

## Written evidence submitted by Christine Thomas [GRA1736]

I am sending this evidence as an ally to the trans community and as someone who works with homeless people as a frontline keyworker. This is relevant as I am taking into account the disproportionately large amounts of trans people who experience homelessness in their lifetime.

Question 1: Will the Government's proposed changes meet its aim of making the process "kinder and more straight forward"?

No.

To make it so that the GRC application procedure is only online would mean that it would be inaccessible to the large amounts of trans people who are homeless. The government has not listened to the responses of the GRA consultation or the petition with over 100,000 signatures which was in support of self-declaration. The reduction in cost is not enough, there are considerable amounts of trans people in poverty, and there should be no fee.

Question 2: Should fee for obtaining a Gender Recognition Certificate be removed or retained?

Removed.

There are considerable financial burdens placed on trans people, from accessing private healthcare due to the waiting lists in the NHS, the travel costs, prescription costs, and cost of applying for new documentation for IDs. Therefore there should not be the added financial burden for obtaining a Gender Recognition Certificate.

Question 3: Should the requirement for a diagnosis of gender dysphoria be removed?

Yes.

Not all trans people experience dysphoria and some who do experience dysphoria do not want to get treatment. Therefore this should not be a requirement. There is no universal or concrete diagnosable experience of dysphoria.

The process of getting legal gender recognition can't be medicalised, as it isn't in other countries.

Question 4: Should there be changes to the requirement for individuals to have lived in their acquired gender for at least two years?

Yes.

This is an illogical requirement because the concept of living in a gender is completely impossible to prove or disprove with documentary evidence. There is so much subjectivity to this that I can hardly believe it is a requirement in the first place. There is no way to live in a gender correctly or incorrectly. If I don't have to prove my womanhood with documentary evidence I see no reason why trans people should have to. This process is especially exclusionary of non-binary people.

Question 9: what else should the government have included in its proposals, if anything?

The government should have included the following:

- Making it so that non-binary people can get legal gender recognition
- Getting rid of the requirement to have 'lived as your acquired gender' for two years.
- Getting rid of any costs involved with applying for a GRC
- Getting rid of the requirement to have gender dysphoria

Question 11: Why is the number of people applying for GRCs so low compared to the number of people identifying as transgender?

Only men and women can apply for GRCs, so this takes out a huge amount of non-binary trans people. Applying for a GRC can feel like a hugely dehumanising process, being asked to prove and justify your existence can be really painful for some individuals so they could be deterred from attempting to apply, given the mental distress it could cause.

**Written evidence submitted by Christine Thomas [GRA1736]**

**November 2020**