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Hon Dr Shane Reti  
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Tēnā koe Dr Reti,

**RE: Gender Affirming Care and Prescription of Puberty Blockers**

Speak Up For Women (SUFW) wrote to you on 13 December 2023, and provided you with a briefing that included our concerns related to your portfolio as Minister of Health. I have attached a copy for your convenience.

I am writing again to go on the record for posterity. SUFW strongly objects to the medical (and social) “gender transition” of children and young people in Aotearoa New Zealand. It must end.

I wanted to let you know in case you are not aware, there have recently been significant developments internationally with regard to the medical “gender transition” of children including the use of drugs to suppress puberty.

We understand the provision of puberty blockers in New Zealand is still under review by the Ministry of Health. Puberty blockers, i.e. Gonadotropin Releasing Hormone Agonists (GnRH) such as Leucrin which are prescribed off-label, should never have been provided to children for gender ideological reasons. It is a medical scandal.

On 12th March this year, the **NHS England announced it will discontinue the use of puberty blockers after it carefully considered the evidence review conducted by NICE** (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence) as well as further published evidence. In a statement the NHS England spokesperson said *“we have concluded there is not enough evidence to support the safety or clinical efficacy of puberty blockers to make the treatment routinely available to young people at this time”*.

The ban comes after the **Cass Review’s interim report in the UK which recommended the closure of the GIDs (Gender Identity Disorder Service) at the Tavistock Clinic**. A relevant summary is set out in this article from ACPUK (Association of Clinical Psychologists United Kingdom):  
<https://acpuk.org.uk/the-cass-review-and-its-implications-psychologically-informed-considerations-for-the-future/>

Medical transition for children has also been rolled back in other European countries including Finland, Sweden and Denmark:

<https://segm.org/Denmark-sharply-restricts-youth-gender-transitions>

**A further development in early March of this year saw the publication of the “WPATH files” report by the organisation Environmental Progress:**

<https://environmentalprogress.org/big-news/wpath-files>

These files contain videos and a selection of messages from an internal chat system sent between the members of the World Professional Association of Transgender Health (WPATH). These files show that members of WPATH are fully aware that the so-called gender affirming care they provide can result in lifelong complications, and that patients do not understand the implications of such treatments, including sterility and lack of sexual function.

The files reveal WPATH to be an organization that is adhering to an ideological path with reckless disregard for the young people whose best interests they are supposedly there to serve.

WPATH is a membership organization for gender identity activists, not a professional medical body (albeit some medical professionals are members). While gender activists have focused on the fact that the leaked material does not contain WPATH official guidance it clearly demonstrates that WPATH members are aware that children cannot understand or weigh the future impact of a lack of normal sexual maturation, including loss of sexual function and fertility.

Also, horrifyingly, in a leaked video WPATH members are shown to glibly waive away resulting medical harm, including of one of their patients who has developed liver cancer. The files also reveal WPATH members engaging in a discussion about contra-indications for gender affirming care. They casually dismiss that being homeless, or having a severe mental illness such as schizophrenia would present a barrier to gender affirming surgery.

We note that in New Zealand, PATHA (Professional Association of Transgender Health Aotearoa) has strong links to WPATH. It is clear that the members of PATHA’s executive committee only endorse and promote the model of gender affirming care for young people with gender issues. Because of this adherence to a model that is largely ideological driven, they lack the scientific neutrality to assess a wide range of research that informs good clinical practice.

The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) in the UK provides the highest caliber of neutral, independent advice regarding the evidence base for medical interventions. Their findings about puberty blockers for gender dysphoric teens and children is not driven by ideology but by the highest scientific rigor. NICE is clear that *there is not enough evidence to support the*

*safety or clinical efficacy of puberty blockers to make the treatment routinely available to young people.*

New Zealand government agencies have long worked with and continue to promote and cite PATHA:

<https://www.hrc.govt.nz/news-and-events/events/2021-professional-association-transgender-health-aotearoa-symposium>

<https://www.tewhaturora.govt.nz/keeping-well/transgender-new-zealanders/>  
<https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/assets/DirectoryFile/Transitioning-and-Gender-Affirmation-in-the-New-Zealand-Public-Service-V1-Optimised.pdf>

Politicians, civil servants, NGOs, medical professionals, educators and all those in New Zealand who promote the “gender transition” of children are now, effectively, on notice. There will inevitably be public inquiries here and overseas into how and why a pseudoscientific pseudo-religion, enabled, promoted and imposed by public institutions, officials, political parties and others was able to survive for so long.

SUFW urges you to obtain up-to-date and evidence-based, non-ideological advice about the “gender transition” of New Zealand children. We hope you are aware that along with well-meaning but frankly naïve officials who believe they are promoting a just and progressive cause, there are gender ideologues and activists within the civil service. Such people are highly motivated to obfuscate, misrepresent and disparage critics, stifle debate and cherry pick evidence. We hope you will push back at your advisors and at departmental officials if you receive ideologically motivated advice.

Dr Reti, a girl, is a human female child. There is no right or wrong way to be a girl. Girls can prefer short hair, “boys” toys, and playing with boys. A boy is a human male child. There is no right or wrong way to be a boy. Boys can prefer long hair, “girls” toys, and playing with girls.

Children have the right to grow up with a healthy connection to material reality, happy in their sexed bodies regardless of whatever masculine or feminine personality traits they exhibit. SUFW urges you to support an immediate end to the “gender transition” of children.

Ngā mihi

**Suzanne Levy**

Spokesperson

Speak Up for Women