



New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine Media Release

Ban on new prescriptions for puberty blockers is inappropriate

24 November 2025

The College is concerned at the Government's decision to ban new prescriptions of GnRH analogues (puberty blockers) for young people who are seeking gender affirming healthcare and are not already receiving them.

Removing this treatment option could cause significant additional harm to the mental health of young people with gender incongruence and dysphoria.

While the College acknowledges that the evidence base for such prescribing is limited, the ban represents political overreach and appears to be more about ideology than science.

Puberty blockers will continue to be available for young people already receiving them for the treatment of gender dysphoria or incongruence, and will also be available for children with early onset puberty.

College President Sir Collin Tukuitonga says that governments of the day shouldn't be making decisions on what treatments should or should not be prescribed, or what indications or patient groups are appropriate to receive such treatments. "These are clinical decisions that should be made by medical specialists with appropriate expertise working within their scopes and with multidisciplinary teams in partnership with patients and their families" says Tukuitonga.

The College is also concerned that the Government's ban appears to have been made without meaningful consultation with the community that will be most impacted. Trans and gender-diverse people experience higher rates of mental illness due to discrimination, stigma, trauma and abuse. They must be consulted before regulations that directly impact on their healthcare are put in place.

For the Minister to cite a 'precautionary approach' as the basis for the ban is disingenuous and ironic. Tukuitonga says that health experts have been crying out for the Government to adopt a precautionary approach to address a range of public health challenges, but such calls have gone unheeded, even when there is robust evidence to guide policy.

ENQUIRIES: For more information, call Leanne Dawson on 027 528 0223 or email leanne@nzcphm.org.nz

The New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine is the professional body representing the medical specialty of public health medicine in Aotearoa New Zealand. Public Health Medicine is the branch of medicine concerned with the assessment of population health and health care needs, the development of policy and strategy, health promotion, the control and prevention of disease, and the organisation of services. For information about our mahi, members or purpose visit our website www.nzcphm.org.nz