

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Quick-Reference Guide to Finding LGBTQ+ Affirming Health Care at Denver Health

PRIMARY CARE

LGBTQ+ Health Services (LHS) schedules only with our department-trained, affirming primary care providers. This ensures that members of the community can receive the care they deserve, in a safe space with a provider who understands their unique health needs. However, the primary care Patient Advocate is also limited to scheduling new and clinic transfer patients in specific appointment-type slots that have limited availability.

HOW DO I SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT FOR PRIMARY CARE?

- Complete the [New Patient Intake Form](#). Once your paperwork is submitted, the primary care Patient Advocate will begin the process of scheduling you.
- ***The same form is used for adult and pediatric (17 and younger) patients.***

HOW FAR OUT ARE NEW PATIENT APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED?

- 60 – 90+ days, but it can take up to one week to process your submission and 2 – 4+ weeks to schedule an appointment, dependent upon provider availability.
 - Note: Only this first appointment takes this long. Once you're established, you can schedule appointments much more readily.

HOW DO I SEE A PROVIDER SOONER?

- Getting an earlier appointment is not guaranteed and relies on other patients cancelling their appointments.
 - When added to the scheduling waitlist, the primary care Patient Advocate also adds patients to the cancellation waitlists for all providers who are relatively near their home address.
 - You can call the Denver Health Appointment Center (303-436-4949) yourself too, to ask if there have been cancellations.
- There aren't any tricks or secrets the Patient Advocate can use to schedule you faster; they will always do their best to schedule you ASAP. Please be mindful of this.

WHAT TYPE OF LGBTQ+ CARE TRAINING DO LHS PROVIDERS RECEIVE?

- The LHS Medical Director and LHS Health Education Trainer work together to provide comprehensive training around language, gender-affirming hormone therapy, PrEP services, health disparities, and risk factors for the LGBTQ+ community.
- Providers meet every three months.

HOW DO I TRANSFER MY MEDICAL RECORDS TO DENVER HEALTH?

- Complete a [Release of Information Form](#); email the form to DH_HIM@dhha.org or fax it to 303-602-8003.
- To learn more about transferring your medical records, please visit the Denver Health website [here](#).

GENDER AFFIRMING CARE

LGBTQ+ Health Services providers can prescribe and manage gender affirming care for community members of all ages. Denver Health offers several methods of HRT, including puberty blockers for young gender diverse folx and a multitude of other options for teenagers and adults.

HOW DO I GET STARTED ON GENDER AFFIRMING HORMONE THERAPY (HRT)?

- Establish with an affirming family or internal medicine provider in a regular clinic.
- Patients who are not currently, actively being seen by a Denver Health provider will need to fill-out the [New Patient Intake Form](#).
- Discuss history of gender dysphoria and transitioning goals with your PCP and go over informed consent.
- What is informed consent?
 - “The informed consent model for gender-affirming treatment seeks to acknowledge and better support the patient’s right to, and capability for, personal autonomy in choosing care options without the required involvement of a mental health professional.”
– American Medical Association
- Informed consent removes the requirement to see a mental health care provider before beginning gender-affirming medical care, including HRT.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO RECEIVE MY FIRST HRT PRESCRIPTION?

- Each provider approaches their process differently, but barring any medical issues, you should receive your first prescription within 1-3 appointments.
- All providers will require bloodwork to be done before writing a prescription.
 - You can complete labs on the same day as your first appointment.
 - The results will go directly to your provider.
- You will discuss the follow-up steps and timeline directly with your provider.
- If your provider prescribes injections, the clinic will schedule you for a follow-up visit with a Registered Nurse to learn how to administer your hormones safely.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

HOW DO I GET CONNECTED TO A MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER AT DENVER HEALTH?

- If you are established with a Denver Health primary care provider, they can put in a referral. You can contact your provider via MyChart (see below).
- If you are not a Denver Health patient, you can call [Denver Health’s Outpatient Behavioral Health Services](#) (303-602-4851) and leave a message. The scheduling center will call you back when they have availability to schedule you.
- Contact the LGBTQ+ Program Assistant (LGBTadmin@dhha.org or 303-602-3681) for a list of outside affirming resources.

