



Participant Lay Summary of Results

Research Project title: The Perioperative Experience of Patients Undergoing Gender Affirming Surgery in Saskatchewan

Introduction

This study explored the surgical experiences of transgender and gender-diverse patients who underwent gender affirming surgery in Saskatchewan.

Methods

We interviewed and surveyed participants who had gender affirming surgery in Saskatchewan between 2014-2024.

Results

Fifteen patients participated in the study. Five major themes (i.e., the main ideas or patterns in participants' experiences) were identified in the data:

- 1) preoperative access to care,
- 2) preoperative supports,
- 3) preoperative feelings,
- 4) identity affirmation and respectful perioperative care, and
- 5) postoperative challenges and supports.

Participants suggested five healthcare system-level solutions to improve patient-centred care:

- 1) recruitment, retention and training of gender-affirming care providers;
- 2) expanded financial supports for non-insured surgical procedures and recovery;
- 3) streamlined referral and scheduling processes;
- 4) mandatory training in trans-competent care; and
- 5) community-based recovery programs and follow-up care.

Conclusions

Participants' surgical experiences were shaped by interpersonal supports (e.g., family, friends, community) and healthcare system-level practices. Future directions and opportunities to improve perioperative care include adding chosen names and pronouns to medical documents, increasing the amount of funding available to support patients, and supporting healthcare provider education to improve patient-centered gender affirming care in anesthesia settings.

We extend our deepest gratitude to all participants who generously shared their experiences with us.

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