sex they were assigned at birth. This includes, but is not limited to, transgender, non-binary, and Two-Spirit people seeking gender-affirming care.

Client refers to all clients, patients, residents, and service users accessing care unless otherwise specified.

Staff refers to anyone employed by your organization unless otherwise specified. This may also include contractors and volunteers.

People refers to anyone who may be present in your service, including staff, volunteers, contractors, clients, family members, advocates, and all others who access the service or space.

2 Organizational Assessment Tool Trans Care BC - PHSA

Earn extra Mainpro+® credits for reading the quality standard

- **Earn an extra 1.75 Mainpro+® credits** by reading the *Gender-Affirming Care for Gender-Diverse People: Care for Adults* quality standard through the **Understanding Quality Standards in Primary Care Program***
- Review the quality standard and then complete and submit a short self-reflection exercise to receive credits
- To learn more, contact UnderstandQS@OntarioHealth.ca



*This self-learning program (1 credit per hour) has been certified by the College of Family Physicians of Canada and the Ontario chapter for up to 66.75 credits. Registration is open year-round.



Questions and Answers



Thank you