

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **WPATH Joins AusPATH, PATHA, & PATHSA in Condemning New Zealand Government's Decision to Restrict Access to Puberty Blockers**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) today joined the [Australian Professional Association for Trans Health \(AusPATH\)](#), the [Professional Association for Transgender Health Aotearoa \(PATHA\)](#), and the [Professional Association for Transgender Health South Africa \(PATHSA\)](#) in condemning the New Zealand government's decision to restrict access to puberty blockers and issued the following statement:

“WPATH stands in solidarity with our colleagues at AusPATH, PATHA, and PATHSA in expressing our concern over the New Zealand government's decision to restrict access to puberty blockers. We share their alarm and remain opposed to this action, which will put a vulnerable group of people at further risk.

Puberty blockers are an important medical intervention for appropriately assessed young people. When prescribed safely and in accordance with WPATH's Standards of Care, they are both ethical and have demonstrated significant benefit based on preliminary evidence. Let us be clear, this ideologically driven ban ignores clinical experience, established international practice, and the medically necessary needs of transgender people and the families who care for and love them.

Making it harder to access these interventions will not change a young person's gender identity and lived experience – or the care they need and deserve to live full, authentic lives. It only increases the dangers of preventable harm, forces families to make impossible decisions, and takes away an important stabilizing tool clinicians often rely on in treating patients during a highly vulnerable developmental period.

Major professional medical associations, including WPATH, understand the importance of using a biopsychosocial assessment as a foundation to understanding the individualized needs of trans and gender-diverse people. Regrettably, New Zealand's decision seems to be driven by political motivations and runs contrary to the Ministry of Health's own evidence. Pediatric care often relies on an evolving field of evidence – gender-affirming care is no exception.

WPATH requests the New Zealand government restore access to puberty blockers. WPATH is committed to working collaboratively with governments and healthcare organizations to develop evidence-informed pathways of care. WPATH supports engagement with medical professionals who are experts in their field and have dedicated their lives to caring for this patient population.

WPATH will continue to support AusPATH, PATHA, PATHSA, and the trans people whose health, safety, and well-being should be at the heart of these public health policy decisions."

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**About WPATH:** The World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, interdisciplinary professional and educational organization devoted to transgender health. Our professional, supporting, and student members engage in academic research to develop evidence-based medicine and strive to promote a high quality of care for transsexual, transgender, and gender-nonconforming individuals internationally. We are funded primarily through the support of our membership, and through donations and grants sponsored by noncommercial sources.

For more information on WPATH, please visit [WPATH.org](https://www.wpath.org).