



Ethical Dilemmas in Transgender Health Care

SPPAC 2017 Preconference Workshop (3 CEs)

Since the first pediatric gender clinic in the United States was established in 2007, heightened public awareness of gender diversity has resulted in increasing numbers of transgender/gender-nonconforming (TGNC) youth presenting for medical and mental health services. In response to these needs, there has been nationwide growth in specialized clinics serving TGNC youth and a growing need for pediatric psychologists to serve on interdisciplinary teams. While clinical practice guidelines have been published by the World Professional Association of Transgender Health and the Endocrine Society, there is limited empirical data informing treatment for TGNC youth. Thus, there remains a lack of consensus regarding approach to clinical care for TGNC youth and variable interpretation and implementation of existing clinical practice guidelines.

The purpose of this 3-hour workshop is to highlight common ethical dilemmas that emerge in the provision of care to TGNC youth across the developmental spectrum, from pre-pubertal youth with questions about social transitioning to late adolescents desiring irreversible hormonal and surgical interventions. We will provide a brief overview of common clinical presentations of TGNC youth, discuss general approaches to clinical care, and highlight common ethical considerations that arise including the following: social gender transitions in young children; developmental delay and assessment/assent; Autism Spectrum Disorder and assessment/assent; non-binary/gender-fluid presentations and intervention decision-making; parental disagreement on approach to treatment; appropriate ages for medical/surgical intervention; complex mental health presentations and decision-making (e.g., psychotic patients); the use of gender-norms for standardized assessment; concerns regarding gender stability; fertility implications, interdisciplinary team conflict and decision-making. Then, we will use an interactive case/vignette format, to present an ethical dilemma and guide participants through an ethical decision-making process. Following this example, case vignettes will be distributed to participants who will have the opportunity for small group discussion of an ethical decision-making process before a large-group discussion to identify key themes that emerge across ethical dilemmas. Content would be relevant to pediatric psychologists who may encounter TGNC youth in the course of their work, as well as medical sub-specialties represented on interdisciplinary gender teams such as pediatricians/adolescent medicine physicians, pediatric endocrinologists, and pediatric surgeons/plastic surgeons.

Based on the content of this talk, participants will be able to:

1. Describe diverse presentations of gender identity/gender expression in TGNC children and adolescents.
2. Summarize general approaches to clinical care for TGNC youth across the developmental spectrum and points of controversy.
3. Discuss key ethical dilemmas that emerge in medical and mental health care for TGNC youth.
4. Utilize an ethical decision-making process including clinical, ethical, legal, and risk management considerations to resolve ethical dilemmas related to clinical care for TGNC youth in their own clinical practice.

Target Learner Level: Intermediate

Registration cap: 45

Presenters: Diane Chen, PhD, Laura Edwards-Leeper, PhD, Terry Stancin, PhD, ABPP, & Amy Tishelman, PhD

Dr. Diane Chen is assistant professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences and pediatrics at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. She is a founding psychologist of Lurie Children's Gender & Sex Development Program and founding co-chair of the Division 53 Gender Variance SIG. *Dr. Laura Edwards-Leeper* is an associate professor of psychology at Pacific University and was the founding psychologist of the first pediatric

gender clinic in the US. She served on an APA Task Force developing practice guidelines for working with transgender individuals and regularly consults with hospitals developing multidisciplinary gender clinics. *Dr. Terry Stancin* is professor of pediatrics and psychiatry & psychological science at Case Western Reserve Medical School, Director of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry & Psychology, and Vice-Chair of Research in Psychiatry at MetroHealth Medical Center. In 2008, she was the founding psychologist of the interdisciplinary KIDz PRIDE clinic, which serves TGNC youth in an inner city medical center. *Dr. Amy Tishelman* is assistant professor of psychology at Harvard Medical School and Director of Clinical Research with the Gender Management Service at Boston Children's Hospital. Drs. Chen and Tishelman are funded by NIH to study psychosocial outcomes of medical treatment for transgender youth.

COI Statement: The speakers have no conflicts of interest to declare.

Session Date/Time: Thursday, March 30th, 2017; 8:30-11:30 am



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