

EPATH/WPATH Statement on the Temporary Suspension of New Surgical Referrals in Wales

EPATH/WPATH is aware of reports regarding the temporary suspension of new gender-affirming surgical referrals from the Welsh Gender Service (WGS) while concerns relating to referral practices and clinical governance are investigated.

At this stage, the matters under review remain subject to an investigation. It would therefore be inappropriate to speculate on the causes of the reported concerns or to draw conclusions regarding individual clinicians, services, or organisations before the facts have been established.

Our primary concern is the wellbeing of transgender and gender-diverse people affected by this decision. Many patients have already experienced long waits for care and may now face additional uncertainty regarding access to surgery. For those whose surgical pathways have been disrupted, this may cause significant distress, anxiety, and disappointment.

EPATH/WPATH supports a transparent, timely, and evidence-based review and encourages all parties to work collaboratively to resolve any identified issues as quickly as possible. We believe it is important that relevant stakeholders, including patients, clinicians, service providers, commissioners, and surgical teams, are appropriately engaged throughout the process to ensure that any outcomes are informed, balanced, and focused on improving care.

Throughout this period, clear communication with patients and access to appropriate support will be essential. While concerns regarding clinical governance should be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly, patient welfare must remain at the centre of decision-making.

EPATH/WPATH remains committed to supporting evidence-informed, person-centred healthcare for transgender and gender-diverse people and hopes that the review will provide clarity, identify any necessary improvements, and support the timely restoration of access to care for affected patients.