



## THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1200 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

MAY 09 2025

### MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY

SUBJECT: Additional Guidance on Treatment of Gender Dysphoria

This memorandum provides supplemental guidance on the provision of care for individuals diagnosed with gender dysphoria (GD) within the Military Health System's direct care component and through the Supplemental Health Care Program (SHCP) following the U.S. Supreme Court's stay issued on May 6, 2025, *U.S., et. al. v. Shilling, et al.*, Order 24A1030, of the preliminary injunction that was granted by the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington in the case of *Shilling v. United States*. Because the *Shilling* preliminary injunction has been stayed, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) memorandum, "Compliance with Federal Court Order in *Shilling v. United States*, No. 25-cv- 241-BHS (W.D. Wash)," March 28, 2025, was rescinded. This memorandum cancels and replaces my memorandum, "Additional Guidance on Treatment of Gender Dysphoria," April 21, 2025.

Within the direct care component, meaning at military medical treatment facilities (MTFs), Service members and all other covered beneficiaries 19 years of age or older may only receive mental health care and counseling for GD. Apart from consults for the diagnosis of GD and provision of mental health care and counseling, MTF staff will refer all other care (e.g., cross-sex hormone therapy) for GD to the private sector. MTF Directors and direct care providers are reminded that cross-sex surgeries, also known as gender-affirming surgery or sex reassignment surgery, for the treatment of GD are excluded from TRICARE private sector care coverage. Referrals shall not be submitted for non-covered GD care.

Consistent with the USD(P&R) memorandum, "Additional Guidance on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness," February 26, 2025:

- DHA Procedural Instruction 6025.21, "Guidance for Gender-Affirming Health Care of Transgender and Gender-Diverse Active and Reserve Component Service Members," May 12, 2023, is cancelled.
- All unscheduled, scheduled, or planned surgical procedures associated with facilitating sex reassignment for Service members diagnosed with GD are cancelled.
- All previously approved SHCP waivers for surgical care are cancelled, and any newly submitted SHCP waivers will be returned without action. Any SHCP waiver requests for medically necessary care to address surgical complications and necessary repairs shall be submitted to my office for review.

- Cross-sex hormone therapy for Service members 19 years of age or older who have a current diagnosis or history of, or exhibit symptoms consistent with, GD that began prior to the date of this memorandum, may, if recommended by a health care provider in order to prevent further complications, be continued until separation is complete.
- Effective immediately, no DoD funds will be used to pay for newly initiated cross-sex hormone therapy as treatment of GD for Service members. As provided in the February 26, 2025 USD(P&R) memorandum, the Secretaries of the Military Departments, on a case-by-case basis, may submit for an exception to this prohibition for non-surgical care for the treatment GD if required to protect the health of Service members. All such requests shall be sent to my office for review.

I am directing you to take the necessary steps to immediately implement this guidance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Ferrara', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Stephen L. Ferrara, M.D.  
Acting

cc:

Assistant Secretary of the Army  
for Manpower and Reserve Affairs  
Assistant Secretary of the Navy  
for Manpower and Reserve Affairs  
Assistant Secretary of the Air Force  
for Manpower and Reserve Affairs  
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for  
Health Services Policy and Oversight