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**Depathologising birth for queer people through a gender-affirming model of care.**

Not all birthing people are women and not all women are birthing people. There is increasing global recognition that gender-diverse people are birthing and becoming parents, however their invisibility persists in healthcare attitudes, policies, and language.

General healthcare for queer people is routinely pathologised and characterised by dismissive attitudes and negligent misgendering of internal and parental identities. This policy seeks to elevate the perinatal experience for all birthing people by implementing a gender-affirming model of care into local maternity services built on the three interconnected pillars of: accessibility, rights-based, and person-centred care. Midwives are ideally positioned to adopt this policy as the tenets of gender-affirmation parallel those of the midwifery model of care in respect for human dignity and compassion.

Implementation will include upskilling clinical and non-clinical staff in inclusive care practices and strengths-based approaches, and by increasing visibility in diversity of birthing people and their families in perinatal spaces. Evaluation of this policy will measure the success of inclusivity education through qualitative assessment of gender-diverse peoples experiences of maternity care. Deidentified experiences and outcomes will be formally published as a contribution to building an evidence base for wider implementation and establishment of gender-affirming models of care.

As a public health strategy, this policy aims to reduce wider health inequities for gender-diverse people by empowering providers to deliver individualised and culturally competent perinatal care. This policy reinforces the empowerment of childbearing women alongside supportive care for queer birthing people.

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