

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Notice of Petition for Rulemaking and Request ) Federal Register Notice  
for Comments: Exclusion of Gender Alterations ) Filed July 9, 2018  
From the Medical Benefits Package )

COMMENTS OF WHITMAN-WALKER HEALTH

Whitman-Walker Health (WWH or Whitman-Walker) submits these comments in response to the Department's July 9, 2018 Notice and Request for Comments, 83 Fed. Reg. 31711. We urge the Department to grant the petition for ratemaking and modify its rules to provide coverage in its medical benefits package for all medically supported procedures that are indicated and needed to confirm a transgender veteran's gender identity. Exclusion of medically supported gender-affirming surgery – or exclusion or restriction of any other gender-affirming procedure – is contrary to the scientific and medical consensus and unjust and discriminatory.

Interest and Expertise of Whitman-Walker Health

Whitman-Walker is a Federally Qualified Health Center serving greater Washington, DC's diverse urban community, including individuals who face barriers to accessing care, and with a special expertise in HIV care and serving lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning/queer (LGBTQ) populations. We empower all persons to live healthy, love openly, and achieve equality and inclusion. Our health center provides high quality, affirming health care to more than 20,000 individuals annually and is the medical home to more than 10,000 patients. The center has five sites and a team of more than 280 highly educated and practically experienced staff.

WWH services include primary medical care, HIV and LGBTQ specialty care, oral health, mental health care, addictions treatment services, psychosocial support, medical nutrition therapy, early intervention services, public benefits and insurance navigation, nurse-

focused case management, HIV and STI screening, legal services, youth programs, and an onsite pharmacy. The health center has achieved Level 3 Patient Centered Medical Home accreditation with the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

Whitman-Walker has a robust portfolio of high-quality, holistic services to the transgender and gender-nonbinary community. Although most of our patients reside in the greater Washington, DC metropolitan area, we also provide services to transgender and gender-nonbinary individuals living throughout Maryland and Virginia, and in Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Delaware. In calendar year 2017 we provided health care to more than 1,500 separate transgender and gender-nonbinary persons, and our Legal Services Department provided advice and representation to approximately 1,000 such individuals. Currently, our transgender and gender-nonbinary patients and clients number more than 2,000. Whitman-Walker also has a large and growing Research Department, which is participating in several studies that include or focus on transgender individuals.

Whitman-Walker health care providers are very experienced with assisting patients suffering from gender dysphoria to understand and evaluate their treatment options, and with evaluating patients for gender-affirming surgical procedures and providing recommendations for those for whom surgery is indicated. They also continue to work with numerous patients who have had surgeries. As documented in the attached Statement of Thomas Coughlin, WWH's Director of Gender Affirming Services, and Stacey Karpen, Senior Manager of Behavioral Health, the experience of our providers overwhelmingly supports the importance of access to the full range of gender-affirming care, including surgery, for individuals suffering from gender dysphoria.

## Response to Questions Posed by the Department

The Department's Notice and Request for Comments posed three specific questions; Before addressing those questions, we note that the Department appears to rely on a February 2018 Department of Defense report, recommending against military service by transgender individuals, to cast doubt on the efficacy and cost of gender-transition-related surgery. That report has been thoroughly discredited by the American Medical Association and many other professional associations. There is no justification for the Defense Department's discrimination against the many transgender persons who honorably serve in our armed forces, and the many more fully qualified individuals who wish to serve. In addition, the report provides no basis whatever to continue to exclude coverage of medically justified transition-related surgery desired by *veterans* – individuals who have previously served – and their families.

Whitman-Walker's responses to the Department's specific questions are set out below.

*Question in the Notice:* What evidence is available about the safety and effectiveness of gender alterations for the treatment of gender dysphoria and how reliable is that evidence?

*Whitman-Walker's response:* As explained in the attached Statement of our Director of Gender-Affirming Services and our Senior Manager of Behavioral Health, the overwhelming experience of our providers and other staff who work closely with transgender patients and clients is that gender-transition-related care, including surgery, hormone therapy and mental health counseling, administered in accord with well-established guidelines of the World Professional Association of Transgender Health (WPATH) and the University of California San Francisco's Center of Excellence in Transgender Health – is safe and effective in treating the gender dysphoria experienced by many individuals.

*Question in the Notice:* Given the challenge of the high rates of Veteran suicide, what does the evidence, including peer-reviewed evidence, suggest about the impact of gender alterations on the rates of suicide and suicide ideation among those suffering from gender dysphoria?

*Whitman-Walker's response:* As Mr. Coughlin and Dr. Karpen explain in their attached Statement, gender dysphoria frequently manifests as severe depression and suicidal ideation and even suicide attempts. Gender-affirming treatment, including surgeries for a significant number of patients, dramatically improve mental health and lower suicide risk.

*Question in the Notice:* Given that any addition to the medical benefits package will have an associated cost and burden on existing specialists, especially urological and vascular surgeons and other highly trained specialists who are already in short supply nationwide, what is the potential impact of adding “gender alterations” on Veterans’ access to care, particularly for Veterans facing lifethreatening [sic] medical conditions waiting to see surgical specialists?

*Whitman-Walker's response:* Respectfully, this question appears to be a red herring. Whitman-Walker cares for many individuals and families – including more than 10,000 patients who consider us their medical home. Our providers refer patients for many outside services, including surgeries, that are unrelated to gender transition or gender affirmation. There is no basis in our experience for any concern that increased access to gender-affirming surgery, for those who desire such treatment and for whom it is medically indicated, would have any meaningful impact on the availability of other needed care.

## Conclusion

Whitman-Walker Health urges the Department to grant the petition for ratemaking and modify its rules to provide coverage in its medical benefits package for all medically supported procedures that are indicated and needed to confirm a transgender veteran's gender identity.

If we can provide additional information or be of assistance in any other way, please contact me at [dbruner@whitman-walker.org](mailto:dbruner@whitman-walker.org) or (202) 939-7628.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel Bruner".

Daniel Bruner, JD, MPP, Senior Director of Policy  
WHITMAN-WALKER HEALTH  
1342 Florida Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20009  
(202) 939-7628  
[dbruner@whitman-walker.org](mailto:dbruner@whitman-walker.org)

September 5, 2018

**BEFORE THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Notice of Petition for Rulemaking and ) Federal Register Notice Published  
Request for Comments: Exclusion of Gender ) July 9, 2018  
Alterations from the Medical Benefits Package )

**Statement of Thomas Coughlin, LPC, NCC, and Stacey Karpen, PhD, LPC, NCC**

Thomas Coughlin is Director of Gender-Affirming Services and a Psychotherapist, and Stacey Karpen is Senior Manager of Behavioral Health, at Whitman-Walker Health. Mr. Coughlin oversees Whitman-Walker's internal and external programming related to services for the transgender and gender non-binary communities. Dr. Karpen manages the operations of Whitman-Walker's Behavioral Health Department, and conducts psychological assessments of patients for gender-affirming surgeries. Both of us work directly as psychotherapists with Whitman-Walker patients, including individuals exploring their gender identity or seeking assistance to transition to their true gender identity. Our CVs are attached to this Statement.

As providers of gender-affirming services in Washington, DC, we have seen our transgender patient population grow from 200 patients to over 2,000. The increased visibility of the transgender population, their health needs and the very significant health disparities they suffer – exacerbated by widespread discrimination and stigma – have made gender-affirming care at Whitman-Walker Health a priority. Our Gender-Affirming Services Program meets the needs of the community in a safe and effective way for adults and youth, ages 13 and older.

