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Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## Consultation – summary of responses

# Welsh Government action plan to further equality for transgender people

Date of issue: 11 December 2015

## **Introduction**

The Welsh Government is committed to making Wales a country where everyone has the same opportunities to contribute to the economic, environmental, social and cultural life of Wales. The Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty, with responsibility for equality for transgender people wants to drive forward actions which will address inequalities for transgender people in Wales.

In order to produce an Action Plan to further equality for Transgender People, Fairer Futures wanted to seek the views of those with an understanding of issues which affect transgender people. We want to identify areas of discrimination, improve access to public services and tackle social stigmatisation, harassment and bullying for transgender people in Wales.

## **Consultation Process**

For a 12 week period between 22<sup>nd</sup> June and 11<sup>th</sup> September 2015, Fairer Futures consulted on the Welsh Government's proposed action plan to further equality for transgender people.

The consultation was structured around the themes of Children and Young People, Communities, Public Services, Striving for Equality, and any potential gaps which we hadn't identified.

The consultation document was available bilingually, online with an easy read and youth friendly version available. Responses could be submitted online or in hard copy. We asked 16 Questions – some related to specific actions, some were open questions to gather as much information from participants as possible.

The consultation was widely circulated to stakeholders.

We held three focus groups with members of the trans community. The first of which the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty attended with trans young people from the Trans\*form Cymru Steering Group. The second took place in Llandudno and was organised by Unique Transgender Network, the third took place in Cardiff with members of Trans+ Social Meet Up Cardiff (TSMU Cardiff).

We are very grateful for these networks working so closely with us to organise these events and for welcoming us to join them to talk about the Action Plan.

We received 62 written responses to the consultation, 28 of which came from individuals. We would like to thank all those who responded. The list of respondents is below. Individuals have not been named to ensure their confidentiality.

Unity Group Wales  
Aber Balch / Aber Pride  
SNAP Cymru  
Wrexham CAMHS  
Western Bay Youth justice and early intervention service  
Welsh Sports Association  
WHSSC  
Victim Support  
Wales Community Rehabilitation Company  
Welsh Liberal Democrats  
NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights and Public Health Wales  
Velindre NHS Trust  
Survivors Trust Cymru  
Wipe out Transphobia  
North East Wales regional community cohesion coordinator  
NSPCC Cymru  
UK Trans Info  
Unique Transgender Network  
Wrexham County Borough Council  
Samaritans Cymru  
Older People's Commissioner Wales  
Tai Pawb and Cymorth Cymru  
Stonewall Cymru  
Trans Youth Wrexham  
Umbrella Gwent  
Welsh Women's Aid  
Equality and Human Rights Commission Wales  
Royal College of Nursing Wales  
Flintshire County Council  
New Tredegar Youth Club  
Abertysswg Youth Club  
Caerphilly Youth Group  
Blackwood Youth Club.

## **Summary of Consultation Responses**

This document provides a summary of the consultation responses we received.

Information has been gathered by chapter and key themes emerging from the responses have been identified. This document also summarises the key areas discussed during the Focus Group events.

## Children and Young People

### Proposed Actions:

- To publish lesson plans on gender and transgender-based bullying.
- To continue our drive to publicise our Respecting Others anti-bullying guidance
- To hold a cyber-hate conference during Hate Crime Awareness Week 2015 in association with Cardiff University. The conference will raise awareness and increase understanding of cyber-hate and bullying and its impact on victims. The conference will include a workshop, hosted by Youth Cymru, which will allow young transgender people to raise issues in relation to cyber bullying. A conference report outlining outcomes and next steps will be published.

### Do you think these actions should be a priority to improve equality for transgender children and young people?

Number of responses to question	55
Yes	35
No	
Don't know	
Not specified	20

49 people commented on this question. A summary of the main themes raised in these responses is below.

### Education on trans issues for children and young people

The issue of educating children about gender identity came through strongly in the consultation responses and the focus groups. There has been strong feeling it is important for young people to be informed in an age appropriate way from an early age. Conversations in the focus groups highlighted this would be beneficial to young trans people and help them have a better understanding of their own gender identity from an earlier age.

Some respondents advised caution around how this is carried out, for example, being careful not to highlight young trans people as different which might make them targets for bullying. Caution is also needed to ensure no one is 'outed'.

There is an expectation awareness raising will lead to greater understanding and acceptance. Some other points raised:

- There should be mandatory lessons for schoolchildren including non-binary identities and an update to biology lessons on sex. There should

be compulsory Sex and Relationship Education including LGBT+ issues.

- Lesson plans should include issues which transgender youth have to go through and gender stereotypes.
- Teaching should engage with gender identity issues across the curriculum, not just in PSE.
- Schools should reflect on the ways they reiterate heteronormativity and challenge these assumptions in themselves and their pupils.
- Inform pupils of the harm caused by bullying.

## **Staff Training**

Another very strong theme emerging in consultation responses was the need for appropriate transgender awareness training for teachers, staff and others working with young people. Some key points raised:

- Training / guidance should be expanded to teachers, staff, governors, counsellors, advisors and school nurses so they are equipped to deal with issues raised by a young trans / non-binary person. Including fairness, bullying, suicide risks, hate crime, healthcare, inclusive teaching and process of transition.
  - There is existing e-learning (eg from GIRES and Mermaids) which are useful reference points.
- Training should be included as part of Initial Teacher Training programmes as well as Continuing Professional Development.
- Clear and concise information should be given to teachers before lesson plans are published to make the delivery as effective as possible. This is a sensitive issue and training needs to cover attitudes to ensure personal views do not undermine / conflict with the delivery of the training.
- The Unity Identity Centre has developed a Trans Inclusion Schools Toolkit to provide information and guidance to schools, colleges and universities in Wales on how to support transgender and gender questioning pupils and students.
- Recommend opportunities are sought to raise awareness and understanding of transgender issues with parents and carers.

## **Best practice / guidance**

A number of respondents included suggestions for best practice in schools:

- The *Transgender Guidance for Wrexham Schools 2015* which was informed by the good practice in Cornwall Council / Intercom Trust and the Allsorts young people's project in Brighton should be adopted across all schools in Wales with the support of Estyn. This gives practical advice on important issues such as changing, showering and toilet facilities, school trips and sporting events.
- There are issues where trans\* young people are not able to re-register their names with examination boards so certificates will still be in their birth assigned name and gender.

- Give a strong lead in advising educational establishments they must change records and reissue certificates so young people do not face the unnecessary embarrassment of gender history following them into and throughout their adult lives.
- Follow-up on the good practice by Viva / Wrexham Council in having a trans youth worker and establishing a local group for young trans people and their families.
- Schools to have definitive policies on school uniforms which are sensitive to young trans\* people's needs. Similarly for changing rooms, showers, toilet facilities, school trips, sporting events and overnight accommodation.
- Schools' strategic equality plans and anti-bullying policies should make explicit reference to trans equality and tackling transphobia. Welsh Government should produce guidance in partnership with other agencies on trans-inclusive policies, recognising schools currently have widely varying experience and awareness of trans issues. Guidance should include best practice and practical steps on how to work towards it in areas including bathrooms, changing facilities, uniform policies and advice on supporting trans pupils and staff. Schools should take a pupil led approach to supporting trans young people.
- Section 85 (10) of the Equality Act excludes protection for pupils from harassment on grounds of gender reassignment. Welsh Government should make it clear to education providers they expect them to prevent any harassment of pupils on the basis of this protected characteristic.
- Gender neutral toilets.
- NSPCC referred to some projects such as the online safety helpline and the upcoming work with Welsh Women's Aid and Cardiff University on priorities for healthy relationship education to inform a young person's guide to Whole School Preventative Approaches in Schools.

## **Bullying / cyber bullying**

Responses recognised the devastating effect bullying can have on young people and into their later life.

There was a strong focus on cyber bullying in the responses. Whilst some respondents recognised the internet can provide a great way to socialise, explore and have fun, they also recognise there are risks to young people and would like to see a greater understanding of the issues young trans people face online. The motivation and action behind bullying should be addressed. Some specific issues highlighted:

- Cyber Hate and bullying work should be rolled out to schools, colleges, universities at the start of the first term every academic year.
- Cyber bullying work (the Cyber Hate Conference) should look for solution based approaches to mitigate cyber bullying.
- Galop and GEO have developed a Stop online abuse website.

- NSPCC would like to see a greater emphasis on digital competency as part of the wider discussions about well-being in schools. This should include signposting to information and support.
- NSPCC have developed a range of tools and services around online safety such as the Share Aware campaign and NetAware tool.
- One respondent would like to see the Welsh Government establish a cross-governmental Welsh stakeholder group on online safety to support the delivery of the new curriculum and cross-curriculum competencies on digital learning.
- The Welsh Government's 'Respecting Others' guidance should be updated to provide separate, dedicated guidance on different types of bullying including more examples of what constitutes transphobia and good practice in tackling these issues.

## **Sex and Relationship Education**

- Make SRE compulsory in schools and absolutely have to include information on LGBT+ sexual health, relationships, trans\* and gender and sexuality issues.
- NSPCC Cymru/Wales believes compulsory age-appropriate SRE for all children and young people under the new Health and Wellbeing area of Learning and Experience, taught from an inclusive equalities and sexuality perspective would allow children to learn about, explore and develop safe and healthy relationships which are crucial to preventing bullying, abuse, and discrimination towards transgender young people. An essential element of this teaching would be the mainstreaming of transgender issues into all areas of SRE. We therefore call for compulsory healthy relationship education as part of a statutory requirement to PSE for all primary and secondary school pupils in Wales.
- SRE should be based on the reality that not all young people may grow up heterosexual or cisgender and all young people have a right to healthy, informed and safe sex and relationships.
- VAWDA&SV prevention work should be part of a whole school approach to healthy relationship education.

## **Role models**

Some responses raised the value trans role models could bring if highlighted to young people or in visiting schools. The charity Diversity Role Models carries out awareness training in schools in England.

## **Other issues raised**

**Youth Clubs** - More information about trans issues should be available in youth centres and clubs, schools, and clinics.

## **Focus groups**

The focus groups were strongly in favour of including actions around Children and Young People in the action plan. Focus Groups echoed the above responses around the importance of educating children appropriately at an early age and felt it was very important for schools to be able to provide a safe and supportive space for young trans people. This would therefore also mean the education of teachers and staff members in how to support young trans people and the specific issues which may need to be addressed to do this successfully.



## Hate Crime and Community Cohesion

### Proposed Actions:

- To fund the National Hate Crime Report and Support Centre through Victim Support Cymru which will:
  - monitor the number of transgender people who are reporting and receiving support;
  - roll out all Wales training across public sector and community organisations to increase awareness of hate crime which will include gender identity hate crime,
  - through the Welsh Local Government Association Data Unit, map hate crime referrals which will include transgender hate crimes and provide information for Local Authorities to enhance tension monitoring procedures.
- Support the delivery of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's LGBT Hate Crime Project, which will include:
  - supporting a national awareness raising campaign on the delivery of the project;
  - the Unity Project will develop and deliver bespoke LGBT training in partnership with Victim Support Cymru;
  - anonymous reporting figures will be shared with the National Hate Crime Report and Support Centre
- The Welsh Government will analyse support given to transgender people and communities through the National Community Cohesion Delivery Plan, including assessing the number of people who have received equalities training, including transgender awareness.

