

How Do I Have a Phalloplasty?

The Comprehensive Gender Services Program (CGSP) uses the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) Standards of Care guidelines when referring you for care relating to gender dysphoria. The process described in this handout helps us to make sure that we follow the WPATH Standards of Care guidelines and provide safe and effective care.

Phalloplasty is a surgery that creates a penis using skin taken from another part of the body and also involves the removal of the uterus, ovaries, and vagina. In order to have this surgery:

- You will need **2 referral letters** from licensed mental health providers that address the WPATH Standