

Men Supporting Women's Rights

Questions

1 Do you have any comments on the proposal that applicants must live in their acquired gender for at least 3 months before applying for a GRC?

Yes

If yes, please outline these comments.:

Making the 'living in their acquired gender' period just three months is a significant reduction to the current requirement. While we understand that the intention behind this was to ease the process for those few who live with the effects of gender-dysphoria Men Supporting Women's Rights has three comments:

First of all the NHS says that diagnosis and treatment of gender-dysphoria requires the involvement of two or more specialists over a longer period than three months.

Secondly we strongly feel that the Bill as it stands has failed to take into account the exponential increase of those presenting to gender clinics in the past few years. This phenomenon remains poorly understood but one thing is clear: it has been largely fuelled by thousands of girls and young women undergoing identity crises. Many of these children and young people also have a diagnosis of Autism.

These vulnerable people are already fast-tracked towards chest-binding, puberty blockers and life-altering surgery such as double mastectomies. Many are coming to regret these decisions taken at such a young age. Since it is such a recent phenomenon the scale of this problem is as yet unknown. But already a De-transitioners Advocacy Network has been launched across the UK, while a young female de-transitioner is suing the Gender Identity Development Service for encouraging her to transition at a young age and during an emotional crisis.

In this climate we, as a society, should be becoming MORE and not less cautious about what psychological factors are impelling people towards transition, and making sure that sufficient time is given to diagnoses and alternative routes towards healthy relationships between our youngsters and their bodies. For the Scottish Government to give the green light to a fast track process is sending the wrong signals to vulnerable and confused people.

Men Supporting Women's Rights notes that many Transsexuals have also expressed their opposition to this reform.

Thirdly the change effectively removes any gate-keeping required to protect women's spaces and services. Within a few months any man (for any reason) can be legally recognized as a woman because he believes/says he is one. Potential outcomes are surely too obvious to need pointing out.

2 Do you have any comments on the proposal that applicants must go through a period of reflection for at least 3 months before obtaining a GRC?

Yes

If yes, please outline these comments.:

Men Supporting Women's Rights believes that a thorough medical process should be retained to ensure a person considers the full ramifications before signing any legal documents. Three months is simply too short a time, especially for the young.

Caution and a prolonged respectful dialogue will protect young people and people undergoing a crisis of identity. The retention of robust gate-keeping puts women's right to single sex spaces and services on a sound footing.

This Bill in its current form undermines such rational responses.

3 Should the minimum age at which a person can apply for legal gender recognition be reduced from 18 to 16?

No

If you wish, please give reasons for your view.:

Our group strongly feels that the medical pathways down which young people are currently being pushed are experimental and can lead to loss of sexual function, infertility, and a lifetime of medication. Many girls and young women, suffering as they often do from severe body-image problems, find themselves going down this route as a result of psychological and emotional problems. It is frightening that confused 18 year old young women are currently able to get double-mastectomies in the UK on the grounds that they think they are, or desire to be, men. To judge from the testimony of the many de-transitioners now speaking out the majority of those affected are lesbians suffering from an internalized version of the homophobia they find themselves surrounded by.

In endorsing full legal transition at 16 the Scottish Government would be colluding with this incredibly damaging and dangerous approach to gender non-conformity that is medicalizing our young people's relationship with their bodies, and significantly widening the potential for long term, irreversible damage.

Current research shows that, for the vast majority of children and young people, feelings of gender confusion resolve with maturity. The causes for both the rapid increase in children seeking medical help and the (linked) appearance of large numbers of de-transitioners (those who return to their original sex having been through the medical route), need to be investigated and understood better before any law change lowering the age at which our children and young adults go down the path of no return.

4 Do you have any other comments on the provisions of the draft Bill?

Yes

If yes, please outline these comments.:

Men Supporting Women's Rights believes that the The Bill should be rejected in its entirety. The consultation paper (section 2.13) states that Scotland's current legislation is in compliance with European law and that there is no requirement for it to be reformed. No-one should be allowed to switch the sex on their birth certificate without a medical diagnosis of gender-dysphoria. Only those suffering from this rare medical condition, and who have been through a sincere and professionally monitored medical process, should continue to have this right.

To use less secure criteria is to threaten the interests, legal protections and identities of women, children, lesbians and transsexuals.

The Government should properly address the implications and consequences of changing the legal definition of 'woman' and 'man' from one informed by rational and scientifically valid biological science, to one based on unprovable feelings or claims. There is plenty of evidence that taking this stance has already been detrimental for many people.

5 Do you have any comments on the draft Impact Assessments?

Yes

If yes, please outline these comments.:

We consider the draft Impact Assessments to be neither thorough nor evidence-based, therefore unfit for purpose. They flout the Scottish Government's own standards for the assessment of the consequences of law or policy change. They have not properly taken into account the potential for this Bill to have serious negative implications for the female sex. One of the roots of these failures has been the conflation of the concept of 'sex' (biological reality reflecting our species' sexual dimorphism) with that of 'gender' (a set of social indicators and rules associated with the two sexes by mere convention). This is a key distinction which legislation needs to be absolutely clear about, but sadly in this case has remained doggedly opaque.