Gender-affirming care at Whitman-Walker relies on protocols from the World Professional Association of Transgender Health (WPATH) and University of California, San Francisco – a national and international leader in gender-related health care – updated and streamlined to ensure equity in access and sensitivity in delivery. Since our patients are the experts of their own lived experiences, we look to them to get a better understanding of how to promote healthcare engagement and meet their needs. We continually collaborate and consult with members of the communities we serve to make sure we are meeting their diverse needs in a culturally appropriate way.

Access to gender-affirming surgeries is critical for many individuals suffering from gender dysphoria, and has enormous benefits for their mental and physical health. Coverage of such surgeries by insurance plans – including health plans available for veterans – is critical to access for many individuals for whom such procedures would otherwise be unaffordable. In 2014, the District of Columbia issued a regulation that all DC Medicaid plans, and private health plans subject to DC regulation, must be inclusive of gender affirming care. As understanding of transgender people has grown, many other health plans have dropped longstanding restrictions on transition-related surgery and other gender-affirming care. This has allowed Whitman Walker to better serve our most marginalized members of the community and at long last

facilitate access to life-saving procedures which were beforehand only a dream to many. Over the past two years, we have supported over 500 patients with access to gender affirming surgeries. With primary care, mental health support, dental, public benefits and legal services, we have helped thousands of trans-identified individuals lead healthier, happier lives.

It is a challenge for transgender people to live in a society that sees them as second-class citizens or worse. The lack of narratives coming from the perspective of transgender youth and adults perpetuates discriminatory policies and practices that reduce the lives of transgender people to be only associated with pathology. As health care providers for this community, we are witness every day to the courage with which transgender individuals face systemic inequalities and the day-to-day judgement and hatred that persists. The argument that gender-affirming care, including surgery when medically indicated and desired by the patient, is unnecessary or cosmetic, invalidates the lived experiences of transgender adults and young people and condemns them to continued gender dysphoria that causes serious, and often acute, mental and physical harm. Moreover, singling them out for exclusion in health insurance plans reinforces the stigma that they experience. Prioritizing one person's health over another is neither ethical nor moral. All of us deserve care and deserve to live a healthy life with dignity and respect.

At our health center, we see time and again how access to gender-affirming care, including surgery, enables individuals to not just survive, but to thrive. Oftentimes patients who have not had access to gender-affirming care experience serious mental and even physical health problems, including suicidal ideation and even suicide attempts, and need a higher level of services. As our patients begin to get what they need to live authentically, whether it be hormone therapy, gender-affirming surgery, counseling, or legal assistance, their need for services actually decreases over time. When one's gender is affirmed, the acuity of gender dysphoria lessens and adults and young people are better able to engage in social and familial relationships and live healthy lives. Our patients' reports of depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, drug and alcohol use, and other high-risk behaviors decrease as access to gender-affirming care increases. Patients receiving gender-affirming care are more likely to attend medical and mental health appointments and to engage in preventative healthcare. During our combined total 20 years of work in this field, we have observed a strong correlation between gender-affirming care, including surgery, and quality of life improvement and pro-health behaviors. Gender affirming care should not be viewed as anything less than critical and lifesaving. If we were to remove barriers to this care, enabling people to live their true lives, authentically, the reduction in health care costs would be substantial. We create the world that makes things worse for others and it costs us.

In addition, the argument that insurance coverage of gender-affirming surgeries will reduce access to services by non-transgender (cisgender) patients is incongruent to what we have witnessed at our health center. Whitman-Walker refers patients for many different surgical procedures, and we and our health care provider colleagues have seen no indication whatsoever

to suspect that increased availability of gender-transition-related surgeries would affect the availability of urological, vascular, or other surgeries for other patients.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas Coughlin, LPC, NCC



Stacey Karpen, PhD, LPC, NCC

August 30, 2018

# Stacey L. Karpen, PhD, LPC, NCC

202-540-8095/StaceyKarpen@gmail.com

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## EDUCATION

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**Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling**  
George Washington University, January 2016

**Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**  
George Washington University, May 2011

**Bachelor of Arts in Gender and Sexuality Studies**  
New York University, May 2005

**Bachelor of Fine Arts in Drama**  
New York University, May 2005

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## PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE

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**Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in Washington, DC (PRC14589)**  
**Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC)**

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## CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

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**Whitman Walker Health**

***Senior Manager of Behavioral Health & Psychotherapist***

**Washington, DC**

***May 1, 2016- present***

- Provide individual and group psychotherapy for a diverse patient population, specializing in LGBTQ communities and people with HIV.
- Manage the daily operations of all services provided by the Behavioral Health Department across four sites, staff of thirty includes psychotherapists, psychiatrists, psychiatric nurse practitioner, and psychiatric residents in a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) that specializes in serving LGBTQ communities and people infected/affected by HIV/AIDS.
- Responsible for the design, implementation, and monitoring of behavioral health treatment for substance abuse (including intensive outpatient/outpatient program for co-occurring addiction and mental health diagnoses, medication assisted treatment program for opioid addiction program, and harm reduction), mental health care (including individual therapy, group therapy, and psychiatry), and peer-based services at all Whitman-Walker health center sites that emphasizes timely delivery of services, efficiency, program relevancy, integration and coordination with other divisions within the health center.
- Facilitated expansion of Behavioral Health Department to include providing mental health care to LGBTQ youth, specifically victims of violence.
- Provide ongoing clinical supervision to staff psychotherapists.
- Developed and implemented gender affirming protocols and internal workflow for transgender and gender expansive clients: Write supportive letters for the medical necessity and clinical appropriateness for hormone therapy or gender affirming surgeries. Conducted (and continue to conduct) over 350+ mental health assessments for transgender/gender expansive clients seeking hormone therapy or gender affirming surgery.

**Private Practice: Individual/Family Therapy with Gender Specialization**

***Psychotherapist/Gender Specialist***

**Washington, DC**

***September 2015-present***

- Conduct individual therapy sessions with children (ages 5+) and adults who are at various points of transition and exploration of gender identity.
- Engage families of clients in therapeutic work to expand network of support for transitioning clients.
- Assist with medical referrals and supportive letters for hormone therapy or gender affirming surgeries.

**Whitman Walker Health**

*Behavioral Health Specialist*

*Masters/Doctoral Intern/Volunteer Therapist*

**Washington, DC**

*October 2014- May 2016*

*September 2011- October 2014*

- Served as a member of a multidisciplinary team, providing behavioral health screening and clinical assessment, to determine appropriate level of care for mental health/addictions/ and crisis intervention.
- Managed mental health crisis intervention for clients with acute mental health needs, including risk assessment for suicide, homicide, and psychosis. This work entails contacting emergency services, working to ensure the safety of other staff and clients, and following up with client post-crisis to engage them in care.
- Established a referral and resource base to assist in client placement and referrals.
- Provided long-term and short-term individual psychotherapy and group psychotherapy for a diversity of clients.

**Community Counseling Services Center at George Washington University**

*Doctoral Clinical Supervisor*

*Clinical Mental Health Counselor Intern*

**Washington, DC**

*September 2013-May 2014*

*September 2010-May 2011*

- Conducted on-call and on-site crisis management and risk consultation for clients with acute needs.
- Conducted triage and initial client screenings to determine appropriate disposition decisions and referrals to community agencies as needed.
- Provided supervision for graduate trainees in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at the Master's level.
- Primarily responsible for video session review, supervisory evaluation of competency, reviewing and co-signing weekly progress notes and treatment plans.
- Conducted individual counseling with diverse client population using short-term, solution-focused model.

**Bokamoso Youth Center**

*Psychotherapist*

**Winterveldt, South Africa**

*July-August 2014*

- Conducted individual and group psychotherapy and expressive art therapy groups for at-risk young adults specifically focused on HIV/AIDS, trauma related to violent crime and sexual assault, substance abuse, and grief and loss.
- Led cross cultural counseling training for team of masters level therapists, and presented HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention training programs for young adult clients and staff.

