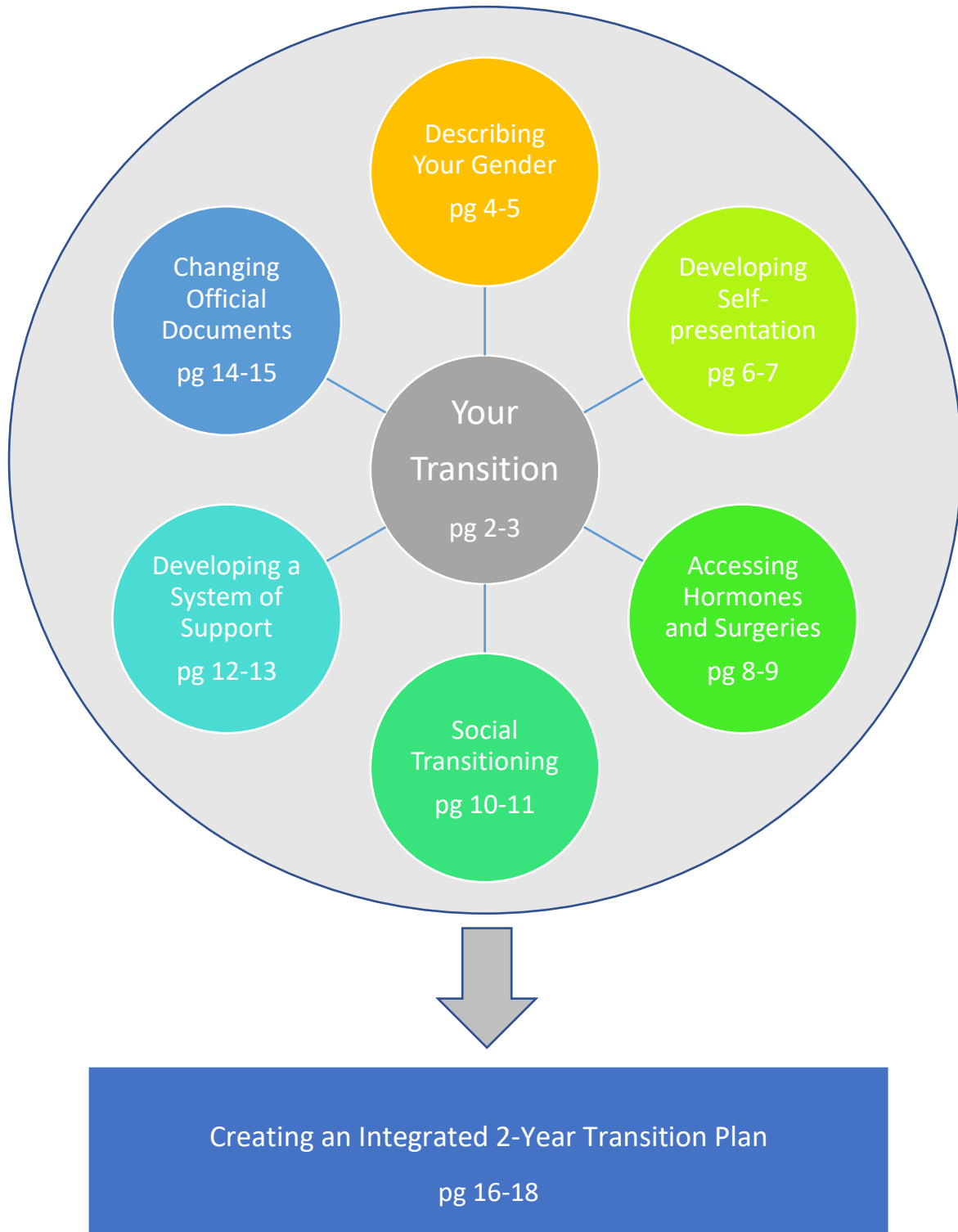


Transition Planning Tool

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Your Transition

Welcome to this transition planning tool. The idea of it is to help give you a structured way to think through the different aspects that might form part of your gender transition; taking stock of where you are now, where you'd like to get to, and the steps that you will need to take to get there. For the purposes of this tool, the word 'transition' can be understood as managing any kind of change around how you understand, present or embody your gender. It definitely isn't limited to moving from one binary gender to another through hormones and surgeries – though of course, many transitions will go down this route. Gender transitions are highly individual, and this tool is intended to help you think through what you might want yours to look like, rather than feeling you need to follow any kind of gender change 'conveyor belt'.

