

Submission by European Professional Association for Transgender Health (EPATH)

to the Public Consultation “Order of issuing the medical organisation of the document of gender reassignment”

To: Pavel Evgenii Schegolev

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October 16, 2017

Dear Pavel Evgenii Schegolev,

We have read with great interest the proposed “Order of issuing the medical organisation of the document of gender reassignment”, but as professionals working in the field of transgender care since decades, we want to respectfully submit our observations to this public consultation.

About the submitting organisation:

EPATH was founded in 2013, because of a widespread felt need for an exchange of knowledge and scholarship in transgender health at European level. EPATH wishes to promote mental, physical and social health of transgender people in Europe, to increase the quality of life among transgender people in Europe and to ensure transgender people’s rights for healthy development and well-being. EPATH functions as the European chapter of the WPATH (World Professional Association for Transgender Health), and as such endorses the Standards of Care (SOC) of WPATH.

We strongly propose the following two necessary changes:

1) SOC and previous advises from WPATH to authorities world-wide.

According to the principles put forward in the WPATH Standards of Care, Version 7 (Sept 2011), and WPATH’s policy statement concerning identity recognition (2010, incorporated into the SOC version 7), surgery should not be required to validate a person’s lived gender. Accordingly, WPATH recommends that a simple form be devised to permit an individual to declare that their lived gender is not in accordance with that designated in the birth register, to specify their lived gender and to request that the register be amended and a new certificate or other appropriate documents be issued in accordance with the instant declaration. “No mental health treatment or diagnosis” should be a requirement for legal gender recognition. A required lengthy psychiatric assessment in order to receive gender recognition puts a heavy and unnecessary burden on the mental health of the transgender person, and can lead to mental health problems.

2) Terminology

The proposed term of “sexual re-orientation” is misleading and incorrect. “Sexual orientation” and “Gender Identity” can’t be conflated. The up-to-date academic and clinical term is “Gender affirming/confirming therapy”. Terminology matters and should aim to be non-discriminatory, respectful, clear and scientifically based. We strongly advise to change these terms.

In short, we advise, in concordance with our scientific knowledge, clinical experience and vision, that the mandatory psychiatric assessment should be deleted as well as the time span of 1,5 years of evaluation. We propose a simple procedure as stated here above. The term of “sexual re-orientation” is totally unclear and should be replaced.

Always open for discussion and information.

Sincerely yours,

The Board-Members EPATH,

Prof. dr. Guy T’Sjoen, endocrinologist, *President & Director of the Scientific Division*

Dr. Walter Pierre Bouman, psychiatrist, *Director of Communication*

Dr. Annelou De Vries, child psychiatrist, *Director of the Interest of Children and Adolescents*

Dr. Joz Motmans, clinical psychologist & social scientist, *Secretary – Treasurer & Director of the Policy Division*

Dr. Timo O. Nieder, psycho-therapist, *Director of Education and Clinical Training*

Dr. Mark-Bram Bouman, surgeon, *European Association For Gender Surgeons (the EAFGS)*
Liaison Member

Dr. Griet De Cuyper, psychiatrist, *WPATH Liaison Member*

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