**Margaret Marquart Hospital, HIV/AIDS Clinic**

*Clinical Mental Health/HIV Counselor*

**Kpando, Ghana**

*April-August 2012*

- Led women's support group and conducted individual counseling for pre/post HIV testing
- Presented educational workshops on Tuberculosis, HIV/STIs, reproductive rights, Malaria, and domestic violence, and collaborated with USAID community health workers to create programs specifically focused on identifying barriers to care and coordination of an ARV adherence support program.

**Jipe Moyo HIV/AIDS Support Program for Women**

*Mental Health Counselor and Coordinator*

**Moshi, Tanzania**

*April-August 2010*

- Travelocity Change Ambassadors Travel Grant used for the development and implementation of mental health program for rural HIV/AIDS community organization.

**Lala Maryam Orphanage**

*Mental Health Provider*

**Rabat, Morocco**

*July-August 2011*

- Worked as a group and individual counselor and caregiver for severely disabled children and young adults.
- Developed system of documenting the case histories of 100+ orphans, and created a manual for future caregivers.

**Valkenberg Psychiatric Hospital**  
***Mental Health Counselor Intern***

**Cape Town, South Africa**  
***July 2008-January 2008***

- Provided individual counseling and facilitated psychotherapy groups for severely mentally ill patients.
- Co-facilitated expressive art therapy group for female patients.

**Lawrence House Refugee Orphanage**  
***Mental Health Services Volunteer***

**Cape Town, South Africa**  
***August-October 2008***

- Developed and implemented therapeutic film project for Congolese, Sudanese, Angolan and Rwandan children affected by war-related trauma.
- Facilitated art and narrative therapy groups for refugee trauma survivors.

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## **LEADERSHIP**

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**The E3 Initiative**  
***Founding Director***

**Washington, DC**  
***September 2011- 2016***

- Founding director of non-profit organization with a mission to educate, engage, and empower women and girls worldwide. (*501(c)(3) status pending*)
- Developed cutting edge theoretical frameworks, policy recommendations, and direct interventions that positively impact women and girls.
- Responsibilities included: Vision and oversight for all project initiatives; Plan and implement conferences and summits, Catalyze research and publication efforts; Foster research collaboration with local and national partners; Grant writing and proposal development.
- Events have included A Global Summit on Issues Affecting Women and Girls Worldwide (2013), wherein approximately 20 organizations that work with women locally, nationally, and internationally gathered for an expo and presentation; and The Model World Conference on The Rights of Women and Girls (2014), a multidisciplinary collaboration including DC area high school students.

**Chi Sigma Iota: International Counseling Honors Society**  
***President, Rho Theta Chapter***

**Washington, DC**  
***September 2011- 2012***

- Developed and implemented workshops, community service, and academic/professional development programs.
- Led meetings with student body as well as executive board.
- Served as a liaison between faculty and students.

**Clinton Global Initiative University**  
***Representative***

**Washington, DC**  
***March 2012-present***

- Established by President Bill Clinton, the CGIU World Conference brings together students and world leaders to discuss solutions to pressing world problems.
- Served as George Washington University representative for CGIU World Conference with a proposal for a peer-counseling program for HIV affected teens in rural Tanzania.
- Attended plenary sessions including The Power of Public Service with President Clinton and former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright

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## **SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND MEDIA**

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**Presenter, United States Department of State**

**November, 2017**

- Transgender 101, recorded and simulcast for staff located internationally

**Presenter, United States Agency for International Development**

**August, 2017**

- Transgender Barriers to Care, recorded and simulcast for staff located internationally

