



WPATH WORLD PROFESSIONAL
ASSOCIATION for
TRANSGENDER HEALTH

(Formerly Known as the Harry Benjamin International
Gender Dysphoria Association, Inc.)

A Non-Profit Corporation

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Update

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The Update is the official publication of the World Professional Association for Transgender Health. Items submitted to the editors for publication will be edited for clarity, readability, syntax, duplication, grammar, and spelling as well as gender-biased language. Materials should be formatted as a Word attachment and sent to the email address above.

TOWARDS VERSION 7 OF THE STANDARDS OF CARE

Version 6 of the *Standards of Care* of the Association continues to be a useful resource for promoting and ensuring high quality care for transgender persons around the world. The *Standards* are used

by clinicians and laypeople to understand minimal guidelines for the administration of hormones and the provision of surgical care. They detail other guidelines for mental health and medical care.

The *Standards* are also used widely as a reference to explain the nature of gender identity disorders and how they can be treated. In addition, the *Standards* have been used over and over again to fight legal battles to ensure transgender rights for equality, access to care, and to recognize a person's gender status as a legitimate marker of an individual's sexual identity.

While the *Standards* have been helpful in many ways, they are not accepted favorably by all. Controversy has always surrounded them. Criticisms have fostered healthy debate and have influenced revisions of the *Standards* over time. Version 6 is the most recent revision (published in 2001).

As Chair of the *Standards of Care* Committee, I am interested in listening to concerns about the *Standards* and suggestions for improvement. I am also interested in reviewing the existing literature to better inform the next revision.

In order to accomplish this, I have formed a "work group" of individuals to examine various parts of the *Standards* and review the literature pertaining to those sections. I have commissioned review papers to:

- 1) Review the research evidence (and provide us with references);
- 2) Point out where research is lacking and needed, and
- 3) Make possible recommendations (significant and cosmetic) to the *Standards* based upon new evidence.

The following individuals have been invited to submit papers: Leah Schaefer, Tina Wheeler, Sam Winter, Aaron Devor, Walter Bockting, Randi Ettner, George Brown, Ken Zucker, Peggy Cohen-Kettenis, Lin

Fraser, Walter Meyer, Jamie Feldman, Stephen Whittle, Petra DeSutter, Stephen Levine, Griet DeCuypere, Stan Monstrey, Toby Meltzer, Michael Brownstein, Loren Schechter, and Heino Meyer Bahlburg.

These individuals will write scholarly articles that will be published in a forthcoming special issue of the *International Journal of Transgenderism*. Initial drafts of these papers are due June 1, 2007. Once these papers are completed, I believe that we will be in a better position to consider a revision of the *Standards*. Forming a *Standards of Care* Revision Committee will be considered at the WPATH Board of Directors meeting in September 2007. This committee will consider the pathway towards a revision of the *Standards* and publication of Version 7. This process will give us the necessary time for informed input for the best possible revision of the *Standards*.

I welcome everyone to submit comments, opinions, and references to me or any other members of the work group over the coming months to ensure optimal input from the membership. We are also planning a plenary session at the Symposium in Chicago this fall with presentations by a number of the authors of the background papers. This will give us a further opportunity for input. We look forward to hearing from you.

Eli Coleman, Ph.D.

Chair, Standards of Care Committee