



Monash Health Gender Clinic and COVID-19: Gender Clinic recommences clinical services

20 May 2020

We are pleased to announce that the Gender Clinic will be recommencing clinical services. We remain aware of a possible need to assist Monash Health's COVID-19 efforts in facing a sub-acute pandemic that might last between 3 – 12 months. However, given the "flattening of the COVID-19 curve", we can now offer a modified delivery of clinical services through telehealth consultations. We understand that this has been a difficult time for our clients and aim to restore access to services as quickly as is possible, whilst ensuring your safety.

We will firstly focus on completing pending assessments and then commencing work with clients on our waitlist. At this stage most appointments will be offered by Telehealth. If you're currently on the Gender Clinic waitlist you don't have to do anything. We will contact you once we can offer you your first appointment. You can email the clinic for further clarification at genderclinic@monashhealth.org. In order to ensure we are able to respond to all queries in a timely fashion, please email your enquiries rather than telephone us. Our clinical or administration staff will try to get back to you as soon as possible.

When the clinic contacts you to arrange consultations, we will send details of how to set up a telehealth consultation. This is through flexible, high-quality, secure software that allows you to use your smart phone or computer, and can connect up to four persons.

At this time we are not accepting referrals for new clients. However, we will review this on an ongoing basis. Should the pandemic continue to remain contained, we aim to resume accepting new referrals by the end of June.

Information on other services

Gender Affirming Surgery

Although some elective surgeries have recommenced, at this stage gender affirming surgeries have been cancelled until further notice. You can find updated information at Andrew Ives office: <https://transsurgeryaustralia.com.au/consultation-changes/>

Monash Health Endocrinology Services

At this stage the Endocrinology Clinic at Monash Medical Centre will continue to operate as normal. Please note that all Endocrinology appointments have been changed to teleconference or phone call. If you need to contact the Endocrinology team please call 03 8572 2514.

Mental Health and Psychological Support

We are very conscious of the fact that the interruption to our operations has caused some distress for people. At this time, psychological support and access to gender-affirming treatments are still important to the health and wellbeing of many Trans, Gender Diverse and Non-binary people.

If you have questions email the clinic for further clarification at genderclinic@monashhealth.org. Email is preferred to avoid overloading our administration staff. If your enquiry is urgent you can call us on 03 9556 6216 and leave a message on the answering machine.

Given our staff numbers are small, we may not be able to respond to your query on the same day that you leave a message. Please consider the following resource options instead if you want more immediate assistance.

If you need immediate support

If you're feeling distressed and want to talk this through with someone straight away we encourage you to the call following phone services:

- Lifeline 13 11 14
- Beyond Blue 1300 224 636
- Switchboard (LGBTIQA+ phone support 3pm-midnight) 1800 184 527

If **you are having suicidal or self-harm thoughts or are struggling to cope** and might need more than a supportive chat please contact your local [Crisis Assessment Team](#).

If **you have concerns for your immediate safety or that of another person** please call Emergency Services on 000.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What will happen to the Gender Clinic?

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When the clinic contacts you to arrange consultations, we will send details of how to set up a telehealth consultation. This is through flexible, high-quality, secure software that allows you to use your smart phone or computer, and can connect up to four persons.

2. If I'm on the wait list what do I do? / Can I still be referred to the Gender Clinic?

At this time we are not accepting referrals for new clients. However, we will review this on an ongoing basis. Should the pandemic continue to remain contained, we aim to resume accepting new referrals by the end of June.

If you are currently on the waitlist you will maintain your position. As an alternative, clients may wish to explore private options - list of private clinicians is available on our website.

3. How can I get alternative Trans and Gender Diverse support?

If you are seeking a referral for approval for hormones or surgery, please see the updated list of providers below: TGDNB clinics (as at 24 April 2020), with information on what services they are currently providing. This is not a complete list so you should also consult the list of private providers on our website. Please note that the information provided here only relates to the current COVID-19 period and that these services may change as conditions improve. Please advise us if there are any inaccuracies, or of changes to services being provided.

One key service is a Victoria-wide Trans and Gender Diverse Community Health Service, which can currently provide fast appointments and dedicated support, including:

- Peer Navigation by a trans and gender diverse health worker,
- Telehealth and in person appointments with GPs, counsellors, psychologists, a psychiatrist, and endocrinologists trained in trans and gender diverse affirmative practice.
- Online facilitated group support
- Access to hormones

To access these services, visit [Your Community Health](#) or call 03 8458 6756.

4. How can I get other mental health support?

These are uncertain times with frequent developments. We want to acknowledge the impact that events such as these have on a person's mental health and we strongly encourage you to have a look at the following links which have some very helpful advice on how to care for your mental health over the coming weeks and months:

- [APS resource for coping with COVID](#)
- [Headspace resource for coping with COVID](#)
- [Beyond Blue resource for coping with COVID](#)
- [ACON resource for coping with COVID](#)

We want to thank you for your patience and understanding. Stay safe and we look forward to connecting with you again as soon as possible.

The Monash Health Gender Clinic Team