**Presenter, Washington AIDS Partnership**

**August, 2017**

- Transgender 201

<b>Panelist, Capital Trans Pride</b>	<b>May, 2017</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Safer Sex for Trans Bodies &amp; Gender Affirming Surgery Navigation</li> </ul>	
<b>Panelist, Facebook Live (Whitman Walker Health/Human Rights Campaign)</b>	<b>August 2016</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>24.8k views</i>. Panelist in Discussion on the Transgender Sexual Health Guide</li> </ul>	
<b>Poster, Critical Race Studies in Education Conference Vanderbilt University Law School</b>	<b>May 2015</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “Being from the block”: Re-narrating what it means to be an urban youth</li> </ul>	
<b>Presenter, American Counseling Association Conference &amp; Expo</b>	<b>March 2014</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ From Pronouns to Practice: An Exploration of Trans*-affirming Language, 60-minute Clinical Session</li> </ul>	
<b>Presenter, American Counseling Association Conference &amp; Expo</b>	<b>March 2014</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engaging Society, Growing the Self: The Impact of Participating in a Mentoring-Based Youth Conference</li> </ul>	
<b>Panelist, Model World Conference on the Rights of Women and Girls</b>	<b>April 2014</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local Voices, Global Vision: Activists Working on the Rights of Women and Girls</li> </ul>	
<b>Paper, International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals Forensic Conference</b>	<b>November 2013</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ethical dilemmas experienced by forensic, private and public sector rehabilitation counselors.</li> </ul>	
<b>Presenter, A Global Summit on Issues Affecting Women and Girls Worldwide</b>	<b>February 2012</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Directed expo and presentation including 20 organizations working with women and girls locally, nationally, and internationally. Presented with United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary Gender on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zainab Hawa Bangura of Sierra Leone.</li> </ul>	

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## PUBLICATIONS

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- Karpen, S. (2016). Living in the Cracks of Apartheid: A Critical Narrative Analysis of Resilience, Hope, and Cultural Trauma in The Born Free Generation of South Africa. Doctoral Dissertation, George Washington University.
- Karpen, S. (2014). Group under fire. Association for the Specialists in Group Work. *The Group Worker*.
- Karpen, S. (2013). Bully busters. Association for the Specialists in Group Work. *The Group Worker*.
- Beveridge, S., Karpen, S. (2014). Online Distance Education: The JDJP program increases the earning capacity of under-represented rehabilitation counseling professionals. *Journal of Forensic Vocational Analysis*, 15(1), 18-24.
- Beveridge, S., Karpen, S., Hadjiyane, M., Weiss, B., & Liu, X. (2014). A mixed-methods case study of an online forensic rehabilitation counseling graduate certificate program. *The Rehabilitation Professional*, 22 (2).
- Beveridge, S., Karpen, S., Chan, C., & Penrod, J. (2014). Application of the KVI-R to assess current training needs of private rehabilitation counselors. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*.
- Beveridge, S., Karpen, S., & France, K. (2013). Importance and frequency ratings of ethical dilemmas experienced by forensic rehabilitation counselors, private sector rehabilitation counselors and public sector rehabilitation counselors. *The Rehabilitation Professional*, 21(1), 29-44.
- Beveridge, S., McDaniel, R., & Karpen, S. (2014). Forensic rehabilitation and case management. In D. Edwards (Ed.) *A Case Study Approach to Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling*. Linn Creek, MO: Aspen Professional Services.
- ***Safe Sex for Trans Bodies*** is a resource created in collaboration with the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) which includes life-saving and affirming practices, from respectful terminology and definitions to helpful practices for sexual health following transition-related care.
- <https://www.whitman-walker.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Trans-Safer-Sex-Guide-FINAL.pdf>
- ***The Resource Guide for Transgender, Gender Queer, and Gender Expansive Clients*** is a comprehensive resource detailing the variety of services for transgender/gender expansive clients at Whitman Walker Health, including timeline of gender affirming hormone therapy changes, and surgery readiness information.
- [https://www.whitman-walker.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/TransgenderResourceGuide\\_Web.pdf](https://www.whitman-walker.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/TransgenderResourceGuide_Web.pdf)