The planning tool is broken down into six sections:

1. Describing your gender
2. Developing your self-presentation
3. Accessing hormones and surgeries
4. Social transition
5. Developing a support system
6. Changing official documents

Just as no two transitions are the same, neither do they happen in a set sequence. The ordering of the sections of this tool aren't intended to suggest that your transition should follow this order – and in fact it's likely that steps from each section will overlap with each other as your transition progresses. For example, even though 'developing a support system' is one of the last sections to fill in, some of the steps you decide to take in this area might happen before you do anything else. Once you've worked through all six sections and considered what steps you want to take in each, you will then create a two year plan where you can put in time order all the steps you want to take from each area. Whilst transitions obviously take place over much shorter or longer periods than two years, hopefully this provides a manageable timeframe to make a good start.

The plan you make will end up forming a rough guide rather than an exact timetable – all transitions are influenced by the practicalities of life. You might not feel ready to take steps when you thought you would, you might spend much longer on waiting lists than you would have liked, and you might change your mind about going ahead with some things at all. You can keep revising your plan – and you will always remain in charge of the direction you are going in.

You can complete the document on your own, or with a friend, partner, counsellor or someone else you trust. It's not a good idea to do this with anyone you don't feel entirely safe with - but if there is someone you can share it with it can be useful to have a sounding board and someone to generate ideas with over the steps you could take to get you where you want to go.

How to Complete this Transition Tool

Step 1:

It's helpful to read through the whole document to get a feel for the task before starting to complete each section.

Step 2:

When you have a feel for the task in hand, decide whether you want to complete the document on your own, or with a trusted friend, partner, counsellor or someone else.

Step 3:

Begin to work through each section. It's helpful to be as specific as you can in imagining where you want to get to in each area and break the steps you need to take into as smaller components as feels manageable. It's fine to skip any sections you feel aren't relevant to you.

Step 4:

When you are happy with each section fill out the integrated 2-year plan section to form an ideal transition timeline.

Step 5:

Even if you have already involved someone else in this process, consider whether there's anyone else who is close in your life that you want to share some of these plans with. Just the act of sharing your intentions can make them feel more real. But of course - keep yourself safe and do things at the pace that is right for you. After all, this plan describes one of the most important periods of change that you are likely to experience in your life.

Step 6:

Once you are finished creating your plan, it might just be time to start taking some action.

Describing your Gender

Finding the words to comfortably describe your gender can be an important (and often evolving) part of gender transition. Whilst labels can sometimes feel limiting and awkward, they can also give us a more confident sense of ourselves and can help us communicate to others how we would like to be seen. There are lots of factors that influence what words feel comfortable when we describe ourselves - and there are no rights and wrongs about it. The important thing is that you find a way of describing yourself that feels right to you. And it's ok if what feels comfortable for you is avoiding gendered words altogether.

Where do you feel you are now in relation to finding the words to describe your gender identity? What words feel right - or definitely wrong? And where would you like to get to?

Some examples include:

- *I think I might be a trans man, but at this stage I am still unsure if I might be more non-binary. I'd like to get a clearer idea of this over the next year and think I might need some counselling to help work it out.*
- *I have a very strong sense that I identify as a woman, and I don't like to use the term trans. I want to gain confidence in using this description of myself socially.*
- *I don't like using any gendered words, but if I had to, I might describe myself as agender, because I don't really feel like any gender fits me.*
- *I feel like the best description for me is gender fluid, as how I feel about my gender often changes from day to day. I want to start using they/them pronouns.*

[Please use this box to put things in your own words]

Steps Towards Describing your Gender

What (if any) steps do you need to take to get to where you want to be in terms of describing your gender identity? What timeframe would you like to take these steps by? What help or resources might you need – for example in the form of money, emotional support or practical information?

