

Requests for gender change on the GP IT record for those that fall within safeguarding legislation (i.e., Adults with care and support needs, and all children)

The following advice is local advice for BSW GP surgeries, from the ICB Named GPs for Safeguarding whilst awaiting further national guidance. It relates to requests for a gender change on the medical record for those patients who fall within safeguarding legislation, i.e., **for adults with care and support needs, and for all children.**

The sex marker on GP records is currently referred to as gender; patients and clinicians may have differing understanding of “gender,” which could affect the safe delivery of care. This could include a lack of understanding by the clinician as to whether there is the presence of the sex organs etc, as well as problems related to screening for cancer, and blood test ranges, which differ between biological males and females. If a new medical record is created to enable this change, reintegration of the previous data is then not possible, which has multiple risks, including clinical and safeguarding risks. We are aware that there is work taking place to ensure that GP IT systems allow for separate fields for biological sex, expressed gender and pronouns, but this is not yet available.

We are aware that some surgeries have had requests from patients for a change of the gender on the medical record. This is our current advice to you about how to manage these situations from a safeguarding perspective, for adults with care and support needs, and all children:

- All such requests should go via a task to the most appropriate GP for the patient in the first instance.
- An appointment or appointments with sufficient time allocated should then be made with this GP to enable them to establish a dialogue about this request with the patient and to fully review the patient in a holistic fashion, including a review of both their physical and mental health and whether there are other relevant diagnoses that need to be managed.
- The GP should consider as to whether they have the knowledge or competency to be able to gain consent from the patient to change their gender. Most GPs will not have the knowledge nor competency to be able to gain consent for this as it is not a routine part of GP training.
- Following the Cass review being published, it is recommended that the GP consider waiting until the patient has been reviewed in a secondary care clinic, a diagnosis of gender dysphoria made, a medical transition processed commenced and the Gender Recognition Certificate* (GRC) granted, before any change to the officially recorded sex / gender field is made to the GP medical record.
- The GP should consider noting the gender identity change as free text within the progress notes/New Journal/patient plan – i.e., child wishes to be identified as he/she/they. This could be flagged by utilising pop-ups and alerts.
- If the GP has had additional training and experience in the field of gender dysphoria and therefore feels that they do have the knowledge and competency to gain consent from the patient to change their gender on the GP IT record, they should follow the relevant guidance from that speciality, as to how to progress.

If the GP feels that there are safeguarding concerns, they should make a safeguarding referral.

In the rare instance that a new medical record is created with a different gender, any Safeguarding Alerts present on the old record *must* be transferred to the new record. If the child had a CP-IS alert on the old record, the council must be notified of the new NHS number.

For further information -

- RCGP June 2019 policy [Transgender care \(rcgp.org.uk\)](https://www.rcgp.org.uk)
- RCGP 2017 document <https://www.rcgp.org.uk/getmedia/18e6238d-6fff-43c7-b027-e3fb2d718fff/RCGPNI-Trans-Patient-Guidelines-for-GPs-2017.pdf>
- RCGP e-learning module – (only if you're a member)
<https://elearning.rcgp.org.uk/course/view.php?id=341>
- BMA – [Gender incongruence in primary care \(bma.org.uk\)](https://www.bma.org.uk)
- NHS Digital legacy has the following guidance but relates to how to record it in clinical systems - [Gender identity - NHS Digital](#)
- [Cass Review – Independent Review of Gender Identity Services for Children and Young People 2024](#)

* A **Gender Recognition Certificate** (“GRC”) is a formal document issued by the Gender Recognition Panel to legally recognise an individual’s acquired gender in the UK. If you are granted a full GRC you will, from the date of issue, be considered in the eyes of the law to be of your acquired gender.