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Hon Matt Dooney
Minister for Mental Health
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Tēnā koe Minister Dooney,

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 Mental Health. I have attached a copy for your convenience.

SUFW represents women from a range of backgrounds and includes health professionals such as paediatricians, psychotherapists and counsellors. We know that most professional bodies who regulate therapy in New Zealand have unquestioningly adopted gender affirming care as the required model of treatment for young people with gender issues and we know that dissenters are routinely silenced: <https://www.speakupforwomen.nz/post/a-letter-from-a-therapist>.

We are writing again to go on the record for posterity. SUFW strongly objects to what is known as Gender Affirming Care for children and young people. This model involves the automatic affirmation of a young person's "gender identity" without question or consideration of differential diagnosis, potentially leading to medical "gender transition" of children and young people in Aotearoa New Zealand. It must end.

We want to draw your attention to significant developments internationally that have occurred recently with regard to the medical "gender transition" of children including the use of drugs to suppress puberty.

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 they 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

<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 organisation that is adhering to an ideological path with reckless disregard for the young people whose best interests they are supposedly there to serve. We note that in New Zealand PATHA (Professional Association of Transgender Health Aotearoa) has strong links to WPATH and on their board there are two members of WPATH.

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, are used off label to block puberty in gender dysphoric children. These drugs should never have been prescribed to children for gender ideological reasons. It is a medical scandal.

We would very much like the chance to meet with you or one of your officials to discuss the issues we have outlined further.

Ngā mihi

Suzanne Levy

Spokesperson

Speak Up for Women