### Do you think these actions should be a priority to tackle hostility and prejudice faced by transgender people?

Number of responses to question	56
Yes	32
No	1
Don't know	
Not specified	22

39 people commented on this question. A summary of the main themes raised in these responses is below.

There was recognition members of the transgender community can be subjected to hate crime, however, there is a problem with under reporting. Some respondents suggested improved education and media portrayal may improve transgender awareness and hopefully reduce incidences of hate crime.

## **Awareness raising**

Most responses were focused around the need for awareness raising whether this be within the trans community, for police forces, or for services working with Hate Crime victims.

Specific transgender training is key and trans people need to be involved in designing training and services. LGBT training needs to be fully trans inclusive and not just an add on. Training needs to be delivered by an organisation with an up to date understanding of trans issues and terminology. Local LGBT groups may be best placed to provide LGBT training.

### Within the trans community

A lot of responses highlighted the need for increased awareness of transphobic hate crime, how to report it and the importance of reporting within the trans community.

- It is important to widely publicise the LGBT Hate Crime Project.
- Propose a 'day of reporting' to raise awareness.
- People don't know how to report or they perceive there to be little prospect in a conviction if they do report.
- Raising awareness initiatives with a particular emphasis on Transgender rather than just LGB.
- More awareness of positive case studies where prosecutions of trans hate crimes have been achieved to provide confidence to community members about reporting.

### For Police forces

- The police (along with security services) need to have adequate training on transgender issues. This should be provided for police forces across Wales.
- Police sometimes need sensitivity training for example not asking for a person's birth name.
- Current training is patchy.

### For hate crime services

- Unity Group Wales will provide specific homophobic, biphobic and transphobic Hate Crime training to Victim Support Cymru staff and other various parties.
- One respondent who had experienced Hate Crime and was unable to be supported by Victim Support because the person they spoke to hadn't had any transgender awareness training.
- All staff and volunteers who work with the police, third party reporting agencies, advocacy, victim support and mental health services must receive trans awareness training in order to provide sensitive and inclusive services for victims.

## **Other Issues raised**

- There should be a centralised telephone / text number to report Hate Crimes.
- Give perpetrators awareness training.
- Police Diversity Officers and CPSO's should be embedded in the trans community – attending trans / LGBT groups and events to encourage reporting through higher levels of trust in the Police and Criminal Justice System generally.
- There should be a confidential way of reporting Hate Crime and asking for assistance such as the British Transport Police Text Service 61016 so the perpetrator does not hear what you are asking. This should spread to all police forces and be linked to the 999 service.

## **Focus groups**

Conversations in the focus groups varied on the subject of Hate Crime. Some of the attendees hadn't experienced any hate incidents and one commented some of the focus and messaging around hate crime was overly negative, making them afraid it would happen to them. Others had experienced it and had varying levels of satisfaction with how it had been dealt with. Some specific issues raised were:

- Often funding contracts are too short for organisations/projects to make any real difference.
- Action needs to be taken forward. Perpetrators should be named and shamed.
- Restorative Justice could be successful – North Wales Police want to do this. Can we see what other police forces do?
- Other crimes are dealt with more seriously, however, Hate Crime can be just as severe. Failure to take action against other crimes would be taken more seriously.
- There is a gap with the Crown Prosecution Service not prosecuting.
- There is a problem with under reporting, however, if people's perception of what they think should happen to a perpetrator is different to what actually happens, why would people report if they feel no action is taken?
- In poorer areas, the problem is worse. There is no community spirit and people don't know each other.
- A lot of different groups are covering Hate Crime – is anyone collating information about the background of victims and persecutors (age groups, race etc). If we know who is perpetrating these crimes, we can target education / campaigns at people more likely to commit Hate Crime.

## Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

### Proposed Actions:

- To give due consideration to the particular issues faced by transgender people in the development of statutory guidance which will be issued under S.15 of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015. This will be subject to full public consultation in due course.
- Training to support relevant public and voluntary service staff will be built into a National Training Framework on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence to ensure staff understand and can respond appropriately to transgender peoples' lives, experiences and particular requirements.
- A National Service User Group will be established which will include LGBT representation to ensure views on LGBT issues are fully reflected and considered across all work in this area, including, publicity campaigns.
- Fund Welsh Women's Aid to:
  - issue guidance in 2015-16 to their member organisations on providing accessible services to meet the needs of transgender survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence;
  - deliver training to domestic abuse services on meeting the needs of transgender survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

### Do you think these actions should be a priority to tackle violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence for transgender people?

Number of responses to question	55
Yes	31
No	
Don't know	
Not specified	24

37 people commented on this question. A summary of the main themes raised in these responses is below.

### Ensuring services are trans inclusive

Most responses were centred on the need to ensure services are trans inclusive. (Although one respondent suggested there may be a need for transgender specific services).

Some respondents felt services are predominately orientated towards heterosexual, cis <sup>1</sup>women so are not perceived to be relevant to the needs of LGBT people. Responses highlighted trans people can face different barriers to heterosexual, cis women in seeking help for Domestic or Sexual Violence. These barriers may be personal or informed by the structural and cultural barriers existing within services or previous experience of poor response to their specific needs. Service design should recognise the need for a specialist approach to supporting trans victims and that an abusive relationship involving a trans victim can involve different dynamics to a cisgender woman, for example, threatening to out the person.

