



Barry Ward  
Dail Eireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

**17<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

**REF PQ: 32511/25**

Dear Mr Ward,

I was asked to comment on a Parliamentary Question directed to the Minister for Health on media contributions on issues related to gender healthcare at the National Gender Service.

Provision of any clinical intervention (including gender affirming hormone therapy and surgical intervention) is based on a fundamental clinical principle that to recommend any clinical intervention the apparent benefits should exceed any apparent risks.

The approved model of care in practice at the National Gender Service (NGS) is based on a multidisciplinary assessment that takes into account all aspects of a person's health and wellbeing over their lifetime, rather than focusing only on gender and gender dysphoria. This assessment results in a formulation of risk and benefit that informs a recommendation on clinical intervention. An outline of the assessment process is on our website [www.nationalgenderserviceireland.com](http://www.nationalgenderserviceireland.com)

We do not recommend prescribing gender affirming hormone therapy in the absence of a comprehensive holistic multidisciplinary assessment, or if after such an assessment, the apparent risks exceed the apparent benefits.

In the current context, clinical complexity is greater than it has ever been before, with people presenting for assessment with multiple unaddressed clinical needs. Therefore, the proportion of people who are found to have greater risk than benefit of the time of assessment is increasing.

A Clinical Governance structure is in place, with a specific NGS Committee that meets quarterly. Despite the increase in clinical complexity, and over 800 people attending the NGS for review on an annual basis, adverse event rates and complaints are infrequent, with fewer than 10 per quarter being reported over the last year or more.

Media output on the work of the NGS, such as that referenced in the question, often contains the reports of individual service users, and we cannot comment on individual cases. Any individual attending the NGS who has concerns about their care should be advised on the appropriate reporting process, including that on [www2.hse.ie/complaints-feedback](http://www2.hse.ie/complaints-feedback)



I trust the above is useful in answering this query.

Yours sincerely,

**Lorraine O'Toole**

**Interim General Manager**

St Columcille's Hospital Loughlinstown