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## GRANTS, HONORS, AND AWARDS

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- **2017 Engendered Spirit Award:** Awarded by Capital Pride Alliance for support and contributions to the betterment of the transgender community.
- **Clemment E. Vontress Cross-Cultural Award** in recognition of dedication to the promotion of cross-cultural understanding, social justice, and racial harmony, awarded by George Washington University.
- \$11,000 Grant: George Washington University, **Innovation in Diversity and Inclusion (IDI) Grant**, 2014.

- \$5,000 Grant: **Travelocity Change Ambassadors Grant.**
- George Washington University Nomination for **Graduate Award for Individual Excellence.**
- George Washington University **Futrell Endowment Fund Tuition Award.**
- **The Point Foundation**, Scholarship Semi-finalist. Point is the nation's largest scholarship-granting organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) students of merit.
- **The Martin Luther King Jr. Community Youth Leadership Award** by New Jersey Senator John Corzine.
- **The Joseph E. Poli Memorial Award** for Leadership in Youth Advocacy.

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## SPECIALIZED TRAINING

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### **Multicultural Trauma Treatment Training**

University of Rwanda School of Public Health, Kigali, Rwanda, 2016

### **Philadelphia Trans Health Conference**

Behavioral Health Provider Training Track, 2014-2017

### **Art Therapy: International Social & Cultural Diversity**

George Washington University Study Abroad, 2014

### **Grief, Loss, & Life Transitions, Summer Institute**

George Washington University, 2010, Instructor: Paul Tschudi

### **Narrative Therapy: Institute for the Healing of Memories, Healing Wounds of Apartheid**

Cape Town, South Africa, 2008

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## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

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American Counseling Association (ACA)

Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW)

National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC), Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC)

Chi Sigma Iota (CSI), International Counseling Honor Society

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## REFERENCES

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Dr. Lance Morgan

Clinical Psychologist

The Max Robinson Center, Whitman-Walker Health

202-797-3508/ LMorgan@whitman-walker.org

Dr. Randy Pumphrey

Senior Director of Behavioral Health

Whitman Walker Health

202-939-7679/RPumphrey@whitman-walker.org

*THOMAS COUGHLIN, LPC, NCC*  
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*Silver Spring, MD 20901*  
*(703) 989-1314*  
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**Experience:**

June 2017 – Present

Whitman-Walker Health – Washington, DC

**Director of Gender Affirming Services**

Supports the oversight of internal and external programming related to the provision of services for members of our trans\* communities. Works in tandem with other clinical and programmatic leaders at Whitman-Walker to provide a unified vision and voice for services. Participate in community events, educational programs, presentations and workshops in an effort to increase public awareness and advance cultural humility in gender affirming care.

June 2008 - Present

Whitman-Walker Health - Washington, DC

**Staff psychotherapist**

Work with diverse population with varied mental health concerns including depression and other mood disorders, anxiety disorders, Bipolar disorder, ADHD, OCD and personality disorders as well as substance abuse issues. Also work with HIV + population.

Have experience running psychotherapy groups for mood disorders, substance abuse and sexuality/gender minority issues.

Provide psychotherapy to LGBTIQ community to include individual, couples and group work.

Groups include:

Positive Coping group for individuals with HIV and history of substance abuse

Stress Reduction group for HIV + individuals experiencing anxiety around diagnosis and other life stressors.

“TransLives” group for individuals addressing psychosocial issues before, during and after a gender transition.

“TransSpectrum” for those individuals questioning and exploring gender identity.

June 2008 – June 2014

Whitman-Walker Health - Washington, DC

**Transgender Health Advocate – Transgender Health Program**

Assist clients in navigating health & other WWH services

Provide information/connection to outside resources and support when necessary.

