

## **Supporting Trans People Toolkit Listening Event 2 July 2020 @ 5:15pm**

### **Attending:**

Sarah Talbot-Williams, Independent Lay Member for Public Involvement  
Julia Ross – Chief Executive  
Michelle Smith – Associate Director of Communications and Engagement  
Dr Rachael Kenyon, GP in Woodspring and member of Governing Body  
Sharon Woma, Inclusion Coordinator  
Vicky Daniell – Customer Service Manager  
Louise Townsend - Customer Service Support Manager  
2 Members of the Public

### **1. Introduction**

Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (BNSSG) arranged a listening event with members of the public to hear the concerns they have about the Supporting Trans People Toolkit.

Julia Ross, Chief Executive for BNSSG began by thanking members of the public for the information they had provided prior to this event and for taking the time to meet today. Julia apologised that wider input was not obtained in the development of this Toolkit and acknowledged that this is a sensitive issue.

Julia assured the group that BNSSG is committed to reviewing and taking into account all the documentation that has been submitted by members of the public as part of the Equality Impact Assessment process. Julia updated on progress to date and then opened the session to public feedback and input.

### **2. Themes from the public – what we heard**

- A concern was expressed about the need for transgender support guidance specifically and members of the public questioned the broader approach to guidance for other protected groups.
- Concerns were raised about the original authorship of the Toolkit and who will be involved going forward.
- Members of the public stated that a conflict exists between the legal position (sex as protected characteristic) and the toolkit contents which imply gender identity as a protected area.
- Members of the public further raised concerns that biological sex and gender identity have been unhelpfully conflated in the document, and expressed that this would ultimately be harmful to women and girls.
- Members of the public were concerned about the section on same-sex wards. Concerns were raised that women could effectively be placed on mixed-sex wards without knowing it and that this compromises dignity and safety.
- It was stated that women have the right to know if they are on a mixed-ward without having to disclose discomfort or that they have been victims of abuse. It was also raised that women may be scared to speak up, and the onus should not be on women to protect their dignity in single-sex spaces.

- Concerns were raised that NHS staff are being 'forced to accept that men are women' and concede to gender identity as a belief. A comparison was made here with religious belief and freedom of expression.
- Members of the public raised the potential disproportionate impact on young lesbians, and referenced a 4,400% increase in young women seeking help for dysphoria over the last decade.
- Members of the public raised concerns that Bristol does not have a Lesbian Alliance Group and that schools are referring young people to LGBT+ organisations if they are gender dysphoric.
- Members of the public raised concerns about the current references to suicidality in the toolkit as irresponsible.
- Members of the public raised BNSSG's status as Stonewall Diversity Champions as potentially problematic given the organisation's recent stance on gender issues. Members of the public also questioned female staff within the CCG would feel comfortable with this position.

### **3. Conclusion**

Julia thanked everyone for their time and assured the group that the submissions received and the views given at this event will be built into the EIA, which will then be discussed with the Governing Body to ensure that BNSSG are able to develop services and respond to the needs of all of the population. This is going to be challenging and this is a constantly moving issue and we have to adhere to any legal guidance.

Julia confirmed that BNSSG are committed to maintaining communication with members of the public about this subject.

Further written representations can continue to be made by email: [bnssg.customerservice@nhs.net](mailto:bnssg.customerservice@nhs.net)