



EAST KOOTENAY GENDER AFFIRMING CARE

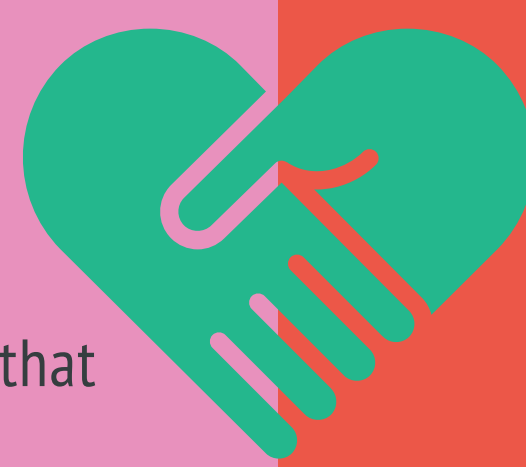
NAVIGATING A RURAL LANDSCAPE

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BETTER HEALTH CARE FOR TRANS, NON-BINARY, TWO SPIRIT, GENDER FLUID, INTERSEX PEOPLE AND THEIR ALLIES

Statistics Canada (2021) indicated that 1 in 300 people aged 15 and older identify as transgender or non-binary with highest demographic in those under age of 40.



THE CHALLENGE TO GAC IN THE EK

Geography:

- One significant potential barrier to accessing care in the East Kootenays geography.
- The East Kootenay is home to about 65,000 people. We reside in a predominantly rural landscape and are comprised of 5 primary communities: Creston, Fernie, Golden, Invermere and the largest and our regional hub, Cranbrook. We tend to experience long winters and travel can be treacherous during the winter months.
- The nearest city is Kelowna (6 hours from the most western point of our region). For individuals seeking specialized care outside the region they will need to travel and this can be a barrier both physically and financially.

Cost

- There are costs associated with having to travel to access care, cost of medications and treatments, cost of supplies such as breast forms & binders and costs associated with legal transitions (documents to change name and gender markers).

Access to Care

- Historically gender-affirming care has been provided in highly specialized gender clinics which meant referrals to a more urban setting that involved travel and long waitlists (1-2 years to be seen).
- There has been a shift over the years with increasing recognition that transgender people can be well-served in primary care settings. Like many emerging areas of medicine, with additional knowledge and training, GPs and NPs can provide many aspects of gender-affirming care which breaks down many barriers and opens up more equitable access to care. Understanding and recognizing the needs of gender diverse individuals is key in providing safe and appropriate care.

SCAN AND VIEW THE ROADMAP



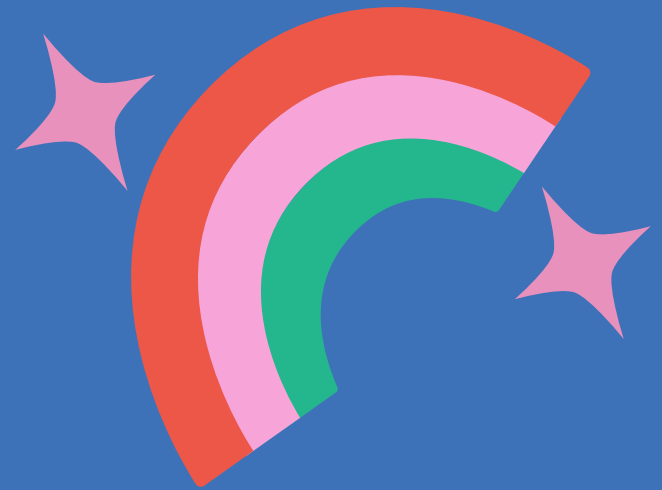
The Patient Roadmap identifies gender affirming care services and resources that exist both in the region and online, and aims to help transgender, gender-diverse, intersex and two-spirited people find and navigate their care. The Patient Roadmap is available on the [Pathways Community Service Directory](#).

The Provider Roadmap, which was developed for family doctors, nurse practitioners, and mental health clinicians, has information about resources, services, and supports found within East Kootenay communities that support primary care provider's knowledge and skills to create a safe, respectful clinic environment and better health care experiences for transgender, gender-diverse, intersex and two-spirited people.



THE GOALS

1. Identify gaps and barriers that exist for those seeking GAC services in the region.
2. Map and document local and provincial resources for both patients and providers to better navigate care.
3. Improve access to local gender affirming care through provider education and awareness.



YOUTUBE

Watch a five minute video about the impact of this project, featuring Dr. Jessica Chiles and Jimmie Dancer, project advisor.
<https://youtu.be/210JSPDd7g>



THE RESULT

Gender-diverse, people-as well as their loved ones-who live in the East Kootenays now have access to a new patient resource. The EK GAC Community Roadmap communicates regional supports that may be considered during the process of exploring one's gender identity or transition journey. Primary care providers now have the EK GAC Provider Roadmap which offers practitioners support towards creating a safe, respectful clinic environment and identifies educational opportunities to enhance their skills, thereby improving patient access to knowledgeable and confident gender-affirming care.

EK GAC LEARNING EVENT

We hosted a 3 hour CME accredited learning event for primary care providers with the goal of educating providers about GAC and the supports available to them and patients.



PRESENTATIONS:

- GAC in the Adult Population - Dr Jocelyn Winny, NP & Tara Fiedler Graham, NP
- GAC in the Pediatric Population - Dr. Paul Kahlke
- Value of Social Supports in Transgender Population - Nicola Hare, TransConnect
- From Patient to Advocate - Jimmie Dancer



COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Trans Connect (Regional)
- TransCare BC (Provincial)
- Interior Health Authority
- Ktunaxa Child and Family Services
- Municipal Family Centres throughout the East Kootenay
- Ministry of Child and Family Services.
- Foundry East Kootenay
- School District 5, 6, & 8
- BC Children's Gender Clinic
- CYMH
- UPCC
- Multiple community members-patient voices
- Kootenay Transfolk Facebook Group
- College of the Rockies

EAST KOOTENAY, B.C.

