

GMC Guidance for GP's on prescribing Hormones for their patients with Gender Dysphoria.

This Key piece on prescribing and supplying hormones is here:

www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/ethical_guidance/28859.asp

"Prescribing from GMC guidance **"Good practice in prescribing and managing medicines and devices"**

67. The term 'unlicensed medicine' is used to describe medicines that are used outside the terms of their UK licence or which have no licence for use in the UK.

Twenty five unlicensed medicines are commonly used in some areas of medicine such as in paediatrics, psychiatry and palliative care. They are also used, less frequently, in other areas of medicine.

68. You should usually prescribe licensed medicines in accordance with the terms of their licence. However, you may prescribe unlicensed medicines where, on the basis of an assessment of the individual patient, you conclude, for medical reasons, that it is necessary to do so to meet the specific needs of the patient.

69. Prescribing unlicensed medicines may be necessary where...There is no suitably licensed medicine that will meet the patient's need.

70. When prescribing an unlicensed medicine you must:

- a. be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence or experience of using the medicine to demonstrate its safety and efficacy
- b. take responsibility for prescribing the medicine and for overseeing the patient's care, monitoring, and any follow up treatment, or ensure that arrangements are made for another suitable doctor to do so
- c. make a clear, accurate and legible record of all medicines prescribed and, where you are not following common practice, your reasons for prescribing an unlicensed medicine.

Most of the medications used for the treatment of gender dysphoria are not licensed for this specific indication, although GPs will be familiar with their use in primary care for other purposes.

Our guidance (see text box) clearly allows for prescribing outside the terms of the licence ('off-licence') where this is necessary to meet the specific needs of the patient, and where there is no suitably licensed medicine that will meet the patient's needs.

Hormone therapy may have an irreversible effect on your patient's reproductive capacity.

When speaking with them about the risks and benefits of treatment options, you may want to suggest that your patient consider storing gamete before starting any treatment.

Work collaboratively with colleagues to maintain and improve patient care"

"From **"The duties of a doctor"**

"You must work with colleagues in the ways that best serve patients' interests"

You must co-operate with GICs and gender specialists in the same way that you would co-operate with other specialists, collaborating with them to provide effective and timely treatment for trans and non-binary people. This includes: prescribing medicines recommended by a gender specialist for the treatment of gender dysphoria following recommendations for safety and treatment monitoring, & making referrals to NHS services that have been recommended by a specialist.

We set out some general principles for managing shared care in our guidance **"Good practice in prescribing and managing medicines and devices"** (see paragraph 35-43).

Please note that "shared care" here refers to collaboration between gender specialists and other doctors to provide care; it does not refer to specific contractual arrangements between providers and commissioners known as "shared care agreements".

Once the patient has been discharged by a GIC or gender specialist, the prescribing and monitoring of hormone therapy can be carried out successfully in primary care without further specialist input.

From the patient's perspective, management in primary care is far easier, and there is no specific expertise necessary to prescribe for and monitor patients on hormone therapy.

It is not necessary to refer trans people back to their gender specialist before referring them to other secondary or tertiary providers, for matters unrelated to their gender history.

If you feel you lack knowledge about the healthcare needs of trans people, you should, in the short term, ask for advice from a gender specialist.

In the longer term, you should address your learning need as a part of your continuing professional development (CPD – see next page) which will enable you to provide treatment to meet your patients' needs. E-learning is freely available on the RCGP website and carries CPD points: RCGP-GIRES Gender variance e-learning. "

<http://elearning.rcgp.org.uk/course/info.php?popup=0&id=169>