



## Community health care to trans people in Talcahuano's local health service.

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It is common knowledge that in Chile there is a lack of public policies aimed at LGBT+ population, i.e., lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people, among other identities of the sexual diversity. In the particular case of trans people, these are the people whose gender identity differs from their biological sex and what is culturally expected from it (APA, 2011; CIDH, 2015). Therefore, the term 'trans' contains non-traditional gender identities, which include transgender, transsexual, cross-dresser and intersex people (Ministerio de Salud, 2019). The health care needs of this group are related to the physical, medical or full body transition, that is, the process through which trans people seek to change their physical characteristics so that their body is consistent with their affirmed gender identity (Adaury et al., 2018; MOVILH, 2019). It must be noticed that not all trans people go through the same medical transition, since every transition is unique to each individual.

Despite the lack of public policies, there is some health-related legal background coming from the Ministry of Health, such as the Clinical Guidelines for body adaptation in people with incongruity between their physical sex and gender identity, from 2010; the N°21 notice from 2012, in which "instruction to provide medical attention to trans people within the network is reaffirmed"; and Law 20.584 that regulates the Rights and Duties. In addition to these regulations, Law 20.609 from 2012 must be considered, since it establishes measures against arbitrary discrimination, as well as Law 21.120 from 2018, which recognizes and protects the right to gender identity. However, despite this legal background, in Chile very few local health services provide quality health care to trans people, which is manifested in the lack of treatment or in disrespectful treatment, both justified by health professionals' lack of information about gender and sexual diversity (Day, 2017). For this reason, it is common that people cannot find the health care that they seek or that they choose to stay permanently away from formal health care. Generally, a great number of trans people do not have the possibility to receive comprehensive and quality health care within the public system. The lack of offer is directly related to professional health training and its lack of LGBT+-related contents, which causes that very few professionals can promote these initiatives.

In this context, Talcahuano's Local Health Service was pioneer in Chile. The organized civil society of trans people approached the institution in 2012, thus starting a joint collaboration that lasts until today. The 'Las Higueras' Hospital became the first to have a Protocol for Health Care and Referral, drafted from the collaborative work developed with the Participation Roundtable for Trans Users. This Roundtable is composed of Trans people, representing the community, as well as professionals from Talcahuano's Local Health Service and 'Las Higueras' Hospital, representing the institutions. Throughout the years, the previously mentioned team has carried out training for professionals and dissemination about the health care of Trans people without discrimination, thus promoting a respectful approach and education.

The Kimntrum Foundation carried out a research, next to be published, about this experience. One of the main findings is that the experience of Talcahuano is unique and is based on recognizing the significance of learning together with the community.

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Therefore, after identifying this problem, it is crucial to initiate a work that includes the trans community, which is the only form of knowing the real needs of this social group and responding adequately to them. Only then, a similar initiative might be replicated in other Local Health Services across the country and quality health care might be provided to trans people from other areas of the country.

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