

Update from the Gender affirming (genital) surgery service

Quarter Three, 2024/25

Current status

As at 31 March 2025, there were 369 people on the active wait list for their first specialist assessment (FSA) as part of the Gender Affirming (genital) Surgery Service (the Service/GAgSS). In the three months January to March 2025 four patients attended an FSA.

17 surgeries have been performed in total in the 2024/2025 financial year. Two surgeries were performed in January 2025, one in February and one in March 2025. One surgery is planned for April and a further four for May.

The Service continues to review the wait list to ensure patients meet the current service referral criteria for acceptance onto the waitlist and to give us a better and more informed picture of everyone's overall current health status.

Patients who do not meet the service's referral acceptance criteria, do not respond to communication or who do not provide the GP completed information within required timeframes when requested will not be considered and will be removed from the wait list as part of the review process, with patients and their GPs or referrers being advised of these outcomes.

This is consistent with the regional hospitals' current pathways of accessing elective reconstructive surgeries, including top (chest reconstruction/breast removal) surgeries, breast reconstructions and breast reductions.

It is important that you contact us immediately if you decide you no longer want to be considered for an FSA/no longer want surgery, or if any of your contact details, including home address, telephone, email or general practitioner (GP) have changed. Email us at gender.surgery@tewhatuora.govt.nz to let us know about any changes.

Wrap around health and wellbeing support for the Service

Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora is working to improve and increase wrap around services.

The wrap around services will include the establishment of several new roles to provide more intensive health and wellbeing support for patients on the waiting list for an FSA and/or preparing for surgery.

One of the current support roles is Pathways Health. Pathways is a leading national provider of community based mental health and addiction services operating across Aotearoa New Zealand. Pathways was formed in 1989 and is currently operating in fifteen regions across the country contracted to Health New Zealand and Oranga Tamariki-Ministry for Children.

Pathways provides via the GAgSS Gender Affirming Package of Care a number of individualised patient centred services to patients receiving surgery to help meet their needs. This includes providing patients with some mental health and wellbeing support during the immediate post operative recovery phase, use of sensory modulation kits specially developed to assist patients, transportation assistance for post-surgical appointments and at times assisting with collection of essential medications and food.

New referrals to the service

We have updated our referral form, and this is included on our webpage. Any new referrals for gender affirming genital surgery from April 2025 should be made using this form. New referrals should be made by the person's public hospital transgender health specialist (this is normally an endocrinologist or a sexual health physician) or, for those in Wellington and Christchurch districts only, this may be done by their GP. People who have been referred for gender affirming genital surgery are on a waiting list for an FSA to see a surgeon and discuss their surgery options. Please note: it is not a waiting list for surgery. To be considered for an FSA, patients need to meet the Service eligibility criteria as listed on our webpage. Our main webpage is currently undergoing a make over with several new patient information resources being added in the near future.

New referrals to the Service

The chart below sets out the number of new referrals received each quarter since January 2013. Of those 77.5 percent of the referrals are for feminising surgery and 22.5 percent are for masculinising surgery.

