

Aide-Mémoire

Release: Evidence Brief on Impact of Puberty Blockers in gender dysphoric adolescents

Date due to MO:	16 April 2024	Action required by:	N/A
Security level:	IN CONFIDENCE	Health Report number:	H2024038057
To:	Hon Matt Doocey, Associate Minister of Health		
Cc:	Hon Dr Shane Reti, Minister of Health		
Consulted:	Health New Zealand: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Māori Health Authority: <input type="checkbox"/>		

Contact for telephone discussion

Name	Position	Telephone
Dr Joe Bourne	Chief Medical Officer, Office of the Chief Clinical Officers Ngā Āpiha Hauora	s 9(2)(a)
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Release: Evidence Brief: on the Impact of Puberty Blockers in gender dysphoric adolescents

Date due: 16 April 2024

To: Hon Minister Matt Doocey, Associate Minister of Health

Security level: IN CONFIDENCE **Health Report number:** H2024038057

Purpose: This report summarises the Ministry's approach to the release of its Evidence Brief examining the Impact of Puberty Blockers in gender dysphoric adolescents, as well as an accompanying Position Statement.

Appended are:

- Evidence Brief
- Position Statement

Comment: This Aide-Mémoire discloses all relevant information.



Dr Joe Bourne
Chief Medical Officer | Ngā Āpiha Hauora
Clinical, Community and Mental Health Directorate |
Te Pou Whakakaha

Puberty blockers

Context

The use of puberty blockers – Ministry of Health conducted evidence brief

1. The Ministry's plan to publish the review was discussed between Dr Joe Bourne and yourself on 25 March 2024. We provided further background information to you on the Brief on 5 April as part of an aide memoire (H2024038057 refers) on NHS England's approach to puberty blockers.
2. Since then, The Cass Review, examining the provision of gender services in the UK, has been released. The main conclusions of these reports are consistent with the findings of our Evidence Brief, in that the quality of evidence around the use of puberty blockers is limited.
3. To inform the Ministry's approach and position on the use of puberty blockers, an evidence brief was commissioned to examine the latest scientific evidence regarding the impact of puberty blockers on clinical and mental health and wellbeing outcomes in adolescents with gender dysphoria. The evidence brief takes into account international and national literature, published up until 30 September 2023.
4. The evidence brief will inform the work Health New Zealand – Te Whatu Ora has underway to update its clinical guidance on the provision of gender affirming care.
5. The evidence brief is now complete and will be published in the week beginning 15 April 2024, accompanied by a Ministry position statement.
6. Our position statement puts forward opportunities to further explore developing measures to monitor puberty blocker prescribing and gender affirming service delivery.

Release schedule

7. Public release is planned for Tuesday 23 April, via publication on the Ministry website. The Ministry will send out a media release.
8. We have provided an embargoed copy to release to the Science Media Centre for them to arrange expert reactions to the Evidence Brief.
9. We will provide embargoed copies of the Brief and Position Statement to media 4 hours prior to release.

Date	Activity
Weds 10 Apr	Evidence Brief and Position statement shared with the Children's Commissioner and Health NZ
Tue 16 Apr p.m.	Provide Brief, comms plan and position statement to Minister Doocey's office
Thur 19 Apr	Embargoed copy of Brief provided to commentators via Science Media Centre

Tue 22 Apr	Embargoed copy of Brief / media release to some stakeholders (1 day embargo)
Wed 23 Apr a.m.	Embargoed copy of Brief / media release to general media (4-hour embargo)
Wed 23 Apr a.m.	Science Media Centre provide embargoed commentary from peer reviewers to general media
Wed 23 Apr p.m.	Ministry of Health media release / tweet published (at time embargo lifted)
Wed 23 Apr p.m.	Science Media Centre commentary published when embargo lifted

Communications goals

10. The Ministry has endeavoured to provide evidence-based information that will be published on the Ministry's website, along with a position statement, on the use of puberty blockers for gender affirming care.
11. We want to:
 - acknowledge to health professionals and the wider community that this is a complex and controversial topic,
 - reassure individuals and their families that the health system will continue to provide care to individuals that need it,
 - give confidence to healthcare providers that puberty blockers remain a treatment option and can be considered as part of a comprehensive care package that also includes other therapies such as psychological support.
12. The Ministry has taken an evidence-based approach as it considered the safety and long-term impacts of puberty blockers.
13. The Ministry will continue to monitor emerging evidence regarding gender affirming care and will work with healthcare providers including Health New Zealand to ensure that young people have access to holistic, quality and safe care.

Talking points for Associate Minister of Health

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Talking points for other Ministers

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PROACTIVELY RELEASED

Appendix One: Evidence Brief

Appendix Two: Position statement

PROACTIVELY RELEASED