

Transgender Health Program Patient Rights & Responsibilities

You have the right to:

- be heard and understood by your provider and care team
- be fairly evaluated for treatment and referrals
- access an equal standard of care as any other patient
- be provided with assistance or referrals to manage psychological and physical health issues that might impact your hormone therapy
- if appropriate, to be given access to gender affirming hormone therapy

You have the responsibility to:

- accurately convey your symptoms (story and history) of gender dysphoria and gender identity development to your provider
- follow your treatment plan and take your medications as prescribed
- follow up with care as recommended
- express your concerns to your provider

Review & Steps

- Get an appointment
- Schedule a physical or have your records transferred from a physical done elsewhere
- Set your goals with your provider
- Work to manage other medical and mental health conditions and concerns
- Keep your follow up appointments and communicate your concerns to your provider
- Move forward with your plan!

Schedule an Appointment

Patients of all ages:

Fenway Health: Ansin Building
1340 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02215
TEL 617.927.6000

Fenway: South End
142 Berkeley Street
Boston, MA 02116
TEL 617.247.7555

Patients up to age 29:

Sidney Borum Jr. Health Center
75 Kneeland Street
Boston, MA 02111
TEL 617.457.8140

Resources

Visit fenwayhealth.org/transhealth to download informed consent forms for review:
(These forms are available in English and Spanish)

- Masculinizing Hormone Therapy
- Feminizing Hormone Therapy

Have more questions?

Contact the Transgender Health Patient Advocate, at
857.313.6589; transhealth@fenwayhealth.org.



COM-3003

What to Expect

Here are some pointers that will help you understand how hormone therapy works at Fenway Health!



Hormone treatment at Fenway is managed through informed consent. This means you and your doctor will work together to develop the best program of care and timeline based on your health care needs, understanding of treatment, and transition goals. Whether you are prescribed hormones depends on your specific situation. Our criteria for hormone therapy is informed by the WPATH (World Professional Association for Transgender Health) guidelines.

Following are some, but not all, of the criteria for hormone therapy:

- Capacity to give informed consent
- Age of majority (18+)
- Persistent, documented gender dysphoria (this is part of what you will discuss with your provider)
- Any other medical or mental health issues are reasonably well controlled

Your provider will discuss the informed consent process, discuss your gender identity development history, review effects, and possible risk factors for hormone therapy prior to writing a prescription.

Patients 18 Years of Age and Older



FIRST APPOINTMENT (INITIAL INTAKE)

Have you had a physical in the past year? If so, make sure to bring a copy of your records to your appointment or have the documents released and sent to Fenway ahead of your first appointment. If needed, your provider may schedule a physical.

Helpful Hint: You can stop or reschedule part of an exam if you are uncomfortable. What procedures are needed to determine medical readiness for hormones is determined by your situation.

SECOND APPOINTMENT

If you brought a copy of your records to your first appointment or had a physical during that visit, your second appointment will be to discuss your hormone goals and any follow-up from your exam.

Helpful Hint: Depending on your history and needs, your gender development history, and other topics, the process may take more than one or two appointments.

THIRD (OR MORE) APPOINTMENT(S)

Follow-up to previous visits includes: any additional tests or assessments, discussion of risks and benefits of treatment, signing of informed consent for treatment.

If appropriate, you may be able to initiate hormone treatments at this visit.

Patients Under 18 Years of Age



FIRST APPOINTMENT

Your provider will get to know you and your parent(s) or guardian(s). You will review the hormone therapy process and do Q&A with your provider. You will discuss the impact of hormone therapy on fertility, get blood tests (if time permits), review consent forms, and gather your medical history.

Behavioral Health Requirement

If you have a therapist, we will ask for your permission to contact them for a letter of support. If you do not have a therapist, we will help connect you to one internally or help you find one elsewhere.

Helpful to bring to Appointment #1: Contact information (name, fax, and phone number) for any outside care providers, copies of last physical and medical records, a list of questions you may have about the transition process, and insurance information.



SECOND APPOINTMENT

Your provider will continue getting to know you and your parent(s) or guardian(s). You will review the process of transition and what your expectations of the experience are.

You may need to have a physical exam and lab work done.

From here your care team will review your information and help you schedule necessary follow-up visits. The process for medical clearance may take more than three visits.



THIRD (OR MORE) APPOINTMENT(S)

Once we receive relevant past medical information, a letter of support from your therapist, and your case has been reviewed by the transgender health clinical team, we will ask you to come in with your parent(s)/guardian(s) to review and sign the treatment consent forms. The care team will work with you and your parent(s)/guardian(s) to make a care plan for the rest of the process.

If appropriate, you may be able to initiate hormone therapy or suppression treatments at this visit.

FAQ and Common Concerns

I've been told I need to talk to a therapist before I can start hormones. Why? I thought informed consent meant I didn't need to see a therapist!

Informed consent means you are not required to have a letter of support before being seen by a medical provider for hormones. A provider may still request a behavioral health assessment prior to starting you on treatment. As part of meeting criteria for hormones, mental health concerns need to be reasonably well managed, and therapy, evaluation, or treatment may be the next step along your path to gender affirmation. Needing to see a therapist as part of your transition does not disqualify you from pursuing hormone treatment. Some people start seeing a therapist at the same time that they start hormone therapy.

I have a medical condition that my provider says I need to manage before starting hormones. I came to Fenway for hormones! I want to start hormones and deal with my other health issue later.

As with any program of health care, our providers need to ensure that a patient's total health is addressed when deciding whether or not to prescribe hormones. You do not have to be in perfect health to start hormones. If a provider thinks that hormones might destabilize a physical or mental health condition, however, they will work with you on that issue prior to prescribing hormones.

This is taking a long time! I thought "informed consent" meant I could just come in and get hormones!

Informed consent does not mean "hormones on demand". Informed consent means you can demonstrate understanding of both the risks and the benefits of hormone therapy and you and your provider have both decided that this is the appropriate time for you to begin treatment. Under the informed consent model, we respect the individual's sense of self and agency, and this means taking the time to ensure that we are providing the most comprehensive and holistic care possible.