SEXUAL HEALTH

STD/STI TESTING

- If you have known exposure to an STI or are experiencing active symptoms, you can call the [Denver Sexual Health Clinic](#) at 303-602-3540. Occasionally they have same-day appointments, but when they don't, their appointments are still reasonably timely.
- If you are looking for routine/regular testing before your primary care appointment, please call the outreach team for free testing throughout the city at 720-415-7075.

PEP (POST-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS)

- If you have a possible exposure to HIV, PEP can be started within 72 hours after the possible exposure to prevent acquiring HIV.
- Call the [Denver Sexual Health Clinic](#) at 303-602-3540 to request testing and PEP.
- The Denver Sexual Health Clinic is part of the Public Health Institute at Denver Health (which is itself part of Denver Health). LGBTQ+ Health Services works very closely with them, and they are all affirming providers.

PREP (PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS)

- If you want to start PrEP, you can schedule an appointment with the [Denver Sexual Health Clinic](#). Their appointment line is 303-602-3540. Occasionally they have same-day appointments, but when they don't, their appointments are still reasonably timely.
- If you are already on PrEP and need a refill, you can call the same line and ask about a 1-time refill to fill the gap while you wait for your primary care appointment.
- The Denver Sexual Health Clinic is part of the Public Health Institute at Denver Health (which is itself part of Denver Health). LGBTQ+ Health Services works very closely with them, and they are all affirming providers.

PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV (PLWHIV/PWH)

- For PWH newly diagnosed, out of care or medication, or with additional barriers, you can call the "Linkage to Care" team's confidential line at 303-602-3652. There is an LTC Case Coordinator on-call during business hours who will answer immediately or quickly reply to voicemails.
- If you are a PWH already on treatment, connected to support resources with the need for new appointments, or you have Denver Health insurance, you can directly call the Denver Health HIV clinics.

Center for Positive Health Infectious Disease Clinic at Denver Health

Outpatient Medical Center, 2nd Fl. Check-in (Desk #4)
660 N Bannock Street, Denver, CO 80203
Phone: 303-602-8710

EIS HIV Primary Care Clinic (Eastside Family Health Center and Webb Adult Primary Care Center)

Eastside: 501 28th Street Denver CO 80205; M, T, F
Webb Adult: 301 W 6th Ave Denver CO 80203; W, R (AM only)
Phone: 303-602-6443

GENDER AFFIRMING SURGERIES

WHAT GENDER AFFIRMING SURGERIES ARE OFFERED AT DENVER HEALTH?

- Denver Health currently offers:
 - chest reconstruction (transmasculine “top surgery”)
 - hysterectomy
 - orchiectomy
 - full-depth vaginoplasty (type of transfeminine “bottom surgery”)
 - minimal-depth vaginoplasty (type of transfeminine “bottom surgery”)
 - breast augmentation (transfeminine “top surgery”)

HOW MUCH DO SURGERIES COST?

- For surgery cost estimates, you will need to contact your insurance or the [Denver Health Billing & Finance Department](#) (303-602-2200).
- LGBTQ+ Health Services Patient Advocates can provide no information on this subject.

HOW DO I SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT FOR GENDER AFFIRMING SURGERIES?

- Complete the [Surgical Interest Form](#).
- Once your paperwork is submitted, the relevant surgery Patient Advocate will contact you with information on the next steps.

HOW FAR OUT ARE SURGERIES SCHEDULED?

- The wait times for surgeries vary on multiple factors.
- Please contact a surgery LGBTQ+ Patient Advocate (303-502-5664) to learn more about a specific surgery’s wait-time.

WHERE DO I SEND MY LETTERS OF SUPPORT?

- Letters of support are required for gender affirming surgeries.
 - There is a specific time window to submit letters of support to insurance companies.
 - **It is important that you complete the [Surgical Interest Form](#) and wait for the relevant surgery Patient Advocate to contact you before you start the letter gathering process.**
- If you receive letters of support from providers outside of the Denver Health system, you can email the letters to the LGBTQ+ Patient Advocate with whom you’ve been working.
 - You can also fax the letter(s) to 303-602-3676.
- If you or your provider have questions about letters of support, please contact the LGBTQ+ Patient Advocate with whom you’ve been working.

