

ISSUE: Child Gender Therapy

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BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND AGED CARE

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- Gonadotropin releasing hormone (GnRH) analogues (sometimes referred to as 'puberty blockers') are only available on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) for the treatment of certain cancers and precocious puberty (early puberty) under certain circumstances.
 - GnRH analogues may be used "off label" for patients undergoing gender affirmation, however, will not attract a PBS benefit in this circumstance. Doctors may use medications off label where they are satisfied that the benefits outweigh the risks for the patient.

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MEDIA COVERAGE

Publication: [Puberty blockers under fresh scrutiny](#) (The Australian)

Publication date: 14 March 2024

Key Issues raised:

- The National Health Service (NHS) England announced children who have gender dysphoria will no longer be given puberty blocker prescriptions. The ban does not apply to NHS Scotland or NHS Northern Ireland.
- Children and young people with gender dysphoria will now only have access to puberty blockers under the NHS England if they are taking part in a clinical trial.
- The decision is in response to the results of a public consultation on the ban, proposed in June 2023 and a review of available evidence by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Nice).
- According to the Australian, the decision is in line with a central recommendation of paediatrician Hillary Cass following an extensive examination of the care provided to children at London's Tavistock clinic.

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Date last updated by Dept:	14 March 2024	Cleared by Adviser/date:	
Contact Officer: A/g Assistant Secretary	Belinda Roberts	Work Phone: (02) 6289 s22	Mobile Phone: s22
Cleared by: A/g First Assistant Secretary	Tiali Goodchild	Work Phone: (02) 6289 s22	Mobile Phone: s22

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