

Gender-Affirming Services in Manitoba



A resource from the Canadian Queer
Medical Students Association, cqmsa.org



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FOREWORD

Gender-affirming medical services are available and accessible in Manitoba. To begin the process of medical transition such as getting hormones, a patient will need to be followed by a family doctor, pediatrician, or endocrinologist. Alternatively, there are medical clinics who take in trans patients to begin or to continue transition-related care. A list of these clinics can be found in the next section entitled “Gender-Inclusive Clinics”. The following discussion only applies to people covered by the public provincial healthcare insurance, [Manitoba Health](#). If a patient has private insurance, the coverage of these services may differ.

DISCLAIMER: This document was created by the Canadian 2SLGBTQIA+ Medical Students’ Association (CQMSA) with the intention of helping medical providers in Manitoba navigate and provide gender-affirming care. This document contains a collection of services and providers which are constantly changing, especially given the nature of the work and the increased stress and demand which community organizations have experienced due to COVID-19. We have done our best to provide up-to-date content but cannot promise the continued accessibility of some of these services. Please read with discretion. If you notice incorrect information, or you would like to notify us about different resources, please email: info@cqmsa.org

We thank you for your efforts in providing appropriate and informed care!
– *The Canadian Queer Medical Students Association (CQMSA)*

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For the Canadian Queer Medical Students Association

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PROVINCIAL HEALTHCARE COVERAGE

Manitoba's residents are insured through Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living coverage. You are eligible for Manitoba Health if you are a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or Work Permit holder (or spouse/dependent of a Work Permit holder). To apply, you must be able to prove that you will be spending 183+ days/year (6+ months) in Manitoba with this province indicated as your permanent residence. If you meet the above criteria, you can apply for coverage starting the first day of the third calendar month of your arrival (for example, if you move on January 29th, you can apply by March 1st as January counts toward your three months).

You can [register online](#) for Manitoba healthcare coverage. For more information about eligibility, coverage, and other frequently asked questions, visit the [Manitoba Health Services Insurance Plan website](#).

NAME AND GENDER MARKER CHANGES

Legal Change of Name

Under the Change of Name Act, Manitoba allows adults (18+ years old, or those younger than 18 who are in a common-law relationship/married or who have custody of a child) to legally change their name. In order to apply, you need:

1. Completed application
2. Proof of identity
3. Proof of Manitoba residency (ex. Manitoba Health card, Manitoba driver's licence; must live in Manitoba for 3+ months)
4. Validated Name Document (Original Canadian birth certificates for those born in Canada; Citizenship and Immigration Canada document for those born outside of Canada)
5. Marital status documents (for those currently/previously married or in a registered common-law relationship)
6. Fingerprints through an [authorized fingerprinting agency](#) (do not get your fingerprints until after you have submitted your application and received a confirmation to do so; see application for details)
7. Third Party Waiver consent in Livescan (for fingerprints; see application)
8. Fees:
 - a. Application fees: \$120.07
 - b. Fingerprint fees: varies; ~\$70

Changing Sex Designation

Under the Vital Statistics Act, Manitoba allows individuals to legally change their sex designation to M, F, or X through the following:

1. Manitoba birth registration (for those born in Manitoba - a new birth certificate will be issued as well)
2. Sex designation certificate (for those born in Manitoba or Canadian citizens who have lived in Manitoba for at least 12 months)
3. Manitoba marriage registration (for those married in Manitoba with the consent of the individual they were married to - a new marriage certificate can be requested as well)

In order to apply for a legal sex designation change, you need:

1. Completed application
2. Proof of identity (ex. Canadian passport, Manitoba driver's licence, certificate of Indian Status card)
3. Statutory declaration (witnessed; see application)
4. Supporting letter from a healthcare professional (see application)
5. Birth registration information
6. Canadian citizenship information/proof of Manitoba residency
7. An authorized witness, as outlined by The Evidence Act, to confirm documents (see application for more information)
8. Third party agreement to legal sex designation change in the Manitoba marriage registration (for those applying for this change; see application)
9. [Application for a Manitoba Birth Document](#) (mandatory for those changing their sex designation on the Manitoba birth registration)
10. [Application for a Manitoba Marriage Document](#) (optional for those changing their sex designation on the Manitoba marriage registration who would like a new marriage certificate)
11. Application fees:
 - a. Manitoba birth registration and new birth certificate: \$60
 - b. Sex designation certificate: \$30
 - c. Manitoba marriage registration: \$30
 - d. New marriage certificate: \$30

You can access and fill out the [English application here](#) (includes instructions for completing the application, supporting document requirements, and information on how to submit your application). For more information, visit [Manitoba's Vital Statistics Agency website](#).

MEDICAL AND SURGICAL OPTIONS

Age of Medical Consent

In Manitoba, the age of medical consent is the same as the age of majority (18 years old). However, like many Canadian provinces and territories, Manitoba follows a common law principle in which minors who are deemed capable of making informed decisions about their health may do so without the consent of a legal guardian. These laws are not written anywhere, and different providers can have varying definitions and requirements for their younger patients to be deemed capable of making these kinds of decisions.

Additionally, the type of medical treatment being requested - and the assumed risk of treatment - might change a provider's willingness to treat a minor without a guardian's consent. For example, if a minor is wanting to start birth control pills without parental consent and they can maturely understand the risks and proper use of the medication, a provider may be willing to prescribe these pills without involving any legal guardians. However, if the same minor decides that they would like to undergo a surgical procedure which carries more risk or long-term impact, like a hysterectomy, this provider may decide that the minor is not capable of making this decision alone. Because these decisions are at the discretion of each individual provider, it is recommended that you talk with your provider and get a clear understanding of what will be kept confidential/ what treatments you can consent to as a minor before starting any medical therapy. If you are concerned about your guardian learning about information you have disclosed/would like to disclose to a provider, we recommend you specify this to your provider.

Gender-Affirming Services

Manitoba Health requires a diagnosis of gender dysphoria (GD) from an approved practitioner in order for an individual to qualify for gender-affirming healthcare (for more information on GD, refer to the section “Gender-Affirming Care” under Canada-Wide care in this document). Generally, this can be fulfilled by a primary care provider or through a clinic specializing in gender-inclusive care.

To qualify for surgeries, Manitoba Health requires a referral letter by an approved Manitoba Health psychologist AND Manitoba Health practitioner. Additionally, for most surgeries to be covered by Manitoba Health, individuals must be on hormone replacement therapy for at least a year. For top surgeries, wait times can take about 4 months for a chest consult plus an additional 3-5 months for surgery.¹ Currently, most bottom surgeries are not performed by providers in Manitoba. These surgeries are referred to the Centre de Chirurgie in Montreal, Quebec. Because most provinces refer to this clinic, the wait time for these surgeries is long (especially since COVID-19), and can take up to 30 months. Manitoba Health will cover the cost of these surgeries if they are approved as well as travel reimbursement; however, you will be responsible for securing and paying for your travel upfront.

Below is a table conveying information about gender-affirming services, including whether the service or procedure is covered by Manitoba Health, criteria required for approval, and names of organizations and clinics who can provide these services. The inclusion of individual providers and clinics is not meant to convey an endorsement or vetting of their trans-inclusivity by the CQMSA.

1. Wait times taken from a Q&A session with the Trans Health Clinic and Sexuality Education Resource Centre MB in November 2019;
<https://serc.mb.ca/answering-questions-transgender-in-manitoba/>

Medical Procedure	Insurance Coverage	Criteria for Approval	Providers
Gender-Affirming Products	Not covered	-	Binder Exchange program - Trans Health Clinic
Fertility Treatments	Not covered	Referral from a family physician, specialist, or allied health professional	Heartland Fertility & Gynecology Clinic
Electrolysis/Hair Removal	Covered	Necessary for some bottom surgeries	Trans Health Clinic Winnipeg
Feminizing/Masculinizing Voice Therapy	Covered	Referral made to speech language services from any health care professional	Deer Lodge Centre
Psychologist	Covered	1+ year on HRT prior to a consult	Ask your primary healthcare provider for a referral
Medications			
Hormone Blockers	Fully/partially covered	Must meet WPATH criteria for hormone blocker initiation	Please see primary care physician regarding this service Depending on your situation, you may be referred to a specialty clinic
Hormone Replacement Therapy	Fully/partially covered	Must meet WPATH criteria for hormone readiness	Please see primary care physician regarding this service Depending on your situation, you may be referred to a specialty clinic
Surgeries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diagnosis of Gender Dysphoria (GD) by an approved practitioner 2. Two letters of recommendation (by a Manitoba Health practitioner AND Manitoba Health psychologist) 3. Surgeries can only be funded if clients see Manitoba Health-approved surgeons 		
AFAB Top Surgeries			
Chest Reduction	Case by case	—	Manitoba
Chest Masculinization	Covered	Only one letter of recommendation by an approved MB Health provider is required, following WPATH Criteria for Chest Masculinization.	
Mastectomy	Covered	<u>HRT is not required</u>	

Medical Procedure	Insurance Coverage	Criteria for Approval	Providers
AFAB Bottom Surgeries - removal			
Hysterectomy	Yes	1. 1+ years on HRT 2. Living full-time as identified gender for 1+ years	Manitoba
Oophorectomy	Yes		
AFAB Bottom Surgeries - construction (including implants)			
Metoidioplasty	Yes	1. 1+ years on HRT 2. Living full-time as identified gender for 1+ years	Centre de Chirurgie - Montreal
Phalloplasty	Yes		
AMAB Top Surgery			
Breast Augmentation	Case by case	To be covered, there must be no breast development after being on HRT (very rare) - most cases are not funded	Plastic surgeon of your choice
AMAB Facial Surgeries			
Facial Feminization Surgery	Not covered	Self-referral	Plastic surgeon of your choice
Tracheal Shaving	Not covered	Self-referral	Centre de Chirurgie - Montreal
AMAB Bottom Surgeries - removal			
Orchidectomy	Covered	1. 1+ years on HRT 2. Living full-time as identified gender for 1+ years	Manitoba (if standalone orchidectomy)
Penectomy	Covered		Centre de Chirurgie - Montreal (if combined with penectomy/vaginoplasty)
AMAB Bottom Surgeries - construction (including cliteroplasty and labiaplasty)			
Vaginoplasty	Covered	1. 1+ years on HRT 2. Living full-time as identified gender for 1+ years	Centre de Chirurgie - Montreal
Vulvoplasty	Covered		

Gender-Affirming Services

Although gender-affirming products for binding, packing, tucking, and padding are not covered under Manitoba Health, these products may often be found through community organizations such as queer-friendly sex shops or trans support centers, or they may be accessed through community-led services such as binder exchange programs. It can be helpful to start by searching for queer-positive sex shops or trans support centers near you. For example, [Trans Health Clinic binder exchange program](#) is a Manitoba-based gender-affirming product program.

Gender-Inclusive Clinics

Transitioning Services for Adults (16+ years old)

Trans Health Clinic

- **Services:**
 - Hormone initiation, hair removal, speech therapy, surgical referrals
 - Once hormone therapy has been established and a stable dose is started, clients will have their medication management transferred to their primary care provider.
 - Clients are required to have a primary care provider
- **Referral:** self-referral is accepted over the phone; call (204) 787-4090
- **Location:** 167 Sherbrook St, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2B6
 - This clinic has a partner clinic in Brandon and offers telehealth appointments
- **Wait time:** estimated 2 months for first visit²
- **Website:** <https://klinik.mb.ca/health-care/transgender-health-klinik/community-members/>

2. Wait times taken from a Q&A session with the Trans Health Clinic and Sexuality Education Resource Centre MB in November 2019; <https://serc.mb.ca/answering-questions-transgender-in-manitoba/>

Gender-Inclusive Clinics (cont.)

Transitioning Services for Minors (under 17 years old)

Gender Dysphoria Assessment and Action for Youth

- **Services:**
 - Clinical psychologist and child/adolescent psychiatrists for assessment and treatment of gender dysphoria
 - Pediatric endocrinologist and endocrine nurse clinician for hormone blockers or replacement therapy
 - Adolescent gynecologist for fertility preservation and menstruation assistance
- **Referral:** self-referral is accepted; call (204) 787-7435 ext 3; email gdaay@exchange.hsc.mb.ca
- **Location:** University of Manitoba Community Services Building, Room FE 307 - 685 William Ave, Winnipeg, MB R3E 0Z2
- **Wait time:** estimated 2 months for first visit
- **Website:** <https://www.gdaay.ca/>

Finding a Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner

- You can [register online](#) to be matched with a primary care provider through the Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living Family Doctor Finder program. Having a primary care provider will allow you to start or continue hormone replacement therapies and start the process of being diagnosed with gender dysphoria, a necessary step for accessing publicly funded transitional surgeries.
- Find out more information about the [Family Doctor Finder program](#).
- **Counseling (not for gender identity assessment):**
 - Aurora Family Therapy at the University of Winnipeg – (204) 786-9251
 - Klinik Community Health Centre - (204) 784-4067
 - Women’s Health Clinic – (204) 947-2422, ext. 204
 - Rainbow Resource Centre drop-in counseling - (204) 474-0212, ext. 201 (call on Monday after 10am for same-week counseling)

Community Groups, Social Networking, and Patient Navigators

- 2S People of Manitoba: <https://twospiritmanitoba.ca/>
- Winnipeg Transgender Support Group: <http://winnipegtransgendergroup.com/>
- Rainbow Resource Centre Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/RainbowResourceCentre/>
- Trans Manitoba: for meeting information and access to the private facebook group, email transmanitoba@gmail.com
- The Gender Cafe Winnipeg: <https://www.facebook.com/gendercafewpg/>
- PRISM Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring program for 2SLGBTQIA+: <https://winnipeg.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/prism/>
- Queer People of Color Winnipeg: <https://www.facebook.com/qpocwinnipeg/>
- Pride Winnipeg: <https://pridewinnipeg.com/>
- Out There Winnipeg - inclusive sports and recreation: <https://www.outtherewinnipeg.ca/>
- Rainbow Harmony Project - Winnipeg choir for LGBTQ2* and allies: <https://www.rainbowharmonyproject.ca/>
- More resources collected through the Trans Health Clinic: <https://klinik.mb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Trans-Community-Resource-List-updated-Nov-2019.pdf>

Other Resources

- **Rainbow Resource Center**
 - Phone: (204) 474 0212
 - Website: <https://rainbowresourcecentre.org/>
 - “The Rainbow Resource Centre is a not-for-profit community organization that provides support and resources to the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and two-spirit communities of Manitoba and northwestern Ontario.”
 - Also offers free counseling (ext 201, call on a Monday morning at 10:00am); guardian consent to therapy needed if <14 years old.
- **Safe supplies, condoms, and STI testing by location**
http://streetconnections.ca/service_map.php
- **Manitoba Suicide Prevention & Support Line (24/7)**
Toll free: 1-877-435-7170
www.reasonstolive.ca
- **Klinik Crisis Line (24/7)**
Phone: (204) 786-8686
Toll free: 1-888-322-3019
- **Sexual Assault Crisis Line (24/7)**
Phone: (204) 786-8631
Toll free: 1-888-292-7565