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Dear Valued Stakeholders,

We are delighted to present to you The Center for Gender Health Annual Report for the year 2023, celebrating the culmination of our first year. As an essential partner and stakeholder in our journey, we extend our warmest welcome to explore the achievements and strides we have made together in promoting health equity and inclusivity. We have committed specific actions that improve access, intentionally eliminate barriers, and create opportunities for trans and gender diverse individuals.

Over the past year, our organization has remained steadfast in its mission to provide exceptional healthcare services that cater specifically to the unique needs and challenges faced by individuals of diverse gender identities. This annual report reflects our commitment to transparency, accountability, and a deep-rooted dedication to our patients, staff, partners, and, stakeholders.

Inside this report, you will discover a comprehensive overview of our accomplishments, initiatives, and financial performance in the realm of gender health. Highlights of the report include:

1. Advancements in Gender Affirming Care: Including surgical interventions, hormone therapy, mental health support, and other medical services aimed to enhancing the quality of life for transgender and non-binary individuals.

2. Culturally Competent Healthcare Services: We have worked diligently to create safe and welcoming spaces where individuals can receive compassionate and knowledgeable medical attention.

3. Media Awareness and Advocacy: Our media interviews have facilitated meaningful discussions, shared industry expertise, and showcases the knowledge we have contributed to the wider media landscape.

4. Financial Performance and Sustainability: Learn how we have sustained our mission and continue expanding our services to meet the growing needs of gender-inclusive healthcare.

5. Testimonials and Impact Stories: Read powerful impact stories from patients and staff that highlights the positive impact of our gender health services and the transformative difference we have made in their lives.

We take immense pride in the progress we have achieved in advancing gender health and creating an inclusive healthcare environment at Hartford Healthcare. We recognize that our success would not have been possible without the unwavering support and trust of clinical providers and administrators like yourself.

Thank you for being an integral part of our first year. Together we can create a system where all individuals receive equitable, respectful, and dignified healthcare, regardless of their gender identity.

Sincerely,

Laura M.I. Saunders, Psy. D. ABPP
Director, The Center for Gender Health
Establish a Center for Gender Health under the Behavioral Health Network that provides safe, sensitive, comprehensive, coordinated care for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) community, regardless of where the patient enters the system.

To provide information, support and education to the Hartford Healthcare system as it relates to care for gender diverse and LGB individuals.
Referrals are made to service lines across HHC including but not limited to Primary Care, Endocrinology, Plastic Surgery, Psychiatry, Behavioral Health, Speech and Language/Voice Therapy, Gynecology, and Urology. By providing specialized care tailored to the unique needs of transgender and non-binary individuals, we aim to promote inclusivity, understanding, and access for all individuals seeking our expertise in this vital area of healthcare.
We take pride in our healthcare system's reach, as referrals pour in from a range of zip codes within CT, the northeast, and beyond. This geographic diversity highlights our ability to positively impact a wide-ranging community.

The scope of our referrals extends far beyond state lines, as seen here.

A closer look at the range of referrals coming in from every corner of Connecticut.
The Center for Gender Health proudly serves a wide range of ages, from middle adolescence to seniors. This diverse patient population underscores our ability to provide comprehensive care across the life span. Our commitment to promoting health and wellbeing spans generations, ensuring that each patient receives tailored, age-appropriate care and support.
Referrals flow into The Center for Gender Health from a myriad of sources, illustrating our strong connections within the medical community and beyond. Whether from primary care physicians, online resources, word-of-mouth recommendations, or other healthcare institutions, these varied sources of referrals reflect our reputation for exceptional care and trust placed in us by a wide network of professionals and patients alike.
An impressive 25% of our referrals are from individuals who are completely new to the Hartford Healthcare system. This highlights the growing reach and impact we have, attracting a substantial portion of new patients seeking healthcare services. The influx of new patients often translates to a potential increase in the utilization of a broader range of medical services beyond their initial reason for seeking care.

The Center for Gender Health would like you to celebrate our achievement of receiving 370 referrals in the past year. Of those 370, 325 followed through and were scheduled for appointments in the HHC system. This milestone not only speaks to our strong reputation and patient trust, but also reflects the exceptional value we provide.
During the month of June, Dr. Laura Saunders engaged in three media interviews: Ch4/NBC; Ch6/FOX61; Ch8/WTNH, focused specifically on the services provided at The Center for Gender Health. This provides a range of benefits to our healthcare system. It allows us to showcase our expertise, advancements, and commitment to quality care on a broader platform, raising awareness, and enhancing our reputation. Through these interviews, we educate the public about our services, foster trust, attract potential patients, and inspire confidence in our healthcare offerings. Additionally, media exposure helps us stay at the forefront of industry discussions, enabling dialogues and position ourselves as a leading authority in the field of gender healthcare.
Just a note - I had dinner last week with a friend whose 30yo son has been struggling for some time with depression. A few years ago they said they were non-binary and asked to be called CJ instead of Chris. Various doctors, meds, therapists ... depression was still a major hurdle to employment, housing, life. My friend Chelsea was so worried. After a particularly disastrous appointment with a primary care provider (when CJ noted on their intake form it only said male/female, and they were non binary, the nurse replied "I don't know what that is."), Chelsea found the Center for Gender Health via Google and CJ got an appointment. She cried when she told me how CJ felt after their first appointment - "seen, heard and validated." They are obviously just starting this phase of the journey but she already feels such relief to have the center available to them - she asked me to pass on to you that you may well have saved CJ's life, and her family. Thank you for everything you do.

-HHC Employee; East Region

Thank you for all your help with everything with me and all you do for the trans community with the Center for Gender Health.

-Patient

Thanks again for all your help. He had a wonderful experience with Dr. Saunders and Dr. Cahill.

-Patient's Mother

Thank you so much. I've been waiting my entire life for healthcare like this. Even our brief discussion this morning made me feel very taken care of and very safe.

-Patient
FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- **Open website portal to Gender Affirming Hormone Therapy referrals to include ages 15-18**
  
  *Connect patients to newly established HHCMG Provider/ NP Family Practitioner with specialization in gender diverse teens*

- **Onboard a per diem behavioral health clinician to work with outpatient therapy volumes**

- **Recruit a transgender medicine surgeon**
  
  *With support from Department of Urogynecology, we will reach out to fellowship trained surgeons with specialization in genital reconstructive surgery.*

- **Hire a nurse navigator**
  
  *To assist each patient from initial intake through the entire treatment process, connecting them to resources and supporting them to make informed healthcare decisions.*

- **Recruit a post doctoral psychology fellow for 2024-2025**
  
  *Supporting future training of clinical providers to develop expertise in trans and gender diverse individuals*