

## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION FORM

LET'S TALK ABOUT

# SEX + GENDER

Exploring the role of sex and gender on health research



## CHR D 2020: Abstract Submission Form

### Submitter Name

Lara Penner-Goeke

### Email

lpennergoeke@gmail.com

### Title

Health Characteristics of Transgender Youth Seeking Medical Care in the Trans Youth Can! (TYC!) Study

### Background

Transgender youth are a vulnerable population who experience unique internal stressors (i.e., gender dysphoria) and may face external stressors (e.g., discrimination) and elevated rates of mental health comorbidities, self-harm, and suicidality.

### Objective

Transgender youth are increasingly seeking gender-affirming medical care. No large-scale cohort study has previously examined characteristics of transgender youth seeking these treatments in Canada. TYC! is a 2-year prospective cohort study that follows youth referred for puberty suppression or gender-affirming hormones at 10 clinics across Canada.

### Methods

Youth were eligible for inclusion if age 15 or younger and had reached or completed puberty by their first medical appointment for blockers/hormones at clinic. Youth data are collected via yearly interviewer-administered surveys, online symptom checklists, and clinic medical records. Baseline data are reported here.

### Results

174 youth (73.3% transmasculine, 18.6% transfeminine, 8.1% non-binary) participated. Self-assessed physical health was reported as good to excellent by 74.8% of youth; however, only 45.5% rated their mental health this way. Mental health concerns were common, with 40.2% and 32.0% having formal diagnoses of anxiety and depression, respectively, while 65.2% and 19.3% self-reported current clinically significant symptoms of anxiety and depression, respectively. 67.6% reported ever engaging in self-harm, 34.5% reported suicidal ideation at some time, and 16.8% reported a suicide attempt within the past year.

### Conclusion

This study is the first to examine characteristics of youth accessing puberty suppressants/gender-affirming hormones in medical clinics across Canada in a large cohort study. These youth present with mental health concerns, including depression and anxiety, self-harm and suicidality at rates higher than typically seen among youth. The 12- and 24-month follow-up of youth participating in this study will explore the role that gender-affirming treatment (e.g., puberty suppression or gender-affirming hormones) has on changes in mental health over time among transgender youth receiving medical treatment.

**Theme:**

Clinical

**Do you have a table/figure to upload?**

Yes

**Untitled**

Supplementary Table.pdf

**Are you willing to participate in Goodbear's Den?**

Yes

**Presenter Status:**

Undergraduate Students

**What was your role in the project?**

Participant data collection & wrote abstract

## Authors

Name	Email	Role	Profession
Lara Penner-Goeke	lpennergoeke@gmail.com	Presenting Author	Undergraduate student
Jennifer Ducharme	jlducharme@hsc.mb.ca	Co Author	Assistant Professor
Margaret L. Lawson	lawson@cheo.on.ca	Co Author	Full Professor
Greta Bauer	greta.bauer@schulich.uwo.ca	Co Author	Full Professor

### Supplementary Table:

Health characteristics: Transgender and gender-diverse youth <16 years referred to 10 Canadian clinics providing gender affirming medical care

	Total n=174	
	n	Weighted %
Self-assessed physical health		
Excellent or very good (1 or 2)	78	40.5
Good	61	34.4
Fair or poor	33	25.2
Self-assessed mental health		
Excellent or very good (1 or 2)	43	22.8
Good	42	22.7
Fair or poor	88	54.5
Depression (MDS often/always $\geq 4$ )	33	19.3
Probably anxiety (OASIS $\geq 8$ ) <sup>a</sup>	94	65.2
Self-harm, past year	110	67.6
Suicidal ideation, ever	95	58.1
Suicidal ideation, past year	56	34.5
Suicide attempt, ever	53	36.0
Suicide attempt, past year	24	16.8
Diagnoses <sup>b</sup>		
Anxiety	75	40.2
Depression	58	32.0
ADHD	39	23.3
Autism spectrum	10	6.0
Learning disability	7	4.8
OCD	5	4.2
PTSD	3	1.9
Other <sup>c</sup>	42	25.2

MDS=Modified Depression Scale; OASIS=Overall Anxiety Severity and Impairment Scale; ADHD=attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; OCD=obsessive compulsive disorder; PTSD=post-traumatic stress disorder.

- a. Asked only of participants aged 12 years and older.
- b. Diagnosis specifically extracted, but with fewer than 3 reports were not shown: polycystic ovary disease (1 case), personality disorder (1), eating disorder (0) and intersex/DSD (0).
- c. Other diagnoses included those not specifically coded in our case report form, e.g., gastrointestinal condition, atopic conditions (e.g., eczema), oppositional defiant disorder, parent-child relationship issues, musculoskeletal condition, substance use disorder, and endocrine disorder.