

April 5, 2023

S.37 Supplemental testimony, Cass Review Interim Report Overview

Vermont House Committee on Health Care

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Vermont Family Alliance

Vermont Family Alliance (VFA) defends the Rights and Responsibilities of Parents and their due process regarding their children at the local and state level. We are a parental rights and minor protections advocacy group.

While the State of Vermont has adopted an exclusively gender-affirming approach to care of minors and youth presenting with gender dysphoria, studies show there is no international consensus on the Standard of Care for minors and youth presenting with gender dysphoria, particularly for birth-registered females – a demographic for which presentation of gender dysphoria has grown dramatically in recent years.

I have included the Cass Review Interim Report as a part of my witness documents. The [Cass Review Interim Report](#) on Gender Dysphoria Services for children and youth was initiated by the UK National Health Society (NHS).

[Dr. Hilary Cass](#) was appointed by NHS England and NHS Improvement to chair the Independent Review of Gender Identity Services for minors at Tavistock Gender Clinic in 2020. The study came after a lawsuit against Tavistock was filed, and concludes, in part:

- A significant increase in referrals to Tavistock's Gender Identity Development Services (GIDS).
- Lack of control measures that are typically applied when new treatments are introduced.
- Lack of discussion and consensus on treatment protocols.
- Diagnostic overshadowing (healthcare issues other than gender-related distress are overlooked).
- Pressure on staff to adopt an unquestioning affirmative approach which is at odds with the standard process of clinical assessment and diagnosis.

In addition, the Summary states:

- “Evidence on the appropriate management of children and young people with gender incongruence and dysphoria is inconclusive both nationally and internationally.”
- “The Review is not able to provide definitive advice on the use of puberty blockers and feminising/masculinising hormones at this stage, due to gaps in the evidence base.”

“The UK's only children's gender identity development service (GIDS), run by the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust, [is to be sued by ‘at least a thousand families’](#) who allege that their children were rushed into taking life-changing puberty blocking drugs. As a result, they were facing ‘physical and psychological permanent scarring that will last the rest of these victims’ lifetimes’, alleged the law firm involved.” [The Tavistock clinic was ordered to close.](#)

Vermont Family Alliance calls upon legislators to study and consider the findings of the Cass Review Interim Report and the [lawsuit against Tavistock Gender Clinic](#) along with detransitioner Chloe Cole’s suit against [Kaiser Permanente](#) before passing any legislation regarding the treatment of minors presenting with gender dysphoria and incongruence.

Vermont Family Alliance requests you review the Summary portion of the 112-page report before passing legislation that requires insurance companies to cover gender-affirming care and prevents increases in malpractice insurance premiums for gender-affirming practitioners.

Vermont Family Alliance also calls upon legislators to bring in balanced testimony on gender ideology and its impact on minors.

Thank you,

Renee McGuinness

Member, Vermont Family Alliance