Some respondents explained gendered services can be a barrier for trans people.

- More needs to be done to make existing services more inclusive – especially refuges which are provided for one gender exclusively.
- Shelters need to be free of discrimination and should not restrict trans people on the grounds of how they look or present.
- Ensure shelters helping people transition out of abusive relationships accept all trans people and non-binary <sup>2</sup>people regardless of their stage of transitioning.
- Welsh Government statutory guidance should clearly state the importance of trans inclusive services. DA and SV service providers should not use the provisions of Schedule 3, part 7 of Equality Act to exclude trans people from gender segregated service on the basis of their trans identity. Or Schedule 9 to discriminate against trans people in employment of staff for the service.
- In their response, Welsh Women's Aid believe concerns about the ability of the current provision of specialist services in Wales to address the needs of trans people should be ameliorated. They state specialist services are currently able to provide support to the trans community and this should be made evident. Staff are trained and supported to provide accessible services and are sensitive to the differing needs any service user may have.

### **Ensuring services are inclusive of non-binary people**

- Services should be accessible to and meet the needs of non-binary people.
- Where services are gender segregated, they need to ensure non-binary service users are placed in the service they feel most comfortable.

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<sup>1</sup> Cisgender – where an individual's experiences of their own [gender](#) agrees with the [sex](#) they were [assigned](#) at birth

<sup>2</sup> Non-binary - describes any [gender identity](#) which does not fit within the [binary](#) of [male](#) and [female](#).

## **Ensuring trans women can access services**

- Ensure transgender women can access shelters, women's aids and recovery services without discrimination. Trans women shouldn't be excluded from Female only refuges.
- Services for women need to take a sensitive approach to trans women who can be a particularly vulnerable group.
- Trans women might be excluded from a provision through fear other service users will be upset.

## **Trans men**

- Its not only women who can be victims of domestic or sexual violence, trans men can also be vulnerable and should be equally supported.
- Would like to see support identified for trans men in areas such as the Dyn project for example which is part of Safer Wales.
- Consideration should be given to establishing individual sub groups concentrating on gender identity and sexual orientation.
- Whilst recognising trans men are Male, need proper risk assessment to put trans men in male facilities.
- Would like to see dedicated commitment to support F-M<sup>3</sup> trans individuals to access services. Concern about whether F-M trans individuals will find it destabilising to have their services placed in the same categories as those focusing predominantly on women.

## **Increasing awareness and reporting**

Respondents raised the importance of increasing awareness of trans people experiencing domestic violence or sexual abuse both within the trans community and within services.

- Trans people may not recognise they are being abused and experience 'self blame' for abuse.
- The Welsh Government could work with existing agencies to educate all areas on where to seek advice and support relevant to their specific needs.
- Increasing public awareness of LGBT people's experiences of domestic abuse and sexual violence among LGBT communities, service providers and the wider public will help tackle misconceptions and encourage trans people to seek support.
- Information and education about VAWDA&SV should be provided to the LGBT community from specialist VAWDA&SV services.
- Informing the trans community about VAWDA&SV will encourage those experiencing abuse to seek help and encourage survivors to engage in conversation about how to make their needs and experiences heard.

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<sup>3</sup> F-M – female to male

- Awareness about trans people and how domestic violence and sexual abuse relates to them is vital. In order to provide a service, providers need to understand trans people can suffer from domestic violence and sexual abuse in the same way as anyone else and they should be supported in line with their gender identity.
- Service providers should address the barriers trans people face to accessing services including fear of disclosing their trans identity or worries they'll be excluded for being trans.
- Additional actions should include identifying ways of increasing reporting of domestic abuse.

### **Ensuring trans voices are included**

Some respondents highlighted trans people should be included in service delivery and design.

- Transgender people need to be represented on the National Service User Group. Trans voices can be lost within LGB groups. Where possible, include representation from a trans man and woman as their needs with service delivery will vary as much as other protected characteristics.
- Work with the transgender community to find out what they need and what would work.
- It is important guidance and training is co-produced with the wider trans community or groups providing specialist support services for transgender people.

### **Training**

- A definite focus should be on training and enhancing skills of anyone supporting victims of violence or domestic abuse. Training providers should form a partnership between DA specialists and specialists in gender variance.
- Training shouldn't be tweaked to include gender variant people, however, should be developed by specialists in both fields. 'Women's' should not be in the title as these are not issues which solely concern women.
- There is emerging evidence on rape and sexual abuse experienced by people from transgender communities. Therefore guidance and training should be extended to or similarly created for statutory and non-statutory sexual violence service provision.
- Training should cover particular dynamics which may be present in an abusive relationship involving a trans victim, the barriers trans people may face to accessing services and measures which staff can take to make their service trans-inclusive.
- We also believe all domestic abuse organisations will benefit from the same training and guidance and so would suggest the proposed action is changed to the following:

Fund domestic abuse organisations to:

- Issue guidance in 2015-16 to their organisations on providing accessible services to meet the needs of transgender survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence;
- Deliver training to their services on meeting the needs of transgender survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

This ensures training is applied equally across all organisations in the sector, building on excellent work already done here.

- Targets for training should be set – how many training sessions will be delivered, how many people will be trained, which staff groups will be trained.

