The Johns Hopkins Center for Transgender Health

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The mission of The Johns Hopkins Center for Transgender Health is to reduce healthcare disparities and improve the overall health of the transgender community through world-class, holistic, evidence-based, affirming clinical care, interdisciplinary education, and research.

1 Background

1960s
The Johns Hopkins Hospital was one of the leading institutions for the provision of transgender healthcare.

2015
Faculty and staff across the enterprise desired to once again, provide gender-affirming services, including surgery.

October 2017
The Johns Hopkins Center for Transgender Health has seen 223 patients in clinical intakes and performed 28 gender affirming surgeries. The center will serve as a centralized access point for transgender individuals seeking care, whether hormone management, mental health support, cryopreservation, pubertal suppression, or surgical services.

1980s
After the close of the program, Johns Hopkins Medicine accumulated a checkered history with the transgender community.

February 2017
Johns Hopkins Medicine launched an effort to implement a comprehensive, interdisciplinary center for transgender health, with a focus on adult patients seeking gender-affirming surgeries.
Goal: to establish a comprehensive, virtual, center for transgender health by summer 2017.

2 Objectives

•Provide culturally competent, gender affirming medical care for transgender individuals in the state of Maryland
•Fill the need for treatment of gender dysphoria via surgical treatment
•With the launch of the Johns Hopkins Center for Transgender Health it is critical that JHH employees hospital wide are able to receive the educational experience necessary to provide excellent patient care and understand the basic principles of ally-ship and inclusivity.

3 Methods

Involvement of a multidisciplinary team to design the best possible training for members of the surgical, medical, technical, legal, and administrative teams of Johns Hopkins Hospital.

As part of the implementation process, Johns Hopkins Medicine sought feedback from the national transgender community:
•Online Survey
•In-person Focus Groups & Interviews
From over 320 respondents, 3 key items were noted:

69% of respondents report having had negative transgender-related healthcare experiences.

80% of respondents would change providers based on disrespectful treatment.

33% would go to a provider who had a negative reputation for transgender health, if that provider was making sincere efforts to change.

4 Results

Approach to Building the Center

Create a Transgender Medicine Executive Task Force
- Demonstrate Senior Leadership support / direction
- Bring together all necessary stakeholders
- Identify system capacities and vulnerabilities

Ground the effort in Core Values and Mission
Core Values: Diversity & Inclusion, Leadership & Integrity, Excellence & Diversity, Respect & Collegiality
Tripartite Mission: Patient Care, Education, Research
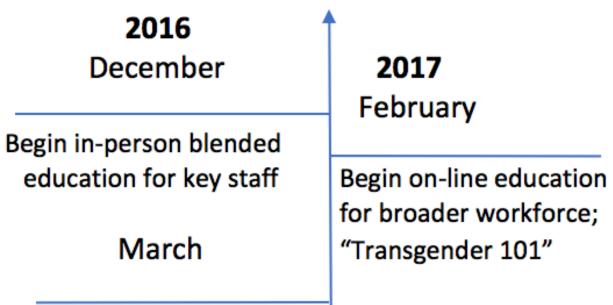
Utilize an Interdisciplinary Service Line Model
- Virtual Center / Services home-ported in their departments
    -Build on existing frameworks & collaborations
    -Involve all stakeholders (selected examples):
    -Medicine   - Pediatrics
    -Plastic Surgery   - Social Work
    -Mental Health   - Endocrine
    -OB/GYN - Urology
    -Case Management
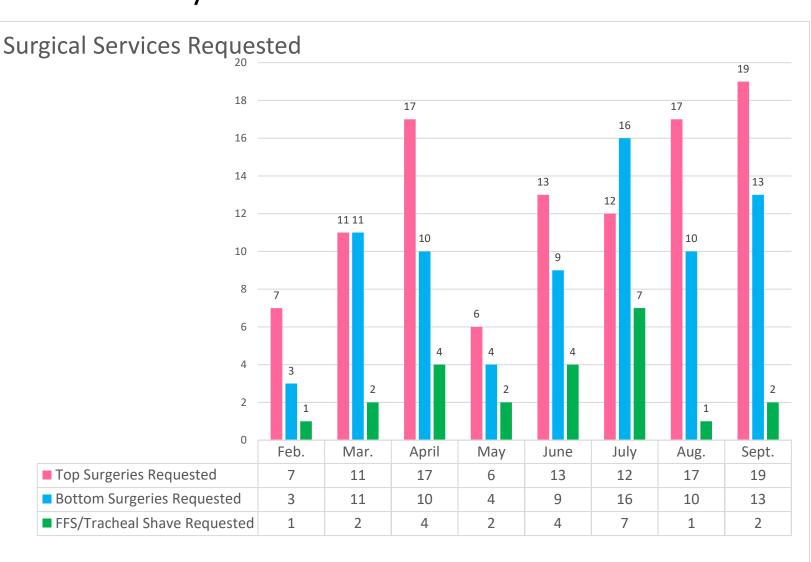   -Community Physicians / Primary Care

Timeline

2016
December
Begin in-person blended education for key staff

March
Soft launch for adult patients seeking gender affirming surgery; Proud Partners Program is created to continue to improve JHH & affiliate's cultural competence

June
Begin comprehensive Services

August
Updated EPIC launch to optimize culturally competent care across all Johns Hopkins Institutions utilizing:
-preferred name & gender identity fields
-updated CTH site with info on services & criteria, up-to-date research, community resources: reading lists, legal advocacy; identity documents to civil liberties violations

2017
February
Begin on-line education for broader workforce; "Transgender 101"

April
Begin surgical consultations and psychiatric evaluation; surgical clearance criteria is formalized

July
First gender-affirming surgeries at JHH since the '80s; JHH pediatrics launch

October
JHH has scheduled 35 surgical cases and completed 28, performed 223 clinical intakes, and 106 surgical intakes.

As of 9/16, the JH CTH line had received 382 calls.

5 Conclusions

The response to The Center for Transgender Health from the local Baltimore community has demonstrated that there was a clear need not previously addressed by local resources.

The Johns Hopkins Center for Transgender Health remains the only full-service gender affirming surgery provider in the greater D.C., Maryland area.

Access to care remains a primary health disparity facing the transgender community. Academic medicine has a major role to play in addressing the problem by creating more venues to provide care, while teaching the next generation of providers and adding to the medical science. However, by providing cultural competence training for the workforce, utilizing appropriate language on forms and in electronic medical records, and creating welcoming and affirming facilities, any health system or practice can impact transgender health in their local community.

Surgical Services Requested

	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.
Top Surgeries Requested	7	11	17	6	13	12	17	19
Bottom Surgeries Requested	3	11	10	4	9	16	10	13
FFS/Tracheal Shave Requested	1	2	4	2	4	7	1	2

Month

6 Future Directions

To be a leader in patient care, research, and advocacy in the Transgender Care movement by continuing to:

- Provide cultural competency training on transgender healthcare to the workforce (all levels and disciplines)

- Evaluate forms and electronic systems for diversity and inclusion

- Ensure that facilities reflect a welcoming and supportive environment (restrooms / signage)

- Expand high-quality services provided to and available for the transgender population

References – Available upon request

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