

Dear xxx,

Thank you for reaching out regarding the recent changes to pediatric and adolescent gender affirming care at UW Health.

We know this is difficult news for our patients and their families. While federal actions necessitated a pause in prescribing hormone therapy and puberty blockers for patients under age 18, our clinical care teams are working directly with each impacted patient and family to help support their ongoing care needs.

Please know that we arrived at this decision based on several actions in December. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services published a proposed rule that would revise the hospital Conditions of Participation to prohibit hospitals from providing surgical or pharmaceutical interventions for gender affirming care to patients under the age of 18. Hospitals must meet the Conditions of Participation not only to participate in the Medicare and Medicaid programs but also, under Wisconsin law, to operate as a hospital.

HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy also issued a declaration that surgical and pharmaceutical interventions such as puberty blockers and hormone therapy for pediatric gender affirming care fail to meet professionally recognized standards of care. Hospitals and individuals who do not meet those recognized standards of care may be subject to exclusion from the Medicare and Medicaid programs. While this declaration is the subject of ongoing legal action, it has already been used to refer many hospitals for investigation.

UW Health is committed to providing high-quality and patient-centered care to our LGBTQ+ patients. We empathize with the uncertainty and anxiety faced by our impacted patients and their families and will continue to do all we can to support their health and well-being.

UW Health Administration