

## **Human rights lawyers highlight Australia's international obligations and condemn any politicisation of healthcare for trans and gender diverse young people.**

Australian Lawyers for Human Rights (**ALHR**) has condemned the Queensland Government's statewide halt on access to puberty blocking agents and gender affirming hormones for all new patients under 18 seeking help for gender dysphoria. The national association of human right lawyers has also joined medical experts, health bodies and LGBTIQ+ groups in cautiously welcoming today's Federal Government announcement of a review into the treatment guidelines for trans and gender diverse young people.

The state-level binding directive issued this week will deny trans and gender diverse young people in Queensland access to necessary health care irrespective of the advice of their treating medical practitioners, the support of their families, and their capacity to provide informed consent, pending an independent review into their use.

**ALHR President Nicholas Stewart said**, "ALHR is alarmed by this abrupt and ill-informed decision, particularly in light of the fact that in July 2024 an independent [review](#) already found that the state's paediatric gender services are '*safe and evidence-based*'.

"ALHR shares the concerns of the [Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists](#), that an already vulnerable patient cohort is now being subjected to significant distress."

Queensland is one of three states in Australia to have enacted a Human Rights Act and the only state to enshrine in law the right to access health services without discrimination. This directive undermines that right, and fails to meet the *Human Rights Act 2019 (QLD)* requirement that any limitation of a person's healthcare rights be '*demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom.*'

"We implore the Queensland Government not to politicise the fundamental human right to healthcare and to take immediate steps to withdraw this disproportionate directive."

**Kerry Weste, ALHR Vice President and Chair of Children's Rights said**, "Australia is a signatory to the core international human rights treaties, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (**UDHR**), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (**ICESCR**) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (**CRC**) which recognise everyone's right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. These instruments also underscore fundamental rights to equality and non-discrimination, obliging Australia to introduce measures to eliminate discrimination on the basis of gender identity."

"When it comes specifically to young people under the age of 18, the CRC obliges all governments across Australia to act in the best interests of the child and to protect their rights to non-discrimination, to identity, to health, and, especially, to be heard in relation to decisions that affect them."

ALHR calls on the Federal Government to ensure that any review of treatment guidelines follows international best practice in protecting young people's fundamental right to participate and includes comprehensive community consultation.

ALHR further calls on the Federal Government to implement the May 2024 [recommendations](#) of its own Inquiry into Australia's Human Rights Framework and enact a national Human Rights Act that protects the right to health care for all Australians.

ALHR stands with the [Trans Justice Project](#) and is proud to endorse the National Day of Action to protect trans youth on 8 February 2025.

Contact: Louise Hall 0428 212 833 [mj@jcp.com.au](mailto:mj@jcp.com.au)