



ALBERTA
HEALTH

*Office of the Minister
MLA, Edmonton-Rutherford*

NOV 21 2012

AR 102059

Ms. Catherine Brady
Trans Equality Society of Alberta
3, 223 – 12 Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta
T2R 0G9

Dear Ms. Brady:

Thank you for your e-mail of September 14, 2012, regarding reinstatement of the Gender Reassignment Surgery Program and access to health care by trans-identified Albertans. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

Our government's vision for the future of Alberta's publicly funded health care system includes ensuring that every Albertan has access to primary health care, when they need it, where they need it and from the most appropriate providers. The Government of Alberta wants to ensure that all Albertans have a home in the health care system where people know them and their health needs, and can help them get specialized care if needed.

As you may be aware, to increase access to quality primary health care, the Premier has committed to developing Family Care Clinics (FCCs) across our province over the next four years. FCCs focus on Albertans' health and social needs and will improve access in two key ways: they will allow individuals to book directly with the most appropriate health care provider, and they will offer extended hours to allow more individuals to receive care.

In regard to your comments about the lack of gender specialists in Alberta, our government has a variety of initiatives in place to support the attraction and retention of physicians in Alberta, including competitive compensation rates and financial support to offset physician office costs. The decision to set up practice in Alberta, however, is up to the physicians as they are generally private business people who make their own decisions regarding the location of their practice. When making such a decision, physicians consider factors, such as the availability of sufficient clientele to sustain their practice and accessibility to support services. Gender reassignment specialists require access to a range of services that support the reassignment process, which at present are not available in Alberta.

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Ms. Catherine Brady

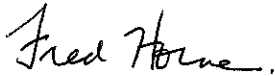
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In my May 2, 2012, response to you, I suggested that you contact the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) to discuss your specific concern with being declined certain health services. I am advised that you have been in contact with Dr. Janet Wright, Assistant Registrar at the CPSA. Dr. Wright has indicated to Ministry officials that she will be in touch with you to further discuss your concerns. You may also contact Dr. Wright at 780-969-4940.

While I appreciate your request to meet, unfortunately, my schedule does not permit me to meet with you at this time.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fred Horne".

Fred Horne
Minister of Health

cc: Honourable Alison M. Redford, QC
Premier