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Understanding the NHMRC advice on puberty blockers

The National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) advice on the use of puberty suppressants (also called puberty blockers) for trans and gender diverse young people has been released.

What does the NHMRC advice say?

The NHMRC advice has given the clinical recommendation, that "based on a shared decision between the young person, parents or carers and clinicians, gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) agonists (also known as puberty blockers) can be considered for a young person who wants puberty suppression," alongside meeting certain criteria.

This means that the NHMRC advice supports the use of puberty blockers for trans and gender diverse young people who are being supported by experienced healthcare professionals to make an informed decision.

It recognises that decisions about puberty blockers should be made carefully, considering each young person's individual circumstances, needs, goals, and wellbeing.

The NHMRC advice can be found here: https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/health-advice/guidelines-care-trans-and-gender-diverse-people/advice-puberty-suppressants

This advice will be open for public consultation from Monday 16th November 2026, until Monday 18th January 2027. This means you can provide feedback on this advice directly to the NHMRC: https://consultations.nhmrc.gov.au/clinical-practice-guidelines/advice-puberty-suppressants/

Why is this advice important?

The NHMRC is Australia's leading national body for developing health and medical guidelines. It brings together experts, researchers, clinicians, and community representatives to carefully review scientific evidence and develop recommendations that support safe, high-quality healthcare across Australia.

Over many years, the NHMRC has produced nationally recognised guidance on issues affecting children, adolescents and families, including nutrition, infant feeding, immunisation, alcohol-related health, and ethical standards for medical research. These guidelines help healthcare professionals, policymakers, and families make informed decisions.

The Australian Government requested the NHMRC develop new national clinical practice guidelines, known as Gender Guidelines, for the care of trans and gender diverse people under 18 years. It is

expected to take three years for the full guidelines to be developed, with completion planned for 2028. In the meantime, the NHMRC has published this advice on puberty blockers.

What does this mean for young people and families?

The advice supports a model of care that:

- listens carefully to the young person and values their experiences and goals
- involves parents, carers, and family members whenever possible
- includes input from a multidisciplinary team of healthcare professionals
- uses shared decision-making, where young people, families, and clinicians work together to make informed choices
- recognises that there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to care.

This approach reflects the care we currently provide through the RCH Gender Service, and no change to our service is needed in response to this advice.

Young trans people and their parents and carers may continue to access a range of options in gender affirming healthcare, including puberty blockers, knowing their safety and wellbeing are prioritised.

Questions are welcome

What you may hear in the news, see on social media, and discussions about guidelines can sometimes be confusing or overwhelming.

We welcome any questions from young people, their parents, carers, and family members about the NHMRC advice and what it might mean for your own situation. We encourage you to discuss any concerns or questions with your care team.

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Helpful resources

The NHMRC advice includes scientific terms that may be unfamiliar to many people, including references to the GRADE system, which is a method used internationally to assess and describe evidence and recommendations.

To learn more in plain language, we recommend:

- This plain language summary from the NHMRC: https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/file/25802/download?token=KxRsYZ2W
- The Australian Research Consortium for Trans Youth and Children (**ARCTYC**) resources, specifically:
  - An explanation of evidence-based medicine, GRADE criteria, and how clinical guidelines are developed: https://www.arctyc.org.au/blog/grade
  - Puberty suppression, understanding the use of puberty blockers: https://www.arctyc.org.au/blog/pubertyblockers