Act as liaison between community and clinic, providing information to outside agencies and organization in service to trans community

Create cultural humility training for staff to better serve the needs of trans/queer/GNC clients & patients

September 2010 – Present

Private psychotherapy practice in individual, couples & family

Psychotherapy – Dupont Circle

Primary focus of work with members of the LGBTQ community.

August 2008 – 2009

Whitman-Walker Health, Washington, DC

Certified in HIV Counseling and Testing.

Provide rapid HIV testing on walk-in basis to clients of Whitman-Walker

Clinic, performing finger-stick test and informing clients of outcome to include

education on the transmission of HIV and direction to immediate care and ongoing medical/mental health services.

January 2002 – Present

Main presenter/panel member/participant in educational seminars on transgender visibility, awareness & education to include Mental Health focus:

Children's National Medical Center, Washington, DC

Marymount University, Arlington, VA

George Washington University (Medical School and Psychology Dept.) - Washington, DC

George Mason University, Fairfax, VA

University of Maryland

US Patent Office, US Government, Alexandria, VA

Equality Virginia – LGBT Lobbying, Outreach & Education organization, Richmond, VA

National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD

Family Court of the DC Superior Court

District of Columbia, Mayor's office of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Affairs

International Gender Education Association – HQ, Washington, DC

Philadelphia Trans Health Conference

Virginia Transgender Information & Empowerment Summit (VA TIES) - Richmond, VA

United States State Department - DC

United States Securities and Exchange Commission - DC

United States Agency for International Development – DC  
United States Navy – Annapolis, MD

October 2002 – Sept 2008

DC Area Transmasculine Society (DCATS)

Lead facilitator and organizer – Peer Social and Support group for persons self-identified on transmasculine gender spectrum. Created and maintained website for group: [www.dcats.org](http://www.dcats.org)

February 2001 – February 2002

SMYAL – Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League - volunteer – facilitated and assisted LGBTQ youth groups and youth-focused events

### **Education & Training:**

Masters of Science (MS), Clinical Community Counseling - Johns Hopkins University  
Degree awarded – May 2008

Internship – 1 year – Whitman-Walker Health, Washington, DC  
Primary Supervisor – R. Jane Gould, LICSW

Certified in HIV Testing and Counseling – August 2008 – Washington, DC

Certified Clinical Trauma Professional Training - 2013

BS degree - Criminal Justice - Florida International University, Miami, FL  
Degree awarded – June 1985

AA degree - University of Florida, Gainesville, FL  
Degree awarded – 1982

Volunteer training in Group facilitation – Whitman-Walker Health

Volunteer training in working with youth – Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League (SMYAL)

### **Professional Contributions:**

Member of working group formed to clarify and institute policy on transgender healthcare in Washington, DC - 2013

Member of US Trans Survey Advisory Committee (UAC) – findings released in 2016

American Counseling Association article – Partners in Transition – 2016

<https://ct.counseling.org/2015/01/partners-in-transition/>

Agence France Presse – AFP global news agency interview about personal and professional trans experience – interview available to other news agencies – 2016

<http://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/support-transgender-kids-skip-anxiety-study-n527006>

<http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/video/eight-years-ago-when-thomas-coughlin-a-therapist-at-a-non-news-footage/536925216>

### **Professional Organizations/Memberships/Recognition:**

Licensed Professional Counselor – Washington, DC – License # PRC14117

Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor – Maryland – License #6134 (eligible for reinstatement)

National Board for Certified Counselors – National Certified Counselor

World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) – Member since September 2008, 2013 – present

Engendered Spirit Award winner – 2010 – recognized by Washington, DC Transgender Community for providing sensitive, compassionate and affirming care to members of the LGBTQ community.

The DC Center Award for Service to the Washington, DC Transgender Community – 2013

Washington Blade Best of Gay DC – Best Trans Advocate – 2014 & 2015

**References Available Upon Request**