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Subject: FW: Update on Gender Affirming Care in our School-based Health Centers  
Sent: Mon 1/30/2023 6:54:22 PM

Hi Folks,  
Just as an FYI, I wanted you to see the message sent last week by the NeighborCare team about their approach and process for an expanded service menu for gender affirming care. This message was shared with the SPS partnerships team along with building leaders for the schools they are currently serving. I know many of you are already providing different levels of care and support for your students around gender and I simply wanted to share this example of communication as Neighborcare beings some new work in this area.

This news may also elicit questions to your clinics as to your current practice. Please do let us know if you hear from media or there are any additional concerns from your teams.

Please reach out to [redacted] or [redacted] with any additional questions about Neighborcare's work.

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[redacted], MPH  
Public Health-Seattle & King County  
School Based Partnerships  
Child Care Health Program

From: [redacted] @neighborcare.org>  
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 12:25 PM  
ToCc: [redacted] @neighborcare.org>; [redacted] @neighborcare.org>; [redacted]  
[redacted] @neighborcare.org>; [redacted] @kingcounty.gov>  
Subject: Update on Gender Affirming Care in our School-based Health Centers

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The Neighborcare Health team wanted to share an exciting new update to our School-based Health Center services. Beginning February 6th, our program will begin offering comprehensive, evidence-based, gender-affirming care services to our students and families who need them. This expansion of gender-affirming care services aims to promote our goal of providing 100% access and zero health disparities for the students and families we serve. This step also represents our continued commitment to providing high quality, identity-affirming care to our LGBTQ+ students, which aligns with Seattle Public Schools' stated goals in supporting these students.

What new services will be available to families;

While our School-based Health Centers have long offered a continuum of gender-affirming care services including supportive student counseling, promotion of social identity, and health education, this step will allow us to begin offering families access to

important medical interventions including hormonal treatments. This level of care can only be consented for by a parent or legal guardian, and all gender-affirming care treatments will be an informed and private decision made between a parent, their child, and their healthcare provider.

Why is gender-affirming care access important for youth and families:

Transgender and non-binary youth experience higher rates of depression and suicidality than their peers. A survey of LGBTQ Youth Mental Health, conducted by the Trevor Project in 2020, showed that 60% of trans and nonbinary youth engaged in self harm in the last 12 months, and more than half of the transgender and nonbinary youth reported they had seriously considered ending their lives in the past 12 months. Access to gender-affirming care has been shown to decrease these rates dramatically. Another study published in 2020 showed over the course of 1 year that youth who received hormonal treatment experienced a 60% drop in depression risk and a 73% drop in suicidal thoughts. Gender-affirming care represents a life-saving treatment for many of the youth and families who choose it.

Access to gender-affirming care for youth has also been significantly limited in our community. Families wishing to access this care at Seattle Children's Adolescent Medicine, a leading youth provider of gender-affirming care, wait on average 6-12 months for their first appointment with a medical provider. Furthermore, there is general consensus among several leading healthcare and pediatric healthcare organizations that gender-affirming care is an essential part of medical and mental health care for transgender and nonbinary youth, and that this care can be safely performed and managed in a primary care setting. As such, we feel ideally positioned to offer this essential and high demand service for our students and families.

How will we provide these services:





The initial phase of these services will be a small pilot available to students and families within the existing schools we serve. Most families will be referred by Neighborcare and SPS staff and will be served by a small subset of our School-based Health provider team through a flexible mix of in-person and telehealth services at the start of care. After that the students will transition back to long-term health management with their own School-based Health Center provider. Depending on the demand and success of the program, we will evaluate further opportunities to expand access further in future school years.

While we are not promoting these services widely through our organizational channels, we know there is a possibility of media interest. We are prepared to speak directly about the value and need for these services and appreciate your making us aware if you get questions from media. Conversely, we will keep you posted if we are contacted as well. In addition to this communication, we are also reaching out to each of our school building leaders to inform them of this new service and offer support for any questions or needs they may have related to these services.

As always, we appreciate your partnership and shared commitment to supporting our students and families. If you have any questions or needs from us at this time, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thank you,

 Neighborcare Health Program Manager for School-based Health

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