

# 如何關顧跨性別人士

蔡定國醫生

# Gender Dysphoria

---

- Gender Dysphoria
  - refers to a marked incongruence between one's experienced/expressed gender and assigned gender at birth, resulting in significant distress and impairment of functioning.
- Confusion in terminology
  - Transsexualism, Gender Identity Disorder are used synonymously with Gender Dysphoria
  - Transgenderism refers to a state or condition in which a person's identity does not conform unambiguously to conventional ideas of male or female gender. They don't meet the diagnostic criteria of gender dysphoria for lacking the typical features and not having the degree of distress and impairment to be diagnosed as gender dysphoria.
- How common is Gender Dysphoria?
  - From studies abroad, about 1 in 100000 suffers from Gender Dysphoria. It is not clear how common it is in Hong Kong or in Chinese, as reliable data are not available.



# Diagnosis of Gender Dysphoria

**In children,** gender dysphoria diagnosis involves at least six of the following and an associated significant distress or impairment in function, lasting at least six months.

- A strong desire to be of the other gender or an insistence that one is the other gender
- A strong preference for wearing clothes typical of the opposite gender
- A strong preference for cross-gender roles in make-believe play or fantasy play
- A strong preference for the toys, games or activities stereotypically used or engaged in by the other gender
- A strong preference for playmates of the other gender
- A strong rejection of toys, games and activities typical of one's assigned gender
- A strong dislike of one's sexual anatomy
- A strong desire for the physical sex characteristics that match one's experienced gender



# Diagnosis of Gender Dysphoria

**In adolescents and adults**, gender dysphoria diagnosis involves a difference between one's experienced/expressed gender and assigned gender, and significant distress or problems functioning. It lasts at least six months and is shown by at least two of the following:

- A marked incongruence between one's experienced/expressed gender and primary and/or secondary sex characteristics
- A strong desire to be rid of one's primary and/or secondary sex characteristics
- A strong desire for the primary and/or secondary sex characteristics of the other gender
- A strong desire to be of the other gender
- A strong desire to be treated as the other gender
- A strong conviction that one has the typical feelings and reactions of the other gender



# Causes of Gender Dysphoria

- Exact causes of Gender Dysphoria are not known.
- It is generally believed that, like many other illnesses, the causes are bio-psycho-social.
- Biological factors
  - Sex chromosomes (XX or XY determines the biological sex)
  - Hormones: before birth, prenatal hormones shape the brains of boys to be different from those of girls.
- Psychosocial factors
  - Normal gender identity formation may be interfered with by unfavourable psychological and environmental influences.



# Helping people with Gender Dysphoria

- **Prevention**
  - assessment of gender identity development in young children; identifying cases at risk; training of parents in child-rearing in relation to helping the gender development of their children.
- **Early detection**
  - gender identity confusion in children and adolescent should be detected early and given appropriate psychological treatment; youngsters with gender identity problems should be encouraged to talk about their problems and to seek help.
- **Treatment**
  - **Psychotherapy:** people with gender dysphoria are generally in mental anguish. Successful therapy involves sharing their pain and accepting their anger.
  - **Hormonal therapy:** using hormones to make the body look congruent with the other gender may cause serious side effects and can be detrimental to health.
  - **Sex reassignment surgery (SRS):** recent research finding raises concern on the unfavourable outcome of people after SRS.