### **Other issues**

- **Sex working** – some work needed to gauge and support trans people engaged in sex working.
- Ensure recommendations set out in ***Barriers faced by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people in accessing domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, and sexual violence*** are fully implemented.
- To ensure a survivor focused, gender responsive and needs lead approach, recommend implementation of the recently developed **Change That Lasts** model.

### **Focus groups**

In the Focus Groups, similar issues around gendered services and the need for training were raised along with:

- Safe houses are not safe, through cost cutting.
- Services can be afraid of doing something wrong when a trans person wants to use their service, so they are reluctant to provide service.



## **Sport**

### **What barriers are there to participation in sport for transgender people?**

There were 42 (out of 62) responses to this question.

#### **Gendered Facilities**

28 respondents said gendered changing rooms are a barrier to transgender people taking part in sport.

This ranged from people being refused entry to facilities which matched their gender, people feeling uncomfortable or fearful of using facilities and gendered facilities exclude non-binary people.

Suggestions from respondents were gender neutral, private changing room options would help, along with training for members of staff at leisure facilities to enable them to deal with any issues that might prevent a trans person using their correct changing room.

#### **Gendered Teams / sports activities**

The next most prominent issue is Gendered teams / sports activities. 18 responses made reference to this being a barrier for trans people fearing acceptance and also for non-binary people. Specific references were made to schools and suggested that a way to remove this barrier would be for young people to be able to choose which sports they take part in, and offering more mixed-gendered sports.

Linked to this, was the impression some people may have that trans women may be at an unfair advantage playing on a women's sport team or that this may prevent trans women from even attempting to enter a women's team.

#### **Other issues raised**

- transphobia/prejudice/bullying. Some people had experience of this, while others raised the fear of abuse preventing them from taking part. Responses made reference to bullying or abuse from other players, spectators and the media.
- the role that Sports Associations and Governing Bodies could play in removing barriers for trans people. Some responses suggested the need for clear policies and guidance around the inclusion of trans people in sport and raised the lack of policies supporting young trans people.
- the importance of training and awareness for staff / sports coaches / organisers and personal trainers in transgender issues. A reference was also made to the need for this to include requirements relating to the Equality Act.
- issues around lack of confidence or body image being a barrier.
- Sports kit could be a barrier to trans people taking part because kit could either be gender specific or overly revealing.

- the importance of trans role models in breaking down barriers and encouraging trans people to take part in sport.
- Treatment of professional athletes and gender testing was considered a barrier.
- Other responses highlighted the lack of support for trans people in taking part in sports, an unwelcome culture, actually being denied access to local facilities and a lack of funding for LGBT sports.

### **Focus Groups responses**

The focus groups felt sports should be included in the Transgender Action Plan and echoed the main themes around changing facilities and gendered teams, particularly in schools.

Some of the conversations had a strong focus on elite sport and the role which governing bodies (along with drugs testing) can play.

## **Public transport**

### **What barriers (if any) inhibit your use of public transport in Wales?**

We had 36 responses to this question. Below is a summary of the key barriers mentioned.

#### **Fear / safety / hate crime**

28 responses to this question referred to fears of harassment, abuse, misgendering or for their personal safety.

Responses mentioned busses, trains, isolated railway stations and bus stations. Some respondents particularly feared taking public transport at night or on particular occasions such as match days.

Some people had previous negative experience using public transport.

Suggestions about improving the situation:

- Work with public transport providers to ensure their staff are aware of gender identity hate crime and are equipped to respond accordingly and ensure passengers are safe, with any incidents reported.
- Work with public transport providers and their drivers / staff to ensure an understanding of trans people.

Some respondents reported using public transport without problem.

#### **Other issues raised**

- A person's travel pass may be in their birth identity
- Public transport can be more difficult in rural areas
- Financial costs may be a barrier to some
- What training do BTP Community Safety Officers receive in trans issues? Are they confident in tackling harassment? Is harassment of the trans community monitored? What equality training is provided to transport employees? Can a resource be developed in conjunction with large employers such as Arriva?

#### **Focus Groups**

Attendees at our focus groups raised very similar issues around safety and a need for increased transgender awareness for drivers. Some specific issues raised around safety and Hate Crime were:

- Drivers could have a link up to the transport police, like a panic button. However, this is only useful if someone takes notice of the crime reported.
- Greater Manchester Police have a text number to report crimes. A text option would be helpful if on a bus for example, because you could report the incident without anyone else around knowing.

## Improving access to public services: Health

### Proposed Actions:

- To inform the provision of appropriate and responsive services, Welsh Government will request the Public Health Wales Observatory undertakes an evidence-gathering exercise. This will seek to establish the prevalence of transgender/gender dysphoria in Wales; to identify the health and wellbeing issues for transgender people; document the current provision of health care services for transgender/gender dysphoric individuals in Wales, and report on patient experience of those services which are provided. The information gathered through this exercise will inform the development and implementation of the NHS Wales Strategy for Gender Dysphoria Services, which is being developed by the Public Health Wales-led All Wales Gender Dysphoria Partnership Board.
- Welsh Government to support the forthcoming publication of the revised Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee policy on gender identity services and care pathway by developing guidance for GPs on gender dysphoria and working with transgender individuals. Welsh Government will also explore the potential for using primary care clusters<sup>4</sup> as a mechanism for improving expertise and delivering a greater range of services on a locality basis.
- Welsh Government to work with WHSSC and Local Health Boards to support the implementation of the forthcoming NHS Wales Strategy for Gender Dysphoria Services.

### Do you think these actions should be a priority to improving access to and experience of Health Services for transgender people?

Number of responses to question	57
Yes	42
No	0
Don't know	0
Not specified	15

49 people commented on this question. A summary of the main themes raised in these responses is below.

### Treatment in England / the wish for a Welsh GIC

A prominent theme raised by respondents was the need to travel to London for appointments and treatment. Issues raised:

- This can add to the cost, anxiety and stress of treatment.

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<sup>4</sup> Clusters are small groups of GP practices which work collaboratively to develop services in the community, serving populations of between 30 and 50 thousand patients

- The need to take time off work and balance appointments around caring responsibilities.
- More choice over which clinic they were treated in and which surgeon they saw.

A lot of respondents raised the wish for a Welsh Gender Identity Clinic.

- Gender Dysphoria is a more common condition now so there is likely to be a much greater call for treatment.
- A Welsh Gender Clinic would support primary care clusters.
- A Welsh GIC should be possible using existing local resources
- Gaps in provision of locally delivered services such as endocrinology and speech and language therapy should be addressed.

Linked to this are issues around the current referral pathway and waiting times.

### **Waiting Times**

A strong theme in the consultation comments was the waiting time for appointments and the length of time for treatment. Respondents said long waiting times had led to increased stress, anxiety, loss in confidence, increased dysphoria, self-medication and increased suicidal ideation. There were also comments about unacceptable delays for appointments breaching the 26 week rule for patients to be seen following referral.

### **Current Referral Pathway and treatment**

Some comments suggested consideration be given to other models from around the UK and that our system should be consistent with other parts of the UK. For example, some respondents reported that in Scotland, people can self-refer to a NHS GIC, or GPs can refer directly to a GIC.

Comments raised about the system:

- WHSSC do not fund certain services such as pre-surgery genital hair removal and facial feminisation surgery.
- Not having a choice of surgeons, as in England.
- There is a lack of communication between England and Wales about who can do what for patients, for example, confusion between the GP and the Charing Cross Consultant about who could prescribe and then administer hormones.

There were also some suggestions for improvements:

- Bring change to the Gender Care Pathway through the Health collaborative.
- Services for Children and Young People need to be improved as well as improving the transition from CAMHS to adult services.
- The NHS Wales strategy for gender dysphoria should include strategies to recruit more clinicians to become gender identity specialists across all relevant disciplines.

## **Training for Health Professionals**

A very common theme raised was the need for training and increased awareness of both gender identity and equality issues as a whole, along with specific training and resources to be made available about the referral pathway.

Some respondents highlighted the need for GPs in particular, to be targeted with mandatory training, others suggested that this should be taken forward throughout the health service. One respondent highlighted that this should include non-binary identities – to allow treatment without having to fit a transmasculine or transfeminine pathway.

Other areas identified as needing increased awareness are the importance of using correct pronouns and supporting trans patients with issues around toilets and single sex wards.

Some respondents identified resources already available such as GIREs e-learning, the Public Health Wales work already undertaken and the Public Health England Trans Fact Sheet.

## **Mental Health Issues**

Respondents raised the following issues related to Mental Health:

- delays to gender reassignment treatment coupled with discrimination and marginalisation can have a negative effect on Mental Health which can include suicidal ideation and depression.
- Mental Health services need to be able to support individuals with the impacts of bullying, hate crime etc as well as the impact of transitioning.
- Trans people experience disproportionate levels of poor mental health.
- Often mental health professionals fail to understand trans issues – in some cases, gender identity has been seen to be the cause of poor mental health.
- There is a need for specialists such as psychologists to have an understanding of gender identity, not just the mental health services for gender dysphoria. Could there be more specialist counselling services prior to and separate to gender clinics. CAMHS teams require support in dealing with trans issues. The initial referral to CAMHS is unnecessary. A better process would be for a GP to refer the patient to Tavistock directly where Tavistock would undertake an assessment and communicate back to the GP who could then refer to CAMHS if needed. would like to see 'Talk to me 2' support a tailored approach to improve mental health in protected groups. The Trans Mental Health Study 2012 recommends more targeted interventions to reduce exceptionally high prevalence of suicide and suicide ideation amongst trans people.

One respondent has drawn attention to GIRES' trans suicide prevention toolkit.

## **Records**

Some respondents raised issues around medical records such as:

- Offering an 'other' or 'nonbinary' gender option on all medical records, intake forms, GP surgery appointment slips etc. Also, adding MX as a gender title to all NHS databases and publicising this option.
- Being able to change name or gender on NHS records without breaking the link to old medical records.
- Update computer systems so trans people get correct treatment for their birth body care – eg screening check ups.

## **Other issues raised**

**Sexual Health Clinics** to acknowledge the specific needs of trans people and service providers to ensure services are trans led and trans friendly.

The number of **older transgender people** is growing. Health providers need to make sure that services are appropriate for older trans people which will include dementia care.

## **Focus Groups**

During the consultation period, two public workshops were held – one in Llandudno, the other in Cardiff – where stakeholders were invited to share their views on the proposed health-related actions included in the consultation document.

The issues raised by workshop attendees mirrored those identified in the written responses received. Many members of the trans community who attended the workshops related personal experiences of difficulties they had encountered in their dealings with healthcare providers in Wales – including a perceived lack of understanding or compassion amongst some healthcare professionals in relation to gender dysphonia. Concerns were also expressed regarding the lack of indigenous GICs, and waiting times for services provided in England. Some stakeholders, however, were also keen to point out that not all experiences were negative, and to recognise that pockets of good practice, and committed practitioners, did exist in Wales.

The consensus amongst attendees was the proposed health-related actions included in the consultation document were appropriate, however, the work to develop a care pathway, and address the lack of Gender Identity Clinic(s) in Wales, should be considered the overarching priorities.

## Housing

### Proposed Actions:

- Incorporate LGBT advice service within Shelter Cymru's national advice project.
- Incorporate the Hate Crime Toolkit as a 'reasonable step' which could be taken in the statutory code of guidance to accompany the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.
- Work with Tai Pawb to ensure, where practicable, data collection takes account of protected characteristics, including gender identity.

### Do you think these actions should be a priority to improving access to and experience of Homelessness Services for transgender people?

Number of responses to question	55
Yes	31
No	
Don't know	
Not specified	24

31 people commented on this question. A summary of the main themes raised in these responses is below.

### Training Requirements

11 respondents felt Housing services may require additional training around the specific needs that transgender people may have. Some specific points raised are:

- Review how local authority training and awareness raising is informing trans people's experience of housing.
- There is a need to ensure housing provider's processes do not unintentionally discriminate, for example staff being aware not to ask for a gender recognition certificate.
- There is a need for clearer guidance to be provided for service providers on best practice in relation to changing records when someone has transitioned.
- In the private rental sector, training for landlords and agents – Tai Pawb suggest the landlord accreditation training should include trans awareness training.
- Data storage and access – all those who are collecting information should receive appropriate training on data security.

### Transgender people can be vulnerable when it comes to housing

8 responses highlighted housing can be a particular issue for transgender people because some may experience family breakdown, homelessness,



victimisation by neighbours or loss of employment when they come out as being transgender. For those who lose their social network, homelessness may become a reality.

### **Priority need**

8 responses felt transgender people should be an automatic Priority Need Category for housing.

### **Specific transgender housing need**

4 responses referred to the need for trans specific housing projects, particularly for those needing temporary or emergency housing in a safe and protected environment. Some specific points raised:

- It would be inappropriate to expect someone who is mid transition to stay in a male or female hostel.
- A good solution would be a transgender hostel located in or near Cardiff city centre.

### **Access to all**

3 responses highlighted the importance of trans people having access to housing services despite gender identity. There should be no discrimination. Organisations should show that they are LGBT inclusive.

### **Area of Housing**

Some people in the transgender community have threats of violence by neighbours.

Some respondents felt there should be greater flexibility for transgender people accepting or refusing a property from Social Housing Landlords.

Homeless accommodation may be in undesirable, unsafe areas where a transgender person may face discrimination, be at high risk of hate crime / violence and find it difficult to settle.

Trans people should always be placed in housing situations where they feel safe and any complaints should be taken seriously. This is particularly important for young people and those placed in emergency accommodation.

### **Young People**

Some responses highlighted more support is needed for young trans people who come out and as a result are being made homeless by their families

Albert Kennedy Research shows young people who identify as LGBT are at a significantly higher risk of becoming homeless. This shows a clear need for service providers such as family mediators (in a homelessness context) to be

sensitive to issues facing young trans people and consideration of the suitability of hostels aimed at young people.

Work with young people should take a proactive approach based on early intervention.

There is a serious risk young people forced from their homes will encounter child sexual exploitation if the appropriate support is not provided.

### **Other issues raised**

Consideration should be given to providing debt advice within Shelter Cymru's national advice project.

Many housing problems could be reduced by getting trans people back into gainful employment. This could be through voluntary work to build confidence and experience of working in their acquired gender.

The link between violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, and homelessness should be considered as a priority. For example, an abusive partner may have control over finances which would usually result in reliance on the perpetrator. Homelessness services need to be aware of this to ensure this person would be housed as a priority to avoid them returning to the household due to financial dependency.

### **Focus groups**

Some of the people we spoke to in the focus groups felt that Housing wasn't a priority issue for them. Others however felt it was important to be included in the Action Plan.

Some of the issues raised in the consultation responses were reflected in the focus group conversations. Some specific issues brought up were:

- Some housing associations group trans people into one place. This is the wrong thing to do. It creates a ghetto and increases risk.
- Trans people as a matter of course should know that they will be treated with respect and supported. It needs to be consigned to legislation that trans people will be treated with respect.
- When problems arise in an area, the victim shouldn't be moved, the perpetrator should be.
- There is no consistency with Housing Associations when dealing with a tenant who is transitioning.
- There are instances where there has been refusal to change someone's name on the tenancy agreement.
- There are examples of people being put in the wrong accommodation with supported living.

## Striving for Equality

### **Are there other actions the Welsh Government should take to ensure transgender issues are addressed when taking decisions or setting equality objectives?**

We received 29 responses to this question.

#### **Consult and work with trans people**

The most prominent response to this question, with 12 people raising it, was to consult, listen to and work with trans people when implementing policies that will affect them.

Trans people have invaluable lived experience to share on these issues.

This should include community groups, individuals and trans activists. Make sure they represent a variety of views from across the community and not to be overly reliant on the same individuals who are not able to be the voice of the whole community.

#### **Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)**

9 responses raised EIAs. The Welsh Government should ensure consideration is given to how new policies could impact a transgender person and provide training and good practice models to improve the quality of EIAs.

#### **Other issues raised**

- Services should respect an individual's pronouns.
- The Welsh Government should provide advice to all aspects of public services on how to support a trans person.
- The Equality Act names the protected characteristic as 'Gender Reassignment'. It is unclear how this is defined and different groups understand this differently. The Welsh Government should show leadership on this issue by referring to the protected characteristic as 'gender identity' rather than 'gender reassignment' and ensure it is defined to cover a broad range of trans identities which includes non-binary people.
- The Welsh Government should support public bodies to sensitively monitor gender identity and to collect data on the needs and experiences of trans employees and service users.
- Mx – The Welsh Government should officially recognise the gender-neutral title Mx on all internal and external forms.
- The Welsh Government should assess staff training needs on trans issues and implement training where necessary.
- Address the evidence gap on trans people's experiences.

