

Living as a non-binary person in the UK is not easy, I face discrimination and hate on a weekly basis simply because I am trans.

I believe that the requirement for a diagnosis of gender dysphoria should be removed - insisting on this is comparing trans identities to mental health issues, when this is not the case. Because of this many trans people feel scared and ashamed of their identity, and either choose to hide who they are or unfortunately die by suicide. The requirement for individuals to have lived in their acquired gender for at least two years is rather ridiculous, how are you meant to prove that to a healthcare professional? I have faced transphobia and gatekeeping from medical professionals when I needed care, the fact that I then have to 'prove' I am trans to gain basic respect from them is disgusting and just creates further problems for trans individuals. When I suffered a miscarriage I was treated horribly by staff due to being non-binary, that is not something anyone expects when they have suffered the loss of their child.

The spousal consent provision is backwards and hurtful. For a country that is meant to be world leader, and brags about its status for upholding people's rights, why is there an option for someone's spouse to block them from receiving what they need to live a full and happy life? The partner that is not trans can file for divorce if it bothers them that much, its not the end of their world but it will have a massive impact on the trans persons life and mental health. People are not their spouses property.

I recognise that the number of people applying for GRCs is low in comparison to trans people living in the country. This is down to the fact the government has made it an extremely difficult and expensive process. The GRC would take ages to be recognised by institutions – personally I have changed my surname twice from my birth name, once to my mothers married name to match the rest of my family and distance myself from my biological dad, and once when I married. To this day the NHS still has my original birth name, despite me telling them its changed, providing evidence etc. This is enough stress and upset for anyone, let alone trans people.

Transphobic health staff makes accessing services hard. Harder still when you have existing MH issues they are aware of, they pretty much make it impossible to speak to anyone. With regards to gender affirming surgeries and hormones – the process is insane, wait times are dangerously long. For a service that is meant to have an 18 week wait time, the current time (over two years across most of the UK) is absurd and insulting.

Better recognition for non-binary and gender fluid individuals is also needed. In reference to above, gender affirming care is usually even harder for NB/GF people to access, health professionals and law very much focused on binaries still – I've personally found as an AFAB person pushbacks for hormones/top surgery because of the fact I may one day want to give birth... what I decide to do with MY body is MY choice, not anyone else's. I shouldn't have to be treated like a child when speaking to healthcare professionals about what I

need to be happy in my body and live a full life, I shouldn't have to worry that my doctor will deny me care.

The Equality Act does not adequately protect trans people. There are many people in the UK that seem to be disgusted by our very existence despite the fact it is no way impacting their lives. I know people who work in education, and transphobic hate groups are sending anti-trans resources to schools across the country. This behaviour should not in any way be tolerated. It wouldn't be tolerated against any other group of people. The current situation regarding trans people in the UK is very much mirroring the social panic towards gay men that the media created in the 80's, it is tiring and upsetting that this is happening again to another part of the LGBT+ community forty years later.

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