



The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

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BAC-CO-46432

Robert McDonald, Clerk
Legislative Council
Parliament of Victoria
Via email: council@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Mr McDonald,

Thank you for informing me of the petition tabled in the Legislative Council on 14 May 2024 about the care and treatment for young trans and gender diverse Victorians.

The Allan Labor Government is committed to ensuring trans and gender diverse young people can access the care they need.

I am aware there is a lot of misinformation in the community about the trans community and in particular the care and treatment for trans and gender diverse young people. This is concerning and harmful to trans and gender diverse Victorians, their families and friends.

This misinformation has got worse since the release of the Cass Review in the United Kingdom.

As with any significant review of healthcare my Department is considering the applicability of the report's recommendations to the Victorian context.

It is important for interested members to understand that the way gender care is accessed and provided in Australia is profoundly different to the care delivered in the UK and other countries.

The *Australian standards of care and treatment guidelines for transgender and gender diverse children and adolescents* were developed in consultation with 44 expert professionals across different states of Australia and are reviewed and updated following new evidence. The most recent update was in 2023.

This model of care includes non-medical pathways for gender expression and experience and medical treatment where clinically and legally appropriate.

The guidelines advise that puberty suppression is appropriate for some adolescents, following a comprehensive, multidisciplinary assessment process, led by a mental health clinician with expertise in child and adolescent development. Unlike some other countries, commencing pubertal suppression or hormone treatment in Australia is never routine. Rather

it is an individualised and considered decision, made in collaboration with parents and caregivers, medical and mental health professionals, and the young person.

Channel Seven's Spotlight story on treatment and care for young trans people has been widely discredited. This story profiled three young people, one of those being American, who received care and treatment in the American healthcare system, not in Australia. This selective sample size is not representative of the many young people supported by gender affirming care who have better health and wellbeing outcomes because of this care and treatment.

It is also pertinent for all of us to understand the real risks of denying treatment to young people with gender dysphoria and the potentially very serious impacts this would have on their mental health.

I trust this information has been of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Thomas', written in a cursive style.

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

6/6/2024