MEDICATION REFILLS

HOW CAN I GET A REFILL BEFORE MY APPOINTMENT?

Running low on medications and need a refill before your appointment? There are a few things you can try. Take the previous prescription bottle(s) with you for verification.

- Sign up for [Denver Health MyChart](#) and use the virtual urgent care.
 - Note: The provider might not be trained or experienced in LGBTQ+ affirming care, such as gender-affirming hormone therapy.
- Physically visit an Urgent Care Center.
 - Denver Health has three [urgent care locations](#) for adults, or you can search online for another one that might be more convenient for you.
 - Check with your insurance for any costs or copays for urgent care visits.
- Call the [Denver Health Appointment Center](#) (303-436-4949) and ask for the soonest available appointment with any provider.
 - Note: The provider might not be trained or experienced in LGBTQ+ affirming care, such as gender-affirming hormone therapy.
- Try an outside pharmacy refill source such as [GoodRx Care](#).
 - Note: They will not refill controlled substances, and we cannot speak to their experience with hormone therapy/affirming care.
- For HRT: Visit [Planned Parenthood](#) or [STRIDE Community Health Center](#).

MYCHART

WHAT IS MYCHART?

- Denver Health uses an integrated system that allows you and your Denver Health providers to view/manage your medical record.
- You access this system through MyChart, a free online patient portal available to all patients treated at a Denver Health location and family or guardians who patients grant access. You can view letters, talk to your providers, view your previous and upcoming appointments, etc.
- Learn more about MyChart at its [FAQ](#).

HOW DO I ACCESS MYCHART?

- Go to the [Denver Health MyChart login](#) and sign up as a New User.
- If you are having trouble getting access or logging in to MyChart, contact MyChart Support (303-602-4380 or MyChart@dhha.org).

INSURANCE

For commercial insurance, Denver Health hospital may be in-network, but specific providers may be out-of-network or vice versa. While LGBTQ+ Health Services Patient Advocates can often verify if the *hospital* is in-network, they are incapable of verifying if providers are covered. ***Patients must verify this themselves.*** This does not apply to Medicaid, Medicare A and B, or TRICARE.

HOW CAN I VERIFY IF DENVER HEALTH ACCEPTS MY INSURANCE?

- Call your insurance and ask them to verify if Denver Health and providers with whom you're scheduled are in-network.
 - If they are not in-network, you can ask if:
 1. you have out-of-network benefits, and
 2. those benefits cover both Denver Health and your new PCP.
 - Your insurance might ask for Denver Health's Tax ID. It is 841343242
- You can also check the Denver Health website [here](#) to see if your insurance is listed.
 - *It is still recommended that you follow-up with your insurance to verify coverage!*

WILL MY INSURANCE COVER GENDER AFFIRMING HORMONES AND OTHER RELATED SERVICES?

- Call your insurance and ask about your specific plan's coverages and exclusions.
- Your insurance may ask for the specific Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) Codes of the services you're seeking, to confirm whether they cover it.
 - The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services maintains a [List of Current Procedural Terminology \(CPT\) Codes](#).
 - If you are having trouble finding the CPT Code you need, you can contact the LGBTQ+ Program Assistant (LGBTAdmin@dhha.org or 303-602-3681).

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE INSURANCE?

- [Denver Health Enrollment Services](#) (303-602-2300; Monday – Friday, 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM) can help uninsured or underinsured patients apply for medical assistance programs.
 - You can physically visit Enrollment Services at:
655 Bannock St, Pavilion I, Denver, CO 80204
Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
 - Programs include the Colorado Indigent Care Program (CICP) discount program, Denver Financial Assistance Program (DFAP) discount program, Health First Colorado (Medicaid), and the Connect for Health Colorado (marketplace insurance plans).
- [STRIDE Community Health Center](#) (303-778-7433), offers LGBTQ+ affirming healthcare that is much less expensive out-of-pocket.

WHERE CAN I FIND RESOURCES TO HELP ME UNDERSTAND INSURANCE BETTER?

- The Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund has an excellent [insurance resource](#).
- To view insurance info for a specific procedure, go [here](#). *Follow-up with your insurance to verify coverage!*