

APA Official Actions

Position Statement on Access to Care for Transgender and Gender Diverse Individuals

Approved by the Board of Trustees, July 2018

Approved by the Assembly, May 2018

“Policy documents are approved by the APA Assembly and Board of Trustees. . . . These are . . . position statements that define APA official policy on specific subjects. . . .” – *APA Operations Manual*

Issue:

Significant and long-standing medical and psychiatric literature exists that demonstrates clear benefits of medical and surgical interventions to assist gender diverse individuals seeking transition. However, private and public insurers often do not offer, or may specifically exclude, coverage for medically necessary treatments for gender transition. Access to medical care (both medical and surgical) positively impacts the mental health of transgender and gender diverse individuals.

The APA’s vision statement includes the phrase: “Its vision is a society that has available, accessible, quality psychiatric diagnosis and treatment,” yet currently, transgender and gender diverse individuals frequently lack available and accessible gender-affirming treatment. In addition, APA’s values include the following points:

- best standards of clinical practice
- patient-focused treatment decisions
- scientifically-established principles of treatment
- advocacy for patients

Transgender and gender diverse individuals currently lack access to the best standards of clinical practice, do not have the opportunity to pursue patient-focused gender-affirming treatment decisions, and do not receive scientifically-established treatment. They could benefit significantly from APA’s advocacy.

Position:

Therefore, the American Psychiatric Association:

- 1. Recognizes that appropriately evaluated transgender and gender diverse individuals can benefit greatly from medical and surgical gender-affirming treatments.**
- 2. Advocates for removal of barriers to care and supports both public and private health insurance coverage for gender transition treatment.**
- 3. Opposes categorical exclusions of coverage for such medically necessary treatment when prescribed by a physician.**
- 4. Supports evidence-based coverage of all gender-affirming procedures which would help the**

mental well-being of gender diverse individuals

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