## **Any Gaps in the Consultation.**

**Do you think there should be any other priorities addressed in the Transgender Action Plan? If so, what should these priorities be?**

**We have asked a number of specific questions about equality for transgender people. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.**

We had 47 responses to these two questions. The most prominent themes brought up in these sections were issues around Social Care, Employment and legal recognition of Gender. A summary of responses to these two questions is below.

### **Older People and Social Care**

Older People will have specific and different experiences to younger trans people. The Welsh Government should make resources available to listen directly to the experiences, needs and concerns of older transgender people.

Social care is a priority concern of older transgender people. Older transgender people are more likely to enter older age alone which has implications around the need for and content of formal care and support. They may be less likely to have family members to care for them as they age and are more likely to require formal social care.

Being able to access appropriate social care from providers that are knowledgeable and sensitive to the needs of transgender people is a challenge. Fears around being misgendered if carers are uninformed or don't accept their gender influence a person's decision making around whether to access social care services or not. There may be reluctance or refusal to enter a care home.

There are additional concerns for older people living with dementia around a loss of control over who knows one's transgender status, confusion and distress about external aspects and self-care of a post-operative body and medical issues relating to natal gender that emerge with aging.

Social care services should signal their transgender friendliness and actively work to counter heteronormative assumptions in service provision and delivery.

There is a need for training and awareness raising on the needs of older trans people in social and care home settings. The personal care needs of transgender and intersex people within dementia plans need to be reflected in services.

## **Employment and Training**

Some respondents recognised there are employers who are taking proactive steps to address trans equality and are meeting the needs of staff members who transition. However there are also employers who are not currently equipped or knowledgeable enough to support trans staff members.

There are employers who do not have adequate pre-emptive policies in place. Issues for consideration can be:

- Toilet or changing facilities. This could be clarified by the EHRC so that employers never demand that trans people use toilets (even as an interim measure) that are not consistent with their gender role and presentation.
- Privacy. A person's transgender status is protected and a breaching a trans person's privacy is unlawful.
- Changing name and title in binary IT systems can be a frequently encountered issue.
- Bullying and discrimination in the workplace. Trans people may leave the work place due to bullying or the fear of discrimination may be a significant barrier to accessing employment.
- Time off for medical appointments.
- Use of preferred pronouns.
- Dress codes.

It would be useful for updated guidance to be available to employers to advise on supporting employees who are transitioning at work and how to embed trans equality as part of their wider equality and diversity responsibilities.

Trans people can be at higher risk of being unemployed from the above issues alongside disproportionately high levels of poor mental health.

There is a need for better education and training services to help trans people access employment or return to work after treatment. This is important because it removes isolation and provides opportunity.

Conduct further research on experiences of trans people at work and finding employment opportunities.

## **Gender Identities and Legal recognition of Gender**

A number of respondents called for a better understanding and explicit recognition of non-binary gender identities and issues such as gender-neutral toilets and removing M and F from passports and drivers licenses.

One respondent, a transgender person who identifies as part male, part female and has no gender dysphoria gave a specific example. They have had positive experiences in general. They have an alternative name on their GP system. The problem comes in with not being able to legally have two genders. Bank cards, National Insurance, travel cards are all only issued in a person's legal gender. They would like the option to legally hold dual gender

identity with appropriate qualifying conditions to safeguard against fraud and misuse. There would be minimum period of time living as transgender to evidence one's intention to live permanently as transgender. Proof of identity could then be overcome by biometric technologies.

One response stated Intersex people can face similar yet distinct inequalities to those faced by trans people. The Welsh Government should consider evidence on issues faced by intersex people and ways in which equality can be achieved for intersex people in Wales.

Another issue raised in a number of responses is the desire to legally self-declare gender.

The issue of monitoring gender identity was raised. There are inconsistencies in questions asked and there is confusion between sex and gender. A suggestion is a government round table to discuss appropriate monitoring questions followed by a Government and Trans Sector document on the agreed approach to monitoring.

One response requested a Welsh Gender Law that would reform the Gender Recognition Act to omit the Spousal Veto (and allow a person to self-certify their gender).

### **Other Issues raised**

- The provision of Advocacy and advice services is important. Advisers should reflect the diversity of the protected groups in Wales.
- Consideration of multiple intersectionality (for example trans people with learning disabilities) also interaction with socio-economic status.
- Treatment of trans people in prisons. Trans people can be at high risk of violence, exploitation and sexual harassment within prison. Further evidence is required to determine issues.
- Media portrayals – often exploitative and sensational and heavily focused on trans women, leading to invisibility of trans men and non-binary people..
- Raise awareness of what it means to be transgender so that the wider public can understand and hopefully be more accepting.
- Asylum and Immigration – trans people may come to the UK fleeing persecution. Welsh Government should support refugee and immigration groups to provide advice and support for trans people who have come to Wales.
- Trans organisations in Wales – concern over funding and sustainability of the work of trans activists and community groups in Wales.
- There is need to support families in terms of trans children and young people and the children of trans parents.
- Gender neutral toilets

## Focus Groups

Attendees at the focus groups also raised issues around employment and gender neutral toilets.

Other issues:

- **Unions** – sometimes the unions don't support the trans individual.
- **Social Inclusion Funding** – Modest funding is very valuable to the trans community. Even a few hundred pounds. Does it need to be such a complicated application process?