

The Levy Review: What is it and why does it matter?

What is the Levy Review?

The [Levy Review](#) is an NHS England review of adult gender services, described by the NHS as “Gender Dysphoria Services”, led by Dr David Levy, an NHS medical director.

The [review is assessing](#) how existing [adult gender clinics](#) in England are working, and whether they’re meeting the current NHS service specification.

What is a service specification?

A service specification defines how an NHS service is delivered, including the treatments it offers and how patients access them. For adult gender-affirming care, one specification covers non-surgical gender services and another covers gender-affirming surgeries.

Who’s involved?

A team of healthcare professionals, regulators such as the CQC, and commissioners carried out visits to the clinics between October 2024 and December 2024.

What happens next?

NHS England will use these findings to update the non-surgical service specification for NHS gender-affirming care in England. We anticipate that a public consultation will be launched shortly after a draft service specification is published.

The consultation is likely to last 12 weeks and will invite feedback from individuals and organisations on the proposed new specification. The updated specification will outline a framework for how services should be provided, including:

- who can be referred to adult gender services and who can make referrals
- what treatments and interventions they must offer
- the pathway for accessing that care, such as the number of appointments
- which types of professionals may be involved in providing care

Once finalised, the new specification will be rolled out to clinics across England, with oversight being promised to ensure services meet the updated standards.

Why was the Levy Review commissioned?

All NHS services and their specifications are reviewed periodically. Following [a letter from Dr Hilary Cass](#), sent after [her widely-discredited](#) review of child and adolescent services, NHS England brought forward a review of adult gender-affirming care. Clinicians, along with trans and non-binary communities, had [raised concerns long before this](#), highlighting long waiting lists, the pathologisation of trans and non-binary identities, and limited options for gender-affirming care.

Some of the key issues included:

- Waiting times for first and follow-up appointments remain extremely long—often several years in some clinics—and fall well outside NHS standards for timely access to care.
- Inconsistent standards and pathways between clinics.
- An insufficient prescribing policy for hormones and increasing GP refusal to prescribe hormones for their trans and non-binary patients, even with a letter from an NHS gender clinic.
- Administrative processes were described as chaotic with waiting lists out of control, with a lack of systematic processes for follow-up post-discharge.

The Levy Review is intended to answer the following question: **are gender services safe, consistent, and meeting patients' needs?**



Why does the Levy Review matter?

Healthcare in England for trans and non-binary people is in crisis: waiting lists are years long, care is inconsistent, and what treatments or support are available can depend on which clinic you're referred to.

The Levy Review could shape:

- How gender services are organised and run including dealing with waiting times.
- Whether care is culturally and clinically safe, consistent, and accessible
- Relationships between GPs and gender clinics
- Eligibility criteria for referral to gender services and treatments.
- How, and by whom, hormones are prescribed and monitored

This matters because the decisions NHS England makes as a result of the review will affect the futures of thousands of trans and non-binary people seeking care, determining how our healthcare is provided for years to come.

What do we want from the Levy Review?

We want a review that centres the **safety, dignity, and autonomy** of trans and non-binary adults, not one that adds additional barriers. The [Trans Healthcare Coalition](#) has outlined our key asks for safer, fairer and more accessible care:

- Shorter waiting times and a more humane model of care
- Access to gender-affirming hormone therapy without unnecessary barriers
- Inclusive services for non-binary, neurodivergent & disabled people
- Better training & support for GPs
- Improved access to surgeries, hair removal & fertility preservation
- Respect for our choices, whether through the NHS, private care, or self-medication
- Mental health support offered (but never required)
- No conversion practices, ever
- Reimbursement of travel costs for anyone having to travel more than 30 miles for transition-related care
- Service evaluation that centres trans people's voices



What are we concerned about?

While the Levy Review could improve care, there are also risks to watch for. We've seen the harm caused by the widely discredited Cass Review. Here's what we don't want to see in the Levy Review's final report:

- Trans-hostile voices or discredited research influencing the review
- Mandatory “exploratory therapy” or forced neurodivergence assessments
- Extra barriers or delays added to referral pathways
- Limits on access to key services like HRT, surgery, counselling, or speech therapy
- Penalising people who go private or self-medicate
- Losing access for under-25s or for neurodivergent people
- Being forced into research participation without consent

What's next for the Levy Review?

We don't yet know what the review will recommend or what changes may follow. Nothing will be final until the report is published, a draft of the updated adult gender-affirming care service specification is released, and a public consultation has taken place.

We do know that:

- The review will shape the future of NHS adult gender services
- Influenced by the review, the service specification will decide what treatments are available, how services are run, and how we access them
- The voices of trans people and allies will matter more than ever

The Trans Healthcare Coalition will respond in full once the Levy Review is published. We'll share updates, resources, and guidance on the service specification and consultation so you can have your say too.

Together, we can push for a system of gender-affirming care that centres safety, dignity and autonomy.

