



POLICY *Brief*



Access to Quality Healthcare for People who are Trans and Gender Diverse in Saskatchewan

By: Alana Cattapan, Ph.D., University of Waterloo; Gwen Rose, M.A., University of Saskatchewan; and Mel Reid, B.A., University of Saskatchewan, on behalf of the TRANS Project Team

Policy Brief: CONTEXT

- The health care system is under stress, with timely access to care a major public issue
- Research indicates people who are trans and gender-diverse (PTGD) are medically underserved in Saskatchewan
- They face three key health challenges:
 - finding inclusive and affirming primary care;
 - finding inclusive and affirming specialist care and;
 - finding care related to other social, economic, and policy-related factors
- As a result, they have increased likelihood for comorbidities and more frequent healthcare visits, in part because transition related care requires a strong relationship with a healthcare provider

Policy Brief: CONSIDERATIONS

- What is gender-affirming care?

“Any combination of social, legal, and medical measures that help people feel happy, healthy, and safe in their gender.”

- An important barrier to affirming primary care also lies in health care practitioners’ comfort in providing trans-specific healthcare.
- PTGD also experience bureaucratic barriers and long wait times in accessing essential specialist care.
- PTGD more likely to require mental health services relative to the general population
 - Higher prevalence of mental health challenges - depression, anxiety disorders and suicidality, related to oppression and marginalization.

Discussion questions

- With the health care system facing significant broad-based challenges – lack of access to family doctors, over-crowded emergency wards, long surgical wait times – where should PTGD be in the hierarchy of priorities?
- How can public/political support be created for PTGD health issues?
- Is there a role for the medical profession to take a leadership role in raising awareness of health issues for PTGD individuals?