

Written referrals should be addressed to:

Dr Domenico Di Ceglie
Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist
Director, Gender Identity Development Service
The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust
Tavistock Centre, 120 Belsize Lane, London NW3 5BA
Tel: 020 8938 2030

The Gender Identity Development Service is associated with the Department of Paediatric Endocrinology at University College London Hospitals.

Are there facilities for patients with disabilities?

The Tavistock Clinic and the Monroe Family Assessment Service are wheelchair accessible. The Tavistock Clinic has lifts to all floors. Unfortunately, Gloucester House, The Tavistock Children's Day Unit and the Portman Clinic are not wheelchair accessible. If you are a patient at the Portman Clinic your clinician can arrange to see you in the Tavistock Clinic if necessary.

There are induction loops on the telephones for patients with hearing difficulties in the Tavistock Clinic but this is not available in the other buildings. Sign-language interpreters are also available.

There is a disabled toilet in the Tavistock Clinic on the ground floor next to the library. If you're in a wheelchair and would like some help with the lifts, do not hesitate to ask at reception. If you have any concerns regarding access, please first discuss it with the reception in your department. If you have further questions, please contact the PALS officer.

Who can I contact if I have any questions or worries about my treatment?

The Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS) is here to help with any questions or concerns that you may have about your treatment. Please contact our PALS officer on 020 8938 2523 or email on pals@tavi-port.nhs.uk

The PALS officer can also be contacted if you require this leaflet in another format (e.g. electronic version or large print).

Address

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Tavistock Centre, 120 Belsize Lane, London NW3 5BA
Tel: 020 8938 2030
Fax: 020 7431 8320
Web: www.tavi-port.org

For practical information about the Trust and maps on how to get there, please see the 'Information for Patients' leaflet.

Painting by Annabel Obholzer.

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Gender Identity Development Service

PATIENT INFORMATION

January 2009



An increasing number of young people are presenting with difficulties with their gender identity. Some feel uncomfortable with the gender they are born with; others are unhappy with the gender role that society requires.

Many adults with gender identity problems describe difficulties in childhood. Often they complain of having been very unhappy children and teenagers and that their suffering had not been understood early enough by parents and professionals. As adult gender identity has its roots in infancy, childhood and adolescence, it is advisable that help is provided at an early stage, and that awareness of these problems is promoted.

Gender Identity Development Service

This specialist service is staffed by a multi-disciplinary group with contributions from child and adolescent psychiatry, clinical psychology, social work, psychotherapy and paediatrics. The staff work closely together in order to make the most of different team member's expertise and skills.

Who we try to help

We see children and adolescents (up to the age of 18) and their families, who are experiencing difficulties in the development of gender identity. This includes children who are unhappy about their own biological sex and wish to belong to the other one.

Some may be boys who feel or believe they are girls and vice versa; others may have a strong preference to play with toys mostly used by the other sex, for instance, a boy who mostly plays with dolls.

Some children feel comfortable only when playing with peers of the other sex, or cross dress from time to time. Some adolescents and their families experience crisis over problems of gender identity leading to considerable concern and distress.

Children with disorders of sex development (DSD) and other endocrine conditions can be referred if there are concerns about their gender identity development.

The Service also offers counselling to children of transsexual parents or parents who present with other gender identity issues. Assessment and advice are provided to the Courts at their request.

Although young people may be experiencing difficulties in this area, they or their families may not feel ready to accept help from the Service directly or their attendance is impracticable. In these cases, we would be available to consult with any professionals already involved, such as the General Practitioner, Mental Health Professionals, Health Visitor, Teachers and Social Workers etc.

How we look at problems

We consider issues of gender identity in the context of developmental processes. The aims of the Service are to support development particularly that of gender identity, by exploring the nature and characteristics of the child's or young person's gender identity. We think that relationships are as important as other factors in contributing to the child's difficulties. Therefore we pay attention to what is happening within the child's/adolescent's relationships with the family, school and other social agencies.

Confidentiality

Great care is taken in ensuring the confidentiality of the client's contact with the Service. We think that it is important, usually with the family's consent, to liaise with other professionals when appropriate.

How we can be reached

The Service accepts referrals from across the UK. The preferred route of referral is through a local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. However other professionals in Health, Social Services and Education departments as well as young people and their families can contact the Service directly to discuss a possible referral.