



# TRANS AGEING AND CARE PROJECT HENEIDDIO A GOFAL TRAWS

Dignified and inclusive health and social care for older trans people in Wales



@TransAgeing

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## National LGBT Survey 2018 (UK GOV)

108,100 responses **but only 6% 55+ years of age**

- 13% identify as trans, inc. **non-binary** (6.9%), **transwomen** (3.5%) and **transmen** (2.9%)
- Life-satisfaction – trans respondents had **lower scores** than cis-LGB people and general population
- Accessing healthcare services – 21% trans respondents state their specific needs were ignored or not taken into account
- Gender identity services – 50% trans men and 43% trans women had accessed services – 80% stated accessing had not been easy, 68% stated the waiting lists were too long.
- 16% trans respondents had sought healthcare or medical treatment outside the UK.



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## What about older trans people's lives?

- Little research on older trans adults' wellbeing or health and social care needs in later life
- Research outcomes and findings specific to trans adults often hidden in 'LGBT' samples
- Trans Mental Health Study 2012 – 65% (N=665) have experienced worries about 'growing old alone' because they are trans.

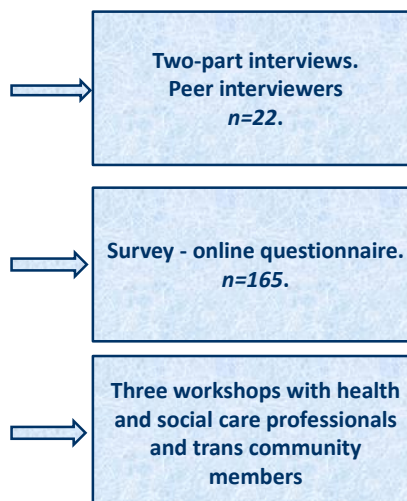


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## About the project 2016-18

### Aims and objectives

1. Identify health and social care needs of older (50+) trans people in Wales across the life course, as well as their hopes for, expectations of and concerns about service provision in older age
2. Examine attitudes and perceptions of health & social care professionals towards older trans people
3. Establish what will enable health and social care professionals to provide inclusive, person-centred services for older trans people in Wales



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## Key findings

### Practitioners' knowledge and awareness of trans issues

We found that survey respondents were **mostly 'trans-aware'** - familiar with trans issues (the media being the most popular source), and generally supportive of trans civil rights.

**BUT** identified gaps in knowledge about trans issues in later life (medical and legal knowledge)

- Over two thirds (116) indicated they had received no training in working with trans clients or patients. Over half calling for more education and training.
- Majority respondents white and cis-female from a wide range of roles including GPs, clinicians, mental health staff, social workers, and healthcare management and admin.



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## Key findings

GPs provide a crucial entry point to gender affirming treatments and pathways.

However, we found that GPs are inconsistent allies for trans adults in Wales:

- Trans interviewees reported mixed responses from GPs – sometimes highly affirming, sometimes transphobic.
- Instances of discrimination and being misgendered by GPs and other healthcare staff
- Trans patients as **reluctant educators** for GPs - lack of knowledge about GI treatments and pathways



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## Key findings

Trans adults had diverse experiences of ageing and different concerns about getting older:

- Those seeking to transition: some had initiated this process earlier in their lives, the majority had waited to later life-points – sometimes post-retirement.
- Reflections on later life – older age bringing new beginnings **versus** holding concerns about the future.
- Social care worries - living with dementia and losing control over decision-making; treatment in care homes from staff and other residents.



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## Key findings

Trans people experienced a number of social and familial challenges as they supported loved ones:

- **Emotional labour** of supporting partners/ spouses and other family members to adjust to their gender identity
- Seeking to manage the sharing of information about their trans status - sometimes losing control of this information
- Experiences of **misgendering, deadnaming** and **being outed** across family networks, local communities and the workplace (for example, outed by colleagues to other team members).



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## Key findings

Trans people experienced obstructed journeys through the healthcare system:

- **Difficulties navigating** NHS services to access the gender identity clinic in London.
- **Numerous hoops** to jump through, lack of knowledge about trans healthcare at local level, and continual delays and cancellations waiting for appointments.
- Heavy reliance on trans peers (online /off-line) to know what questions to ask and how to navigate through 'the system'.
- **Onus on the individual** to keep pushing against the system in order to move forward.



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## Key findings

Trans people's experiences of gender identity clinics were highly mixed:

- Some described 'superb care' and high-quality treatment - majority reported long waiting times and appointment cancellations.
- Lengthy delays in communication between clinic staff and GPs back home.
- High expenses for interviewees and their supporters/ loved ones in travelling to the clinic outside of Wales.
- Pressures to present the 'right way' as sufficiently feminine or masculine (including in name) to progress through the system.
- Expectations to meet gendered norms about presentation and dress to further access treatments and surgery.



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## Our recommendations for change in Wales

Top three wishes and expectations from trans' interviewees:

1. Increased knowledge and trans awareness among GPs and healthcare workers more generally
2. GIC in Wales – smoother process, decentralised/ closer to home, less hurdles to jump, less bureaucracy and personal expense
3. Better standards of care – including medical records & correspondence that matches names and gender ID, reminders about 'sex-specific' screening (e.g. breast/ prostate cancer screening)

**Overall, seeking dignity, respect and fair treatment in later life across all health and social care services.**



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## Our recommendations for change in Wales

1. The onus needs to shift from trans individuals educating GPs and other professionals to trans patients and service users being at the heart of good trans-inclusive care and their wishes being recognised and adhered to.
2. Pre- and post-qualifying training and education for health and social care professionals on trans-inclusive care is essential for ensuring the new GI pathway is successful. Involvement of trans people with lived experience is crucial.
3. Standards agencies (health and social care) need to agree and set a benchmark statement on the level of care and support trans and gender diverse individuals can expect from health and social care service providers.



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## Our recommendations for change in Wales

4. The Welsh Government and NHS Wales need to provide more information for older trans people about GI pathways and NHS-funded treatments available to them, regardless of their age, and make this information accessible in GP practices, libraries, community spaces and other outlets.
5. Public bodies need to increase resourcing available for trans groups and networks across Wales in recognition of the power of peer support from other trans individuals.



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## Planned outputs

1. Digital stories on our website: <http://trans-ageing.swan.ac.uk/>
2. Information sheets for health and social care professionals (good practice guidelines)
3. Policy briefing & research summary



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## On our website

Digital stories produced by Fox and Owl from [My Generation](#).

Trans community members in Wales telling their stories...



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## Further reading and resources

Age UK (2018). *Factsheet 16: Transgender issues and later life*. URL: [https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/factsheets/fs16\\_transgender\\_issues\\_and\\_later\\_life\\_fcs.pdf](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/factsheets/fs16_transgender_issues_and_later_life_fcs.pdf)

Davy, Z. & Toze, M. (2018). What is gender dysphoria? A critical systematic narrative review. *Transgender Health*, 3(1), pp. 159-160. Open Access Online.

Stonewall website: *The truth about Trans*. URL: <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/truth-about-trans>

General Medical Council (no date). *Trans healthcare - advice based on GMC guidance*. URL: <https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-hub/trans-healthcare---advice-based-on-gmc-guidance>

To learn more about the new GI Pathway commencing in Wales 2019: <http://www.genderdysphoria.wales.nhs.uk/gjpg-updates>

Vincent, B. (2018). *Transgender Health: a practitioner's guide to binary and non-binary trans patient care*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

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## References

McNeil, J., Bailey, L., Ellis, S., Morton, J. & Regan, M. (2012). *Trans Mental Health Study*. Scottish Transgender Alliance. Accessed online 3rd Oct 2015, [http://www.gires.org.uk/assets/Medpro-Assets/trans\\_mh\\_study.pdf](http://www.gires.org.uk/assets/Medpro-Assets/trans_mh_study.pdf)

UK Government (2018). *National LGBT Survey: Research Report*. Accessed 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019, URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-lgbt-survey-summary-report>

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