



August 2024

To the Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP, Secretary of State for Health & Social Care;

Congratulations again on your appointment.

I'm writing to let you know about GMB's positions on LGBT+ healthcare, particularly relating to trans, non-binary and gender-questioning children, and the importance of these to our members.

GMB has a significant membership in the NHS as well as many LGBT+ members and parents of LGBT+ children and young people who use the NHS.

Our members have repeatedly expressed their support for trans and non-binary people's right to express their gender and to safety, security and welfare. This crucially must include timely access to healthcare. Our 2024 Congress heard unanimous support for rejecting the right-wing politicisation of trans and non-binary rights that was allowed to flourish under the previous government.

We had hoped that you would remove the temporary ban on the prescription of puberty blockers for trans, non-binary and gender questioning young people imposed by the Conservatives.

We now know that patients will not be recruited into the first clinical trial of these drugs until 2025. Whilst this period may not seem long to an adult, to a young person a delay to their treatment will cause young trans people and their families significant, and in some cases life-long, distress.

We won't repeat the arguments that we know you have already heard from experts by training and lived experience, crucially including young trans and non-binary people themselves. We know that you have heard from our friends in LGBT+ Labour and Labour for Trans Rights as well as experts across the health and LGBT+ sectors, including the BMA. We join them in urging you to put the voices of trans young people, their families,

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and their affirming healthcare providers first.

Our members have also raised the issue of access to PrEP through our annual Congress. GMB supports efforts to continue to improve access to PrEP in every nation, particularly to under-served groups such as Black African people, women, trans people and sex workers.

We know too the disproportionate effects of insufficient funding for mental health on LGBT+ workers. Our LGBT+ members are struggling to access timely and appropriate mental health support, having an impact on their working as well as home lives.

We trust that you will do your utmost, in line with the Labour Party manifesto pledge to transform services and recruit 8,500 extra mental health staff, to revolutionise mental health care. Our LGBT+ members know that there is a major need for specialist services for minority groups as well as improved mainstream care.

Finally, our members have raised concerns about older LGBT+ people's access to safe and inclusive social care. We know that you are dedicated to investing in the social care workforce and urge that investment includes provision for groups with particular needs including LGBT+ people.

We look forward to hearing your assurances on these areas.

Yours sincerely,

GARY SMITH
GENERAL SECRETARY

BARBARA PLANT
NATIONAL PRESIDENT