



Submission to the Review of the Gender Recognition Act (2015)

5th February 2018

GOSHH is a voluntary organisation based in Mid West Ireland and has been involved in supporting people within the areas of Gender, Orientation, Sexual Health and Orientation for over 30 years. We provide personal support, counselling, training, education and information with a focus upon promoting equality and wellbeing of all with a positive and respectful approach to orientation and gender diversity.

We would like to submit a number of recommendations in relation to the review of the Gender Recognition Act (2015). These are based on the life experiences of the young people and adults who identify as Transgender and/or Non-Binary whom we support.



Recommendation 1. Trans and non-binary young people who are under 18 years of age

GOSHH recommends that:

- a) Trans and non-binary young people who are 16 or 17 years of age should have access to gender recognition certificates on the same basis of self-declaration and through the same process as over-18s. This would also therefore not require the consent of parents/ guardians.

- b) Trans and non-binary young people who are under 16 years should have access to gender recognition certificates without requiring a medical assessment/ diagnosis.

GOSHH holds that currently there is not enough international precedent or understanding of implication or consequence where there is not parental consent. It is essential that more research is conducted within the area of impact upon young people and families within this area before it is possible to create positive legislation within this area.

Recommendation 2. Non-binary people

GOSHH recommends that the Gender Recognition Act be revised to be inclusive of non-binary people and others who do not want their gender to be specified. An alternative marker or word to current the Male/Female M/F options should be employed within documentation (eg., X). This option should be decided within consultation with the Transgender / Non-Binary community. In addition throughout the legislation the term 'they' should be employed rather than 'he or she' in order to promote inclusivity.

Recommendation 3. No Financial Barriers

GOSHH recommends that the provisions of the Gender Identity Act (and other Government identity documents) be financially accessible to all.



Recommendation 4. Holistic Support

GOSHH holds that in conjunction with changes to legislation, it is essential that a substantial commitment is made to providing holistic support to young people who identify as transgender or non-binary and their families. It is essential that there are clearer, more accessible pathways in relation to medical support. It is also essential that there is more consistent education, training and support available for professionals across the sectors of education, mental health and family support within the area of gender diversity. The negative impact on the mental health of Transgender and Non-Binary people and their families because of the challenges which they face in terms of accessing services and coping with stigma is unacceptable. In particular, the health-based support pathways available for 16 and 17 year olds are particularly unclear, inconsistent and potentially detrimental. Ideally a holistic specialist national service should be created in order to meet the needs of of young people under 18 years.