

# **NHSEI Response to the London Assembly Health Committee report: “Trans health matters: improving access to healthcare for trans and gender-diverse Londoners”**

June 2022

## **1. Executive Summary**

The report ‘Trans health matters: improving access to healthcare for trans and gender-diverse Londoners’ was published by the GLA Health Committee in February 2022.

NHSEI have been asked for comments on the report and welcomes its publication and the opportunity to comment. The report focuses on making general health care accessible and welcoming to trans and gender diverse Londoners rather than services specific for transgender people (ie gender identity clinics for children and adults, and surgical services for adults) although reference is made to the long waits for transgender specific services.

The report makes a series of recommendations (see below), not all of which are for the NHS to respond to. Those where an NHS response would be appropriate are produced in blue. Some of these recommendations are directed to the London Health Board. This response addresses issues appropriate for the NHS to respond to and provides a brief over-view of the work NHSEI is doing to reduce waits for transgender specific services.

Before responding specifically to the recommendations, it is important to say that NHS in London is supportive of the overall intention.

## **2. Report recommendations:**

**2.1 Recommendation 1:** Using the principles of the Health Inequalities Strategy, the Mayor should convene a consultative group comprised of Londoners with lived experience and subject experts.

This is not applicable for the NHS to respond to.

**2.2 Recommendation 2:** [NHS Digital should improve NHS IT systems so that all healthcare providers are able to record trans status in a consistent and inclusive way.](#)

## **NHSE RESPONSE**

The London region very much appreciates the sentiments in the report that data makes different diverse groups visible. This is an important concept within equalities work. However, to amend electronic patient records systems in the way envisaged is complex. Patients using London services come from a wide geography, hence consistency between NHS regions will be beneficial.

Consequently, the London regional office has taken this issue up with our national team working on digital innovation and will continue to do so in order to formalise national policy agreement on this issue, and the subsequent detailed implementation steps which will need to follow.

**2.3 Recommendation 3:** In the interim, while system-wide NHS data collection improvements are made, the Mayor should urgently commission research in association with the NHS into the healthcare needs of TGD people in London.

This is not applicable for the NHS to respond to directly, but we would welcome discussion and working with the Mayor should this recommendation be supported.

**2.4 Recommendation 4:** The Committee endorses Stonewall’s recommendation that training providers, medical and nursing schools, and royal colleges should review training and curricula to ensure that LGBT health inequalities, and the healthcare needs of all LGBT patients and service users, are included as part of compulsory and ongoing training.

#### **NHSE Response**

We support this recommendation and will work with the Mayor and Stonewall to raise this again with Royal Colleges and the HEE recognising that some changes, for example to curricula will take time to become embedded in clinical practice .

**2.5 Recommendation 5:** The London Health Board should work with the trans and gender-diverse consultative group to:

- assess how to commission trans-inclusive training programmes for primary care services, such as Pride in Practice, across all London boroughs
- work with NHS Trusts to encourage and support non-clinical staff to provide a trans and gender-diverse inclusive environment
- encourage GP practices to:
  - review existing policies to ensure they are trans and gender-diverse friendly. These revised policies should be available on practice websites
  - review their surgeries to ensure they are trans friendly, including by displaying LGBT+ posters and leaflets
- work with NHS partners to consider how to monitor and map healthcare services that have undergone and maintained training, so that trans and gender diverse Londoners can identify and locate inclusive services.

#### **NHSE Response**

NHSEI London would welcome this discussion at the London Health Board and we would suggest that a joint response from partners involved with the elements of this recommendation prepare a paper for the Board facilitated by the officers supporting the Health Board.

**2.6 Recommendation 6:** The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities should fund an awareness campaign to explain how to disclose trans and gender-diverse status to healthcare providers and the benefits of doing so.

This is not applicable for the NHS to respond to.

### **3. Other actions NHSEI is taking to support Transgender Health Care**

Gender dysphoria specialist services are commissioned by NHS England and Improvement. NHS England and Improvement has been working to improve existing gender services, with various initiatives including new pilot gender clinics such as the Trans Plus pilot in Dean Street which operates out of Chelsea and Westminster NHS Trust. The NHS is also bringing in new specialist providers of both masculinising and feminising surgeries; in the past year we have increased the number of providers of feminising surgery in London, and are on track to for a further two providers of masculinising surgery to be available later this year.

#### **4.Conclusion**

Health inequalities is a priority for the NHS as stated in the Long-Term Plan and the Operational planning guidance. As such NHSE London region is committed to improving access, experience, and outcomes for trans and gender diverse communities.

Health services to trans and gender diverse communities are important and form part of our inequalities agenda. NHS England and Improvement London is pleased to be asked to comment on the report and to work with the London Health Board and the Mayor to improve services for Londoners and people who come to London for their healthcare.