

Committee Secretary
Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

5 January 2020

Dear Committee Secretary,

Re Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2019.

Thank you for inviting submissions from the public regarding the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. As a medical doctor and mother of four, I write to express my profound concerns regarding this pending legislature. The proposed legislation will prevent children and adolescents with gender dysphoria from accessing proven treatments of individual and family psychotherapy and counselling, and condemns them instead to a life-long administration of hormones and the possibility of major surgery, including castration. Even the proponents for hormonal intervention themselves admit that they do not know whether their interventions improve outcomes for the children that undergo them. Conversely, we know that puberty blocking medications and cross sex hormones medications have lasting side effects on the developing brain. Is it reasonable to assume children have the mental capacity to understand both the possibility of side effects, and the experimental nature of the regime, and therefore consent to these treatments?

It is also known, that the suicide rate in transgendering adults is some twenty times higher than the general population. With such widespread uncertainty of positive effect but certainty of deleterious side effects, I write to request the Parliament not to oblige therapists to pursue the hormonal intervention and to permit the alternative psychotherapeutic support, which has been shown to be effective in the past.

I empathise with Parliament's concern for the welfare of children suffering from gender dysphoria and with the associated suffering of families. As a medical doctor I am wholeheartedly committed to improving health outcomes for our children, including their mental health. I therefore thank the Parliament for its concern but wish to register my strong disagreement with its commitment to the unproven claims of benefit from the massive life-long administration of hormones and the likely association of castrating surgery, while denying children and adolescents access to proven psychotherapy treatments. I do hope the government will not cause health care providers to need to choose between their duty to provide best, evidence based medical care for their patients, or their need to submit to the government's ruling to direct psychologically confused children to clinics that practice hormonal intervention and surgery.

Kind regards

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