

Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP,
Chair, Women and Equalities Select Committee

By Email

26 November 2021

Dear Rt Hon Caroline Nokes,

Banning Conversion Therapy

I understand the Women and Equalities Select Committee is currently taking evidence relating to the Government's proposals for banning conversion therapy.

As you will know, the Government commissioned Coventry University to conduct research to better understand the nature and impact of conversion therapy practices in the UK. I led the team that delivered this research. We undertook a rapid evidence assessment (REA) of research on conversion therapy and a qualitative interview study with people who had undergone conversion therapy in the UK within the last 20 years. We also carried out a search of the non-academic literature to identify measures taken around the world. The key findings from the research were that:

- Modern forms of conversion therapy largely take the form of talking therapies and spiritual interventions.
- LGBT people of faith are most likely to be offered conversion therapy, often by faith groups/organisations, although this can also take place in healthcare and other settings.
- There is no robust evidence to support claims that conversion therapy is effective at changing sexual orientation or gender identity.
- There is a growing body of evidence that exposure to conversion therapy is associated with poor mental health outcomes such as psychological distress and suicidal thoughts. There is no robust evidence that distinguishes between conversion practices and whether some are more harmful than others.

I attach a pdf version of our report which was published in HTML format alongside the launch of the public consultation here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conversion-therapy-an-evidence-assessment-and-qualitative-study>

I would like to offer our assistance in answering any questions members of the committee may have about the available evidence.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A Jowett".

Dr Adam Jowett PhD, CPsychol, AFBPsS
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