



London 2 August 2022, UK.

The Gay Men's Network welcomes the news that the Tavistock Gender Identity Development Service (GIDS) is to close following the damning interim report by Dr. Hilary Cass OBE. We are appalled by the institutional homophobia that was ignored or concealed by some and that a generation of children, many of whom who would have grown up to be gay or lesbian, were so failed by a medical service that ought to have protected them. The emerging medical scandal in this case paints a startling picture of clinical negligence and institutional homophobia from which lessons must be learned.

The unhealthy and close relationship between GIDS and lobby groups such as Mermaids and Gendered Intelligence, as identified by Dr David Bell, is a matter of great concern for us. Groups with no recognised clinical experience were allowed to gain access to and exert influence over the most extreme and experimental clinical practice by using the legacy of the fight for gay rights as a means to silence those who raised concerns. We are appalled and ashamed by this.

The following points must now be taken into consideration as we rebuild treatment for young people with gender dysphoria.

- The FDA has concluded that puberty blockers can cause serious harm to children
- There is insufficient evidence to support their continued use in the treatment of these conditions
- In 2021 the UK National Institute for Health & Care Excellence (NICE) published a systemic evidence review, concluding that puberty blockers lead to little or no change in gender dysphoria
- The Swedish Karolinska Institute ended the use of puberty blockers in 2021 and in 2022 the French National Academy of Medicine urged "the greatest caution" when administering them

While we welcome the news that decisive action is now to be taken, we lament that the NHS could become ideologically captured and institutionally homophobic to the point that basic safeguarding concerns about young gay and lesbian people were simply ignored. Further, that national charities, cloaking themselves in the legitimacy of the “gay rights movement”, were instrumental in subverting the standard process of clinical care is shocking to us.

We reassert the need for an inquiry such as that proposed by the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP while he was Secretary of State for Health to understand how a public service of such importance could have become so ideologically captured. It should also produce a set of recommendations aimed at ensuring the NHS, or any other public service, never fails in this way again.

Finally, we urge the Government to consider a radical reform of the charity sector. We say that it is not right that public institutions such as the NHS are subverted and have their independence compromised by lobby groups holding, unscientific and unproven, ideas.

Gay Men's Network is a non-profit organisation set up by a group of gay men to advocate for the reality of homosexuality and to fight homophobia in all its forms. For further information please contact info@gaymensnetwork.com.