



Gender Affirming Care in Cairns: Questions Young People Are Asking



Question: Is it true that gender care is illegal now?

Answer: No. Gender-affirming care is not illegal.

But right now, there's a government review into gender-affirming care, which means public services like Cairns Sexual Health Service can't start new gender care for people under 18.

If you were already a client, you still get your care. You still have other options too (see below):



Where you can go:

- **Kaleidoscope Clinic:** You don't need a referral. You can talk to a doctor or psychologist.
- **YETI:** A social group for young people (aged 14-25) with people who get it
- **Gayawur Rainbow (QC):** Peer support, help with binders and referrals, and people to talk to

Question: I heard that puberty blockers or hormones are dangerous. Is that true?

Answer: No. Puberty blockers have been safely used for years and are reversible. Hormones are part of medical care for some people and can be life-saving. You can always talk it through to doctors who understand this stuff.



Kaleidoscope Clinic



Where you can go:

- **Kaleidoscope Clinic:** Can help with hormone information and care plans
- **Transcend Australia:** Has fact sheets for young people and families



Question: Are school nurses allowed to help anymore?

Answer: Some can help and some have pulled back. This is one reason we're talking with Education and Health together - to make it better.



Where you can go:

- Cairns Sexual Health Service for STI checks, contraception, and other sexual health matters unrelated to gender care
- Talk to your school wellbeing team if you trust them
- Ask **Gayawur (QC)** or **YETI** for help with safer options

Question: My parents are scared they'll get in trouble for helping me. Can they?

Answer: No, supporting you is **not a crime**. But the rules are confusing right now, and that's causing fear. We're working to fix the confusion.



Where you can go:

- **PFLAG Cairns:** Parent support group who get it
- **Gayawur (QC):** Can talk with your family or help you do it

Question: I don't have money or transport. Can I still get help?

Answer: Yes. Some clinics bulk bill, and there are funds that help with gap fees (like Project 491 for under-18s). **Gayawur** or **YETI** can help you find the right support





Where you can go:

- **Gayawur (QC):** Peer navigators can help you sort out costs, access and referrals.
- **YETI:** Can help connect you to support services

Question: Is it true that people are using DIY hormones?

Answer: Yes, some people are, but it's **risky** and not recommended. It happens when the system fails people. You deserve safe and supported care. **You're not alone.**



Where you can go:

- **Kaleidoscope Clinic or Gayawur (QC):** Can talk to you about safer care
- **2Spirits / MGOV:** Can help with binders, tucker packs, and support.

Question: Can I still go to Cairns Sexual Health Service if I'm under 18 and need sexual health care?

Answer: Yes. Even though the gender services got people under 18 are limited right now, Cairns Sexual Health Service still sees people under 18 for STI checks, contraception, walk-ins and anything else unrelated to gender care.



Did you know? Many school nurses also have free condoms and pregnancy tests. You can ask them directly.

Where you can go:

- **Cairns Sexual Health:** Walk-in for STI testing and sexual health
- **Your school nurse or wellbeing team:** Ask what's available

Need help now? Contact:

- **Gayawur Rainbow** (1800 GAYAWUR / 1800 429 298)
- **YETI Cairns** (+61 4051 4927)
- **PFLAG Cairns** (0412 133 010)
- **2Spirits Peer Support** (07 4041 5451)
- **Kaleidoscope Clinic** (07 4281 6959)
- **Transcend Australia** - Support and resources for families:
transcend.org.au
- **QLife** - Free, anonymous LGBTQIA+ peer support: Call 1800 184 527 or
visit qlife.org.au

