

Written evidence submitted by Nova Hart (GRA0055)

Hello Reader. My name is Nova Hart. I'm a Quality Control Chemist living in the Brentwood & Ongar constituency. I am 22 years old and I'm Transgender. I am currently on the waiting list to see a gender specialist for Hormone replacement therapy and a diagnosis of gender dysphoria. For all my life, I have felt uncomfortable in my skin. I used to dream about being the opposite sex, wearing their clothes, living their life, being regarded as one of them and not what my outer appearance betrays. For in My head, I have a brain that does not match my body. And looking back, all the awkward moments in my childhood make sense, I was being forced to live a lie.

“Will the Government’s proposed changes meet its aim of making the process kinder and more straight forward?”

No, it won't. I won't deny, its a step in the right direction. Especially, after the announcements Liz Truss had made prior to these reforms. Putting it online is great, but we still need to go through the trouble of getting a diagnosis so, that does not simplify the process. Dropping the fee to a normal amount is nice too, but for something as basic as my human right to self-determine this should be free, covered under the NHS. Increasing the number of clinics is great but the process will only be kinder if the staff employed are educated and compassionate.

Should a fee for obtaining a Gender Recognition Certificate be removed or retained? Are there other financial burdens on applicants that could be removed or retained?

Any fees should be removed, I believe it is a human right to self-identify and self-determine. It should be covered 100% by the NHS. If an applicant has financial burdens there should be a way to express their concerns and receive financial support if such a thing is necessary.

Should the requirement for a diagnosis of gender dysphoria be removed?

Yes and no, allow me to explain. The only person with any right on this matter is the individual in question. I believe one should still need to get a diagnosis, however, there should be no assessment nor extra doctors. One should walk into your GP and express your identity the GP should discuss the help you can receive and what this means and then your GP should say “is this what you want?” if the applicant says yes they should receive a diagnosis on the spot. It is up to the individual, the doctor is there to listen and support. If the doctor feels with reasonable suspicion that something may be amiss they should discuss this with the applicant

Should there be changes to the requirement for individuals to have lived in their acquired gender for at least two years?

Yes, this clause should be removed and instead it should be “advisable to live in your gender for 6 months” just to be sure. However, this cannot be an essential part of the diagnosis due to social conditions outside of the individuals’ control, such as unsupportive parents, peers or safety concerns.

Does the spousal consent provision in the Act need reforming? If so, how? If it needs reforming or removal, is anything else needed to protect any rights of the spouse or civil partner?

Yes, the spouse has no right to object to such a change, this is solely the right of the individual and nobody should infringe on that right.

Should the age limit at which people can apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) be lowered?

Yes, from the age of 0-12, the child should need the permission of one other family member and discuss with a specialist doctor who is simply there to listen to their concerns and validate them. From the age of 12-15, you need only the consent of the individual however they should still discuss with a specialist doctor who can listen to them and explain the next steps. From the age of 15+ you need no consent but your own and also do not need a specialist doctor to discuss with you simply a normal GP will suffice.

What impact will these proposed changes have on those people applying for a Gender Recognition Certificate, and on trans people more generally?

The changes as laid out by the government will have little change on Transgender people. We will see a slight increase in people receiving the recognition and the waiting times should go down. But trans people are demoralised from having to fight for our basic human rights. We don’t want to get up every morning and have to justify our existence, we just want acceptance.

What else should the Government have included in its proposals, if anything?

The government should have included all proposals I have laid out here

Why is the number of people applying for GRCs so low compared to the number of people identifying as transgender?

Because the process is demoralising and difficult. We are treated like defective machines that must prove they are defective by playing what you believe is “dress up” for two years only to then be assessed by two people just to decide if actually, this is just our natural state of being,

its disgusting and immoral. When this process becomes fair and compassionate we will seek it, but we deal with enough humiliation as it is.

Are the provisions in the Equality Act for the provision of single-sex and separate-sex spaces and facilities in some circumstances clear and useable for service providers and service users? If not, is reform or further guidance needed?

Transgender people deserve the right to use the same-sex spaces they identify with without needing a Recognition certificate. We face bullying in all sex spaces no matter what, but we cause little problems with our presence in them. Education on this matter must be discussed in schools the sexual education system itself needs reform. Only with better education can we reduce the number assaults on Cisgender and Transgender people.

Are legal reforms needed to better support the rights of gender-fluid and non-binary people? If so, how?

These identities must also be given the same rights and protections as any other identity, these people deserve respect. Documents must show their gender and all efforts should be made to ensure they are addressed with the correct language, failing that adequate compensation should be granted and punishment is given if necessary i.e in the case of malicious intent.

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