

Gender-Affirming Care

A ROAD MAP

A resource booklet for Kootenay Boundary transgender, Two-Spirit, non-binary, gender diverse people & allies to help in navigating health care, services & support

Created through the Kootenay Boundary Shared Care Gender-Affirming Care Project, a collaborative initiative that brings together local physicians, transgender advocates, allied organizations & practitioners to help strengthen gender-affirming care in our region.

Each Journey is Unique

Within your journey, you're the unique expert. Access to welcoming & affirming health care & services that support you, your goals & needs is your right – every step of the way.

We warmly invite you to use this booklet in whatever way is most helpful to you & your allied supporters in navigating health care, services & supports along the way.

Primary care providers (family physicians & nurse practitioners) are here to help you get the care & information you need to further align with your gender identity – whether it's access to social transition resources, discussions on hormone therapy &/or gender affirming surgeries – as close to home as possible. Your health care team may include a variety of professionals working together to best meet your goals.

Peer support or groups can be an amazing & helpful opportunity to ask questions in a safe, welcoming space & connect with others with shared lived experience.

We hope this booklet will help support your unique journey, in whatever form it may take.

Dr. Lauren Galbraith (she/her)
Kootenay Boundary Family Physician,
KB Gender-Affirming Care Project Lead

Nicola Hare (she/her)
Trans Connect Coordinator,
ANKORS



This Road Map is Available Online & Print

Check it out online for quick links to resources
– all in one place & at your fingertips!

visit: bit.ly/kb-gac-roadmap

Core Resources

Trans Connect | West & East Kootenays

ankors.bc.ca/trans

A health & community program supporting transgender, non-binary, Two-Spirit, intersex, & gender diverse people & their supporters in the Kootenays with one-on-one emotional & practical support, peer support, groups, community education, & more.

Trans Care BC

phsa.ca/transcarebc

A comprehensive resource for trans people & allies of all ages across BC. Trans Care BC supports the delivery of equitable & accessible care, surgical planning, peer & community support.

BC Children's Hospital Gender Clinic

bcchildrens.ca/health-info/coping-support/gender-resources

The team works in partnership with community health care professionals, Trans Care BC, & the BC Transgender Clinical Care Group. Their resource library offers resources & information for families & youth.

BC Provincial Government

gov.bc.ca/gov/content/gender-equity/resources

The Province of BC's Gender Equity & 2SLGBTQ+ Resources page offers a one-stop information hub on provincial government services & resources.

**Need Immediate
or Crisis Support?**
Reach out, you're not alone.

Emergency: Dial 9-1-1
Trans Lifeline: 1-877-330-6366
Kuu-Us Crisis Line: 1-800-588-8717
Interior Crisis Line : 1-888-353-2273
VictimLinkBC: 1-800-563-0808

Working With Your Primary Care Provider

It's important to know that gender-affirming care is a component of primary care. Family Physicians & Nurse Practitioners are here to provide:

- Listening, support, & sharing of resources
- Referrals to mental health & wellness services that match your goals such as social workers and allied health care professionals
- Consultation & referrals to qualified providers & specialists who can support with gender-affirming care such as starting hormones or surgical assessment
- Referrals for pediatric care & gender-affirming support for children & youth
- Ongoing support & primary care as part of your health care team

Trans Care BC | Self Advocacy in Health Care

This resource has been created as a helpful tool in preparing for conversations with health care providers: bit.ly/transcarebc-self-advocacy-in-healthcare

When You Don't Have a Primary Care Provider

Kootenay Boundary Health Connect Registry

This is the first stop for residents who don't have a local family doctor or nurse practitioner & would like one, learn more & register by calling 8-1-1 or online at kbhcr.ca

Trans Care BC Health Navigation Team

Connects people across BC to gender-affirming health care & supports as close to home as possible. Access the team by phone at 1-866-999-1514 or online at phsa.ca/transcarebc/care-support/access-care/navigate-care

Urgent Primary Care & Walk-in Options

For the most up-to-date local information visit: divisionsbc.ca/kootenay-boundary/for-patients/kb-clinics-hospitals

HealthLink BC 811 Service

Offers free-of-charge provincial health information & advice by phone. This can include health information, help to navigate health care, & find health services across the province. Call 8-1-1

Community Counselling & Supports

'KB Fetch', is a regional health & community services directory, & includes listings on free & low-cost community-based counselling & support services available throughout the region: kb.fetchbc.ca

Interior Health | Mental Health & Substance Use Services

To learn more about IH MHSU services & find a location near you, call 310-MHSU(6478) or visit: interiorhealth.ca/services/access-mental-health-and-substance-use-services/locations

Circle of Indigenous Nations (COINS) | Healing Our Spirits: Aboriginal Mental Health & Substance Use Program

COINS is an Aboriginal non-profit society that provides cultural support & counselling services to people in the West Kootenay & Boundary region: coinations.net

Foundry BC | Youth Mental Health

Free & confidential support for young people, ages 12-24, both online & in-person in communities across BC: foundrybc.ca

Exploring Private Counselling Options

For those interested in exploring private for-fee counselling, many counsellors will offer an initial phone call or consultation for free & some may offer sliding-scale fees too. Your local Trans Connect Coordinator can help with finding out which local counsellors offer affirming services: ankorstransconnect.com/contact-us & MindMapBC's counselling directory can also be a helpful resource: mindmapbc.ca.

Sexual & Reproductive Health

Options for Sexual Health Clinics

Clinics are inclusive & accessible for all people in BC to talk about sexuality & sexual health, & to access sexual & reproductive health care. Find a Kootenay Boundary clinic near you (including Nelson, Trail, Castlegar, Grand Forks, Midway, & Nakusp) using their clinic finder: optionsforsexualhealth.org/care/clinic-finder

Trans Care BC offers supportive information & resources on gender expression & coming out, bit.ly/phsa-comingout. Using non-medical options can help you selectively express your gender in settings that feel safe & comfortable for you. These might include: changing your name & pronouns or dressing in a way that is affirming to you. Binding, packing, tucking, & padding can be used to enhance or minimize certain body parts.

Social Transitioning | Trans Care BC Resources

Trans Care BC's social transitioning resource page offers name & gender marker change guides, 'Changing Keys' program voice training resources, & more: phsa.ca/transcarebc/care-support/transitioning

Social Transitioning Supplies & Support

There are many trans-friendly suppliers that may have what you need to express your gender in ways & settings that feel safe for you.

ONLINE SUPPLIES:

- **Gender Gear** gendergear.ca
- **The Breast Form Store** thebreastformstore.com
- **Spectrum Outfitters** spectrumoutfitters.co.uk
- **gc2b** gc2b.co
- **fystis** fytist.com

FREE, LOW COST, & COVERED SOURCES FOR GENDER-AFFIRMING GEAR:

- **Qmunity Bra, Binder, Breast Form Exchange Program** (for youth) qmunity.ca/get-support/youth/bbbexchange
- **Talk to a Trans Connect Coordinator** about accessing gender affirming gear ankorstransconnect.com/contact-us/
- **Provincial Health Coverage**
Check out these reference guides for more information,
 - » Medical Services Plan (MSP), Persons with Disabilities (PWD) benefits: bit.ly/health-coverage-reference-guide
 - » First Nations Health Authority benefits: bit.ly/fhna-reference-doc

Hormone therapy can gradually develop body characteristics that can help you in seeing yourself as the gender you identify with. As with many medical treatments, hormone therapy may have benefits and risks.

If you decide in collaboration with your health care team that hormone therapy is right for you, you'll work with a prescribing Physician, Nurse Practitioner, Endocrinologist, Paediatrician or other qualified provider to get started on hormones & adjust the dose to a steady level.

Hormone Therapy | Trans Care BC Resources

Trans Care BC provides comprehensive information about the use of hormones to alter secondary sex characteristics: phsa.ca/transcarebc/hormones

Gender-Affirming Surgery

Gender-affirming surgeries help match primary &/or secondary sexual characteristics with one's gender identity. Eligibility for surgery may depend on a number of factors including age or health status.

To make sure that the surgery you are considering matches your goals, that you are mentally & physically healthy, & that you will be able to recover from surgery safely, you'll work with one or two surgery readiness assessors to obtain a recommendation for surgery.

Gender-Affirming Surgery | Trans Care BC Resources

Trans Care BC Gender-Affirming Surgery Information: phsa.ca/transcarebc/surgery

After Care & Support | Although surgeons will refer patients to post-operative care in their home community, Kootenay Boundary's Home & Community Service Centres can be a helpful resource to note. Their wellness centres offer services including post-op wound care & can be accessed through self-referral: 1-800-707-8550.

Wherever you're at within your journey, accessing peer support or groups can be a valuable opportunity to ask questions in a safe, welcoming space & connect with others who are on a similar journey.

Groups, Peer Support & Online Spaces

KOOTENAYS:

- **Trans Connect | Gender Outlaws**
Online & in-person groups for trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming, Two-Spirit, intersex, & questioning people of all ages in the Kootenays:
ankorstransconnect.com/programs
- **Trans Connect | One-To-One Peer Support**
In-person & virtual peer support options:
ankorstransconnect.com/programs
- **Kootenay Trans Folk**
A Facebook group for trans people & allies in the Kootenays to connect, find local events, & ask for advice:
facebook.com/groups/kootenaytransfolk

BC-WIDE:

- **Foundry BC | Virtual Queer Cafe**
A virtual cafe for young people ages 14-20 who identify as LGBTQ2IA+ to meet online for in a supportive space:
foundrybc.ca/virtual/groups-workshops
- **Trans Care BC | Peer Support Groups Directory**
Other peer support groups are available provincially & accessible virtually: phsa.ca/transcarebc/care-support/peer-community-support/srvc-directory
- **Foundry BC | Virtual Peer Support**
For youth 12-24: foundrybc.ca/virtual/peer-support
- **Trans Lifeline**
Peer support by phone at 1-877-330-6366 & online at: translifeline.org

Trans Connect can provide information on spaces in the community that have been identified as safer. It's important to note that the existence or culture of businesses, organizations, & places to gather in your community can change over time. Experiences can also vary from one individual's perspective to another. Reach out to Trans Connect at ankorstransconnect.com/contact-us.

Resources for Your Supporters

Workshops, peer connection, guides & stories can help your loved ones & supporters to gain a better understanding of gender fluidity & allyship.

Trans Connect

Workshops for families in transition & one-to-one support for parents & family members in the Kootenays: ankorstransconnect.com/education

TransParent

Peer groups developed by & for parents & caregivers of transgender, gender diverse, & Two-Spirit people.

- TransParent Kootenays offers an online space for parents & caregivers to connect & share information: bit.ly/facebook-tpk
- TransParent Okanagan offers a virtual resource library available to parents in any location: transparentokanagan.ca/resources

Kootenay Families of Trans & Non Binary Humans

A Facebook group for families that offers opportunity for support, resources, education, & connection: bit.ly/facebook-kftnb

Trans Care BC

Trans Care BC offers lots of online resources for family & friends: phsa.ca/transcarebc/care-support/resources/caregvr-family & phsa.ca/transcarebc/gender-basics-education

BC Children's Hospital Family Resource Centre

An online collection of relevant websites, books & more: bit.ly/bcch-library

Legal & Human Rights

Trans Care BC

Advocacy & legal issues information & resources:
phsa.ca/transcarebc/care-support/resources/advocacy

Trans Rights BC

Aims to disseminate human rights information that is accurate, accessible, & relevant to the safety & well-being of trans & gender-diverse individuals & their supportive allies across BC:
transrightsbc.ca

Catherine White Holman Wellness Centre

Provides low-barrier wellness & legal services to Two-Spirit, transgender & gender non-conforming people in a way that is respectful & celebratory of clients' identity & self-expression:
cwhwc.com

Financial Support

While many gender-affirming options are funded by your BC Medical Services Plan (MSP), First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), Indigenous band &/or Non-Insured Health Benefits coverage, there are some out of pocket costs. Assistance can be available through:

Christopher Moore Fund

A community donation fund to support trans & gender diverse community members with transition-related expenses:
ankorstransconnect.com/programs

Angel Flight

Provides no-cost flights from Nelson, Creston, Cranbrook, & Sparwood Elk Valley to medical appointments in Kelowna:
angelflightek.ca

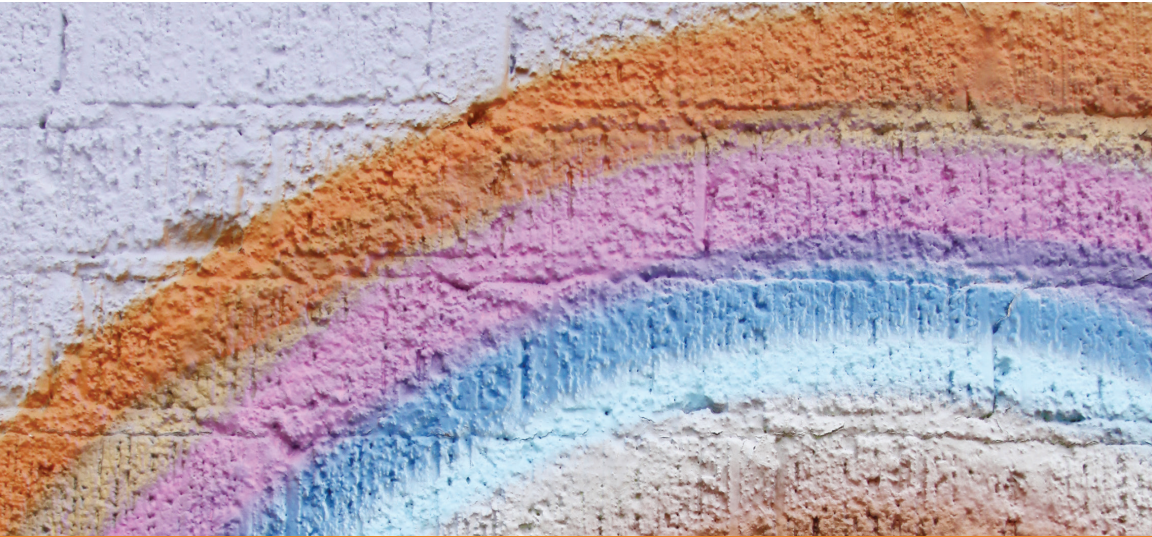
Hope Air Medical Travel Assistance Program

Hope Air can provide coverage of medically necessary commercial air travel & accommodations:
hopeair.ca

We hope this booklet will help support your unique journey, in whatever form it may take.

ACCESS THE ONLINE VERSION WITH QUICK LINKS TO ALL RESOURCES AT:
bit.ly/kb-gac-roadmap





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ACCESS THE ONLINE VERSION OF THIS ROAD MAP AT: bit.ly/kb-gac-roadmap

This resource has been created through the Kootenay Boundary Shared Care Gender-Affirming Care project with the funding & support the Shared Care Committee, a joint committee of Doctors of BC & the BC Ministry of Health.

With humility & in the spirit of active reconciliation, we acknowledge that our work in the Kootenay Boundary region takes place on the traditional, ancestral, & unceded territories of the Sinixt, Syilx, Ktunaxa, & Secwépemc First Nations, & is home to the Métis & many diverse Aboriginal communities.