



# Equality Hub

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## Equality Hub & GEO

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Dear Caroline,

Thank you for your recent invitation to provide oral evidence as part of your Committee's inquiry into the reform of the Gender Recognition Act (GRA).

The government responded to the consultation on GRA reform on 22 September 2020. As part of that response, the Minister for Women and Equalities made a statement in the house on 25 September 2020 providing members with the opportunity to ask questions and hold the Government to account. In that statement, in subsequent correspondence, the Government has been consistent in its position and how that position was reached: through lengthy consideration and wide-ranging stakeholder engagement. Since that time, the Government has not changed its position and so I would not be able to impart any additional information as part of your inquiry.

I can assure you that we are working to implement the next steps that we announced as part of the consultation response. For example, our efforts to make the process of applying for a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) kinder and more dignified. This included reducing the fee for a GRC from £140.00 to £5.00, which was achieved on 4<sup>th</sup> May as promised, and digitising the process of obtaining a GRC to make it less bureaucratic and more straightforward.

We know from our research that healthcare is a priority for transgender people, which is why we opened at least three new gender identity clinics between July 2020 and January 2021, which should see waiting lists cut by around 1,600 people by 2022. This will lead to greater patient choice, shorter waiting times, better geographical coverage and easier access. We have also funded the UK's first National LGBT Health Advisor, who works across NHS England to ensure that LGBT health inequalities are given consideration in local long-term implementation plans.

As you may know, NHS England and NHS Improvement have commissioned an independent review into gender identity services for children and young people led by Dr Hilary Cass OBE. The review will conduct extensive and purposeful engagement so that interested stakeholders, including children and young people, can express their views through a supportive process. Dr Cass' intention is to produce an interim report this summer, with a final report next year. In addition, we are reviewing the overall impact of COVID-19 on the health service and will update the committee further once that work is progressed. More broadly, we are also considering the Court's judgement in JR111, concerning the Gender Recognition Act, and will set out our response in due course.

As you can see, there is a lot of activity underway to improve the GRC application process; improve NHS services; and to review gender identity services for children and young people. I am happy to give evidence to the Committee but would respectfully ask to delay this until this important work has progressed.

I continue to have great regard for the work of the Women and Equalities Select Committee and the accountability your inquiries provide – as demonstrated by the three oral evidence sessions I have attended in the last year, and upcoming session in July. I look forward to continuing to work together in the coming months and beyond.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kemi Badenoch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'K'.

**KEMI BADENOCH MP**  
Minister for Equalities and Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury