

GENDER-AFFIRMING ROADMAP FOR PATIENTS AND THEIR LOVES ONES

For Fraser East Communities

This booklet is organized by the topics on this page. The topic areas have further information on the following pages. Turn the page or click on the title of a topic area to read more about the topic.

This document is part of the Abbotsford Division of Family Practice Transgender Patient Pathway Project. This document is intended to help patients and their loved ones find and navigate resource and services in the Fraser East (Langley, Mission, Abbotsford, Chilliwack and the surrounding areas).

EMERGENCY MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

The process of exploring one's gender identity, "coming out", and navigating gender-affirming care may be distressing for some individuals. If you find yourself in a crisis where you need immediate support or are concerned about your emotional or physical safety, consider:



- Trans Lifeline: A peer-to-peer crisis line for trans* individuals by trans* individuals available 8am – 2am (1-877-330-6366).
- 24/7 emergency mental health support (1-877-820-7444).
- 911 and your nearest emergency department.

FINDING SUPPORTS



It may be helpful to connect with others who are thinking about or are at various points of gender transitioning. Check out one of the support groups available in your community.

SUPPORTS FOR YOUR SUPPORTERS



our family members and friends can be important sources of support for you. Sometimes being part of your transitioning process can be a significant adjustment for them and they may appreciate having supports of their own.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Counselling is not a requirement for accessing hormones or surgery. However, some people find it to be a helpful source of support during the transitioning process while they explore their gender identity. Others find it useful to help with managing other conditions that can negatively affect the experience of transitioning, such as depression or anxiety.



QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR GENDER IDENTITY

If questions about your gender identity occur, you may wish to take time to explore what gender identity means to you before you work with a health care provider, or while you work with a health care provider. There is valuable information available to support you. See the section "Questions About Your Gender Identity" for resources.



CONNECT WITH A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

Questions about one's gender identity can come up at different points during a person's life. You may wish to connect with a primary health care provider for support by approaching:



- Your Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner.
- Health Clinic, Centre, or Hub – such as those listed in this document.
- The Trans Care BC Care Coordination Team to connect you with a health care provider with experience in gender-affirming care.

REPRODUCTIVE OPTIONS AND SEXUAL HEALTH



Hormone therapy may affect fertility, while lower surgeries result in permanent infertility. For those who would like to have biological children, it may be helpful to review options including fertility preservation before starting hormones or having lower surgery.

Intimacy and sexual expression can be important parts of people's lives before, during, and after transitioning. Check out inclusive resources on sexual health in this booklet.

GENDER EXPRESSION



There are non-medical options that can help you express your gender in a way that is more comfortable to you, such as garments and clothing. These may be started at anytime, including before medical therapies, for example, hormones. Many of these options also offer the flexibility of being used in select settings that feel safer to you, then gradually expanded to other settings.

HORMONE THERAPY

Hormone therapy can gradually develop body characteristics that can help you in seeing yourself as the gender that you identify with. Work with your health care providers to make sure that hormone therapy is safe and appropriate for you.



LEGAL SUPPORT



If you experience discrimination because of your gender identity, you may want to review your rights. See this document for further information.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT



While many of the gender-affirming options are funded by the BC Medical Services Plan, there are some out-of-pocket costs. Check out resources in the booklet that may help with some of these costs.

GENDER-AFFIRMING SURGERY



Gender-affirming surgeries help match primary and/or secondary sexual characteristics with one's gender identity. Typically, they are considered for people over the age of 18. In BC, a number of the surgeries are covered under provincial health insurance and do not require additional payment.

GENDER-AFFIRMING ROADMAP

FOR PATIENTS AND THEIR LOVED ONES

For Fraser East Communities

Disclaimer: The Abbotsford Division of Family Practice, stakeholders and partners, and Shared Care do not endorse any of the individuals or groups named in this document.

Some resources referenced in this document require out-of-pocket fee-for-service payment and are noted as “private pay”. These resources are mentioned to facilitate the coordination of care and support the availability of care.

HOW TO USE THIS ROADMAP:

Thank you for using the Abbotsford Division of Family Practice Gender-Affirming Roadmap for Patients and Their Loved Ones (Roadmap) which is part of the Transgender Patient Pathway Shared Care project. This document has information about the different services and resources that may be considered at various points during the process of exploring one's gender identity or transitioning.

- The Roadmap is first and foremost intended to help and support you navigate your care with the help of a Primary Care Provider, such as a Family Physician or Nurse Practitioner. Please note that this document is not intended to provide medical advice and does not replace the care of a Primary Care Provider.
- The Roadmap is intended as a reference guide and brief summary. The most comprehensive and current information can be found on the Trans Care BC website at <http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/>
- If questions come up while you are exploring the resources found on this Roadmap or as you navigate through your transitioning process, contact the Trans Care BC Care Coordination Team for support or information at 1-866-999-1514 or transcareteam@phsa.ca.
- The steps to include in your process of exploring your gender identity or transitioning is up to you. Every individual's gender-affirming journey is different. One does not need to take every step listed in this Roadmap in order to have “completed their transition.”
- Providers and resources listed in the Roadmap are mentioned for information only and are not intended as endorsements. You are encouraged to work with your Family Physician or Nurse Practitioner to ensure that the providers listed are in good standing with their respective professional regulatory bodies before engaging in care.



QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR GENDER IDENTITY?

Trans Care BC:

Comprehensive, medically reliable, and culturally sensitive information on transgender health and services available: <http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/>

QMunity:

A non-profit organization based in Vancouver that focuses on support and advocacy for trans, queer, and two-spirit folks: <https://qmunity.ca>

BC Children's Hospital Transgender Resources:

Information about hormones, recommended readings, relevant websites: <http://www.bcchildrens.ca/health-info/coping-support/transgender-resources>



CONNECT WITH A PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER

Key resources (listed below) can connect you to a variety of different primary care services, including gender affirming care:

Abbotsford Youth Health Centre (ages 12-24):

FOUNDRY Abbotsford
#101 - 32555 Simon Avenue, Abbotsford
Phone: 604-746-3392
Email: nurse@ayhc.ca
<http://ayhc.ca/>

Langley Youth Hub (ages 12 to 24):

(Located at the Langley Youth Resource Centre)
Youth HUB runs Tuesdays & Thursdays from 3-7pm, with Family Physicians providing support the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month.
Phone: 604-546-1166
www.langleyyouthhub.com

Chilliwack (all ages):

Phone the Chilliwack Division of Family Practice at: 604-795-0034
chilliwackgendercare@divisionsbc.ca

Agassiz:

Contact the Agassiz Health Centre
7030 Cheam Drive, Agassiz
Phone: 604-793-2030

If you are unable to access one of these, or if you have more questions about where you can access gender-affirming care, contact the Trans Care BC Care Coordination Team at 1-866-999-1514, transcareteam@phsa.ca, <http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/about/contact>



FINDING SUPPORTS

Abby Parents and Loved Ones of Trans* Discussion Group:

Once a month from 7-9pm
#108a – 32883 S. Fraser Way, Abbotsford
Phone: 604-996-8169
lukas.walther@telus.net

Among Friends:

First Wednesday of every month from 7-8:30pm.
All age support group for gender diverse people in the Fraser Valley. Drop in fee.
Contact 604-853-5664
<http://www.cheamcentre.com>

CampOUT!:

An empowering summer camping experience for BC's queer, trans, and allied youth aged 14-21. An opportunity to become leaders for social change and make friends, access resources and do traditional camp activities like canoeing, arts, and crafts. CampOUT often runs the first week of July, with applications opening in February and closing in March: <https://campout.ubc.ca/>

For more information about support groups in BC, visit:

<http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/care-support/access-care/srvc-directory>

Chilliwack Gender Support Network:

Meets every other Tuesday from 6:30-8pm
Sto:lo Health Building
#7 – 7201 Vedder Road, Chilliwack
<https://www.facebook.com/GENDER.SUPPORT.NETWORK/>

Fraser Valley Youth Society:

Thursdays 6pm to 9pm
Weekly drop-ins for LGBTQ+ youth in Abbotsford, Mission, and Chilliwack for ages 13-25.
<http://fraseryouth.com>

Resources for Two-Spirit individuals:

Check out groups, books, websites, and films prepared for two-spirit individuals: <http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/transbasics/two-spirit>

Schools:

If you are in middle or high school, some schools have LGBTQ support or social groups, e.g. Inclusion & Diversity Groups, Rainbow Groups, and LGBTQ friendly counsellors.



SUPPORTS FOR YOUR SUPPORTERS

Trans Care BC

Offering a wide range of information, including gender development, family and friends, school support, peer and professional support, social affirmation and transition, medical affirmation and transition, and health system navigation: <http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/child-youth/>

PFLAG:

- **Abbotsford Chapter**
Contact: 604-354-463, abbotsfordbc@pflagcanada.ca
32883 South Fraser Way, Abbotsford BC:
<http://pflagcanada.ca/pflag-chapters/british-columbia/>
- **Our Trans Loved Ones**
An e-book on providing support to transgender individuals:
<https://www.pflag.org/sites/default/files/Our%20Trans%20Loved%20Ones.pdf>

Provincial Health Services Authority Family Support and Resource Centre book list:

- A list of books for young people and their family members: <https://libraries.phsa.ca/fsrc/list?q=transgender>

Central Toronto Youth Services – Families in Transition:

- A guide for parents on how to explore gender concerns with their children, information about transitioning, and how to facilitate their social transitioning. Note: Resources are focused on the Toronto region:
<http://www.ctys.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/CTYS-FIT-Families-in-Transition-Guide-2nd-edition.pdf>



MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

The following resources are free of cost or low cost. Patients and their loved ones can also ask their Family Physician or Nurse Practitioner for suggestions of counsellors to contact. You can also contact the Trans Care BC Coordination Team at: 1-866-999-1514, transcareteam@phsa.ca or <http://www.phsa.ca/contact-us>.

Counselling:

- **Moving Forward Family Services**
Sliding scale counselling service:
<https://movingforwardfamilyservices.com/>
- **QMunity**
<https://qmunity.ca/get-support/counselling/>
- **Child and Youth Mental Health**
General mental health services (not specific to gender identity) for people up to the age of 18, available by self-referral: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/managing-your-health/mental-health-substance-use/child-teen-mental-health/mental-health-intake-clinics>
- **Fraser Health Mental Health Centres**
General mental health services (not specific to gender identity) available by self-referral for those over 19 years old:
 - Abbotsford: 604-870-7800
 - Chilliwack: 604-702-4860
 - Langley: 604-514-7940
 - Mission: 604-814-5600



GENDER EXPRESSION

Advice on various aspects of social transitioning, including coming out, timing, and supports:

<http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/care-support/transitioning>

Name and Gender Marker change on official documents and IDs:

- Information: <http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/care-support/transitioning/id-name-change>
- QMunity's ID Clinic (For additional support with ID)
604-684-5307 ext 100, TransID@qmunity.ca
- PACE Society Gender Self-Determination Project
Assistance for trans* and non-binary persons, providing support with legal name and gender marker changes on government IDs: <http://www.pace-society.org/gender-self-determination-project/>

Changing Keys:

Intensive speech and voice training program for vocal feminization for those older than 18 years old, taking place over 7 weeks held in locations across the province: <http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/care-support/transitioning/chng-speech>

Hair Styling Tips:

<https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/219761656795331578/>

Hair Removal:

- **Information:** <http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/care-support/transitioning/hair-remvl>
- **Allard Studio** (Chilliwack, self-pay):
<http://www.allardstudio.com/hair-removal/transgender-hair-removal/>
- **Summer Breeze** (Langley, self-pay):
<http://summerbreezeelectrolysis.com>

Binding, Packing, Tucking, Padding:

Definitions:

- Tucking can minimize the visibility of the outer genitals
- Padding can enhance the form of the breast, hips, and buttocks
- Binding can flatten the chest
- Packing can create the form of external genitals using a non-flesh genital

More Information:

- **Information on what, how, and safety considerations:**
<http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/care-support/transitioning/bind-pack-tuck-pad>
- **QMunity I <3 my chest:**
E-book on chest health for trans* individuals, including binding, padding, hormones, surgery, and preventive care:
<http://qmunity.ca/resources/i-heart-my-chest/>
- **Hudson's FTM:**
Information on clothing, grooming, hormones, and surgery for people identifying in the male spectrum:
www.ftmguide.org

Supplies (Self-Pay)

- **Curalux:** <http://www.curalux.ca>
- **Big Bro's Barber Shop:**
<http://www.bigbroshbarbershop.com>
- **The Breast Form Store:**
<http://www.thebreastformstore.com>
- **Gender Gear:** <http://www.gendergear.ca/>



REPRODUCTIVE OPTIONS AND SEXUAL HEALTH

Information about reproductive planning, fertility preservation, and sexual health:

<http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/care-support/access-care/sexual-hlth#Sexual--health>

Information (Ontario-based) on parenting for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer individuals:

<http://lgbtqpn.ca/>



HORMONE THERAPY

- As with many medical treatments, hormone therapy may have benefits and risks. To make sure that hormones are safe and appropriate for you, you will need to work with a Family Physician, Nurse Practitioner, or a mental health clinician. This may take place over a number of visits and may take a few months.
- If hormone therapy is recommended to you by a health care professional, you will work with a Family Physician, Nurse Practitioner, or an endocrinologist to get started on hormones and adjust the dose to reach a steady level.
 - Your regular Family Physician or Nurse Practitioner may or may not offer the above services as part of their practice and may refer you to another health care provider for this part of your care.
- Once on a steady dose of hormones, you will need to follow up regularly with either the clinician who started you on hormones or with your regular Family Physician or Nurse Practitioner to monitor your bloodwork and obtain refills.

Fertility Clinics

These services require out-of-pocket payment; consultation may be covered with a referral from the primary care provider.

- **Olive Fertility:**
<https://www.olivefertility.com/our-services/lgbtq2-couples>
- **Genesis Fertility:**
<http://genesis-fertility.com/lgbtq/>

- If hormone treatment is stopped, some physical changes caused by hormones may not go away.
- Hormone therapy may affect fertility. See the Reproductive Options section of this brochure (above) for some options, and talk with your hormone prescriber before starting hormones.

Hormone injection tips:

<http://fenwayhealth.org/care/medical/transgender-health/>

More information about Hormone Therapy:

<http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/hormones>

How fast do hormones work?:

- Effects of treatment with estrogen and testosterone-blocker:
<https://www.rainbowhealthontario.ca/TransHealthGuide/pdf/fem-ht-expectedeffectsguide.pdf>
- Effects of treatment with testosterone:
<https://www.rainbowhealthontario.ca/TransHealthGuide/pdf/masc-ht-expectedeffectsguide.pdf>



GENDER-AFFIRMING SURGERY

Some examples of available surgeries:

- **Chest or breast construction:** Creation of a flat chest or breasts.
- **Gonadectomy:** Removal of the internal or external sex organ.
- **Genital construction:** Creation of the internal or external sex organs.
- Surgeries create permanent changes, and gonadectomy results in permanent infertility.
- To ensure that the surgery you are considering matches your goals, that you are mentally and physically healthy enough for surgery, and that you will be able to recover from surgery safely, you will need to work with one or two Surgery Readiness Assessors to obtain a recommendation for surgery.
- You may need to travel to other parts of the province or out of province for some surgeries.
- For more information on each surgery, the surgical readiness assessment process, criteria for surgery, and funding, visit: <http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/surgery>



LEGAL SUPPORT

Trans Rights BC:

Information about human rights in areas such as education, housing, and employment.
<http://www.transrightsbc.ca/>

Guide to BC Human Rights Complaint Process by barbara findlay:

<http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/Documents/Care/human-rights-complaints-findlay.doc>

Access Pro Bono:

Free 30 minute session
1-877-762-6664
www.accessprobono.ca



FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Hope Air:

Non-profit organization offering free travel to medical appointments:
<https://www.hopeair.ca>

Fair Pharmacare:

Register for the coverage of certain medications, such as testosterone and estrogen:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/health-drug-coverage/pharmacare-for-bc-residents/who-we-cover/fair-pharmacare-plan/register-for-fair-pharmacare>

Medical Employment Insurance:

Information on employment insurance benefits and eligibility for individuals unable to work for medical reasons. This may apply during the recovery period after gender affirming surgery:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-sickness.html>

Abbotsford Community Services Medical Transportation Service:

Transportation to medical appointments outside of Abbotsford (to Chilliwack or to Vancouver and to communities in between). 5 working day advanced reservation is required. There is a fee to cover mileage and parking. Phone: 604-866-5147.