

MEDICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR TRANSGENDER YOUTH

Medical Care

- inquire if the transgender youth is receiving medical care from a safe, certified and appropriate provider. Some transgender youth may already be in the process of transitioning through surgical procedures or hormone therapy. If already undergoing treatment,
- Medical care for transgender youth should be based on up-to-date, individualized assessments from trained medical practitioners who are familiar with transgender care¹.

National Commission on Correctional Health Care²

- The National Commission on Correctional Health Care's (NCCHC) publishes standards for prisons, jails, and juvenile justice facilities to ensure that inmates are receiving adequate health care and that issues such as patient confidentiality, discharge planning, qualified health care professionals, medication availability and delivery, and staff training are being addressed.
- The NCCHC gave a Position Statement on transgender inmates, which provided in part, that: “[p]risons, jails, and juvenile justice facilities have a responsibility to ensure the physical and mental health and well-being of transgender people in their custody. Correctional health staff should manage transgender inmates in a manner that respects the biomedical and psychological aspects of a Gender Identity Disorder (GID) diagnosis.”
- The Statement goes on to recommend that correctional facilities manage medical and surgical care for transgender inmates that are developed and approved by expert professionals in the area of transgender health. Diagnosed transgender individuals who have started transition therapy and treatment should be allowed access to that therapy without interruption while detained.
- Correctional staff should be educated and made aware of transgender issues and their risk as targets of violence, harassment and abuse. It is the staff's responsibility to ensure the safety of all residents, including transgender residents.

¹ Gabrielle Prisco & Jody Marksamer at the, *Advocating for Transgender Youth*, presentation at the National Juvenile Defender Center Leadership Summit, Washington, D.C. (2010)

² Much of the following material is drawn from the National Commission on Correctional Health Care's position statement regarding transgender health care in correctional facilities. See Position Statement, National Commission on Correctional Health Care: Transgender Health Care in Correctional Settings (2009).

- When the resident or youth is released, the facility should provide the transgender individual with referrals and resources to continue their transition therapy in the community.

American Medical Association Resolution 122 (2008)

- The American Medical Association's (AMA) Resolution 122 establishes that Gender Identity Disorder (GID) is a serious medical condition, recognized in both the DSM-IV-TR and ICD-10. *See* AMA Policy H-65.983, H-65.992, and H-180.980.
- The Resolution also states that if GID is left untreated, it can "result in clinically significant psychological distress, dysfunction, debilitating depression and, for some people without access to appropriate medical care and treatment, suicidality and death."
- Medical research demonstrates that mental health care, hormone therapy and sex reassignment surgery are affective and necessary forms of therapeutic treatment for individuals with GID.
- The AMA resolution supports both public and private health insurance coverage for treatment of GID and opposes any categorical exclusions of coverage for treatment of GID.

American Psychological Association (APA) Policy Statement³

- The American Psychological Association's policy statement on Transgender, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression Non-Discrimination "supports efforts to provide safe and secure educational environments, at all levels of education, as well as foster care environments and juvenile justice programs, that promote an understanding and acceptance of self and in which all youths, including youth of all gender identities and expressions, may be free from discrimination, harassment, violence, and abuse."
- The APA also supports the need for "adequate and necessary" medical and mental health care treatment, including gender transition treatments for diagnosed and evaluated transgender individuals.
- The APA calls upon public and private insurances to cover these treatments that are necessary to transgender medical care.
- The policy statement also supports access to such gender transition treatment in institutional settings, including access to appropriate health care services and gender identity therapeutic treatment

³ Much of the following material is drawn from the American Psychological Association, American Psychological Association Council of Representatives, Policy Statement on Transgender, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression Non-Discrimination (August 2008).