Steps to be taken	Timeframe	Any help, resources or information needed

Developing your Self-presentation

Developing how we present ourselves is often a key part of becoming more comfortable within our gender identities. We might have spent years holding back on wearing the kinds of clothes we'd really like to. Or we might have been putting up with a body shape that feels uncomfortable. Even without medical interventions, there are many ways that we can develop our self-presentation to feel more comfortable about how we look, sound or come across. We might change the kinds of clothes we wear, use prosthetics or binders to recontour the shape of our bodies, practice vocal techniques, wear make-up (or stop wearing make-up), change our hair-style, undergo hair removal and much else besides. A big part of changing our self-presentation can rely on us gaining the confidence we need to publicly show ourselves in these ways. And unfortunately resourcing these changes can also be expensive and thinking through finance can also be important part of self-presentation planning.

Where do you feel you are now in relation to your self-presentation? Where would you like to get to? (Save any thoughts you might have about hormones and surgeries for the next section).

Some examples include:

- *I wear a chest binder and generally feel ok about my presentation but want to think of other things I can do to look more masculine as I'm still getting misgendered*
- *I am still presenting as male, but I want to look and sound more androgynous – I want to explore different hair styles, clothes and make up.*
- *In the next six months I'd like to be presenting as female full time – I want to have grown my hair into a longer style, get some laser hair removal, buy a selection of femme outfits and be comfortable wearing breast forms. I may also want some help with my voice.*
- *I don't feel I need to change my presentation, I'd just like for other people to adjust the way they see me.*

[Please use this box to put things in your own words]

Steps Towards Developing your Self-presentation

What (if any) steps do you need to take to get to where you want to be in terms of your self-presentation? What timeframe would you like to take these steps by? What help or resources might you need – for example in the form of money, emotional support or practical information?

Steps to be taken	Timeframe	Any help, resources or information needed

Thinking about and accessing Hormones and Surgeries

For many people, developing a way of thinking about themselves, describing themselves and presenting themselves is enough to feel more comfortable about their gender. But for others, it can feel important to make changes to their bodies through hormones and/or surgeries.

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Accessing hormones and surgeries in the UK usually means engaging with medical services which are either provided by the NHS or experienced private gender specialists. Both routes have pros and cons, and for most people it is a matter of balancing the impact of waiting times (which can be longer in the NHS) against costs (which are much higher if you go privately). If you are going to pursue taking hormones you should also consider gamete storage (freezing your eggs or sperm) if you think you might later want to have children biologically.

Where do you feel you are now in relation to hormones and surgeries? Where would you like to get to?

Some examples include:

- *I am still unsure about whether hormones and surgeries are right for me. I might need some counselling to help work it out – or go to a trans group to speak to others who have experienced it. I'll freeze my eggs if I do take T to leave my options open for having kids.*
- *I know that I want hormones and possibly blockers. I don't think I will know about surgery until later down the line. I am on the NHS waiting list. I know I don't need gamete storage.*
- *I know I don't want hormones, but I would like chest surgery. I have decided to go privately and have made a first appointment.*
- *I don't want any medical interventions.*

[Please use this box to put things in your own words]

Steps Towards Deciding About and Accessing Hormones and Surgeries

What (if any) steps do you need to take to get to where you want to be in terms of hormones and surgeries? What timeframe would you like to take these steps by? What help or resources might you need – for example in the form of money, emotional support or practical information?

Steps to be taken	Timeframe	Any help, resources or information needed

Social Transition - Coming out to friends, family, work, college etc.

Telling others that we are planning to transition – or that we would like them to see us differently with regards to our gender – is often a very challenging part of transition. Sometimes we feel we risk losing relationships, or not being taken seriously. Social transition can be done slowly in stages or as a rapid process, and there is no template that works for everyone. It can help to map out your relationships and work out who is likely to be most supportive to get some people behind you as you go through the process. If you are looking to start hormones or access surgeries, social transition is often an important step first; for example, accessing surgeries require that you have lived in role (i.e. undertaken social transition) for at least a year. Ask your gender specialist for a list of the criteria they use for assessments if you want to be sure about this and they should be happy to provide some guidance.

Where do you feel you are now in relation to social transition? Where would you like to get to?

Some examples include:

- *I have told my partner and my best friend but still need to tell everyone else. I have two different friendship groups and one is likely to be easier than the other. I do not think my parents will be understanding and have no idea how to tell them.*
- *I have already told everyone in my social life and have everyone's support. I still need to come out at work. I am planning to ask the HR manager for a meeting to plan my work transition.*
- *I told a few friends how I feel but I don't intend to tell anyone else. For me the changes I want are all about how I relate to myself.*

[Please use this box to put things in your own words]

Steps Towards Social Transition

What (if any) steps do you need to take to get to where you want to be in terms of social transition? What timeframe would you like to take these steps by? What help or resources might you need – for example in the form of money, emotional support or practical information?

Steps to be taken	Timeframe	Any help, resources or information needed

Developing a System of Support

You might already feel you have a good support system in place, with your existing friends and family. But if you don't already know others who have similar gender experiences to you, it can be a good idea to think about whether this might be helpful for you. Meeting other trans people can also be a good way of expanding your circle of friends who are 'trans allies'; people who aren't necessarily trans or non-binary but feel a sense of understanding and support for trans issues. Meeting trans people and allies through meet-up groups or organisations can be helpful in providing a support network. Counselling can also be a way of getting support if you need a more dedicated space to explore your feelings or experiences.

Where do you feel you are now in relation to developing systems of support? Where would you like to get to?

Some examples include:

- *I have met a few trans people online, but I would like to meet people face to face. I'm not great in groups so want to think of other ways of doing this.*
- *I attend a monthly trans group and this already feels like enough.*
- *I don't really feel the need to meet other trans people or allies now as I have good friends who understand me, but this might change in the future.*
- *I see a counsellor and that feels helpful – but maybe beyond this I might need to find some trans friends.*

[Please use this box to put things in your own words]

Steps Towards Developing a System of Support

What (if any) steps do you need to take to get to where you want to be in terms of a system of support? What timeframe would you like to take these steps by? What help or resources might you need – for example in the form of money, emotional support or practical information?

Steps to be taken	Timeframe	Any help, resources or information needed

Changing Official Documents

For many people, changing their name can feel like a way of stepping into their new gender identity. Some people also adopt a new title (for example Mr, Ms or Mx) and change their gender marker on official documents, where this is possible. Unfortunately it is still not possible to have a non-binary gender recorded on British passports – although many large institutions like banks will make these changes to your records, and if this is relevant to you, it's worth writing to the organisations you engage with to find out their policy.

In most instances changing your name can be done by deed poll (see <https://www.gov.uk/change-name-deed-poll>). To change your gender marker on your passport (from M to F or vice versa) you will need a letter from a doctor – usually a gender specialist you see through the NHS or privately. You do not need to apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate to change your gender on your passport, but you do need it if you wish to change your birth certificate – this can be important if you want to get married or have a civil partnership in your correct gender role.

Where do you feel you are now in relation to changing official identity documents? Where would you like to get to?

Some examples include:

- *I am still unsure if I want to change my name, but I would like to change my gender marker to X/non-binary with any organisations that will recognise this*
- *I have already changed my name by deed poll, but still need to get a letter to change my gender on my passport. I haven't informed any official organisations yet. I would like to have all this finished in the next two months*
- *I use a nickname with my friends and family that I'm comfortable with – I don't want to change my name or official gender on anything.*
- *I am struggling with deciding on a new name and want ideas how to go about it. I also can't change my gender marker on my passport and other things until I am surer about my gender identity.*

[Please use this box to put things in your own words]

Steps Towards Changing Official Documents

What (if any) steps do you need to take to get to where you want to be in terms of changing official documents? What timeframe would you like to take these steps by? What help or resources might you need – for example in the form of money, emotional support or practical information?

Steps to be taken	Timeframe	Any help, resources or information needed

Steps to be taken in three to six months

Action to be taken	Ideal timescale

Steps to be taken in six months to a year

Action to be taken	Ideal timescale

Steps to be taken in year two

Action to be taken	Ideal timescale

Anything I might like to happen in my transition after the next two years