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Russian Legislation Threatens Health of Vulnerable Populations

The Board of Directors of the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH), an international interdisciplinary professional medical educational association with over 2000 members dedicated to the study and practice of healthcare affecting transgender and gender-nonbinary or gender-nonconforming people, urges the members of the State Duma of Russia to reject proposed legislation that invalidates the personhood of transgender people and restricts their ability to participate in society. These measures contradict the norms of international law and human rights conventions.

WPATH produces the internationally accepted *Standards of Care for the Health of Transsexual, Transgender, and Gender-nonconforming People*, now in its 7th edition, and publishes the *International Journal of Transgender Health*, a peer-reviewed academic journal. Our members include leading practitioners and researchers in the field of transgender health. Research shows that appropriate treatment for gender incongruence (ICD-11) which includes hormonal and surgical care for accurately diagnosed, well-qualified patients, must also include legal recognition through consistent identity documents congruent with the patient's gender identity and expression. Partial, restricted, or incomplete treatment can put these patients at risk for severe health consequences involving both mental and physical complications stemming from internal and external sources, including anxiety, depression, abuse, violence, murder, and suicide.

WPATH urges the members of the State Duma of Russia to reject bills supporting changes to the Family Code of Russian Federation that will subject persons who are LGBT or who suffer from gender incongruence to adverse discrimination, depriving them of human rights and their innate human dignity, integrity, health, and family life, to which all persons are entitled under various human rights conventions.

WPATH urges consultation with Russian researchers, scientists, physicians, and mental health providers who are familiar with contemporary research and demographics concerning sexual orientation and gender identity, and also with members of the LGBT communities of Russia, in order that members of the State Duma may realize that people of diverse sexual orientations or gender identities do not threaten the institutions of the family or marriage, as they have not undermined these institutions in the many countries where sexual orientation or gender identity are not impediments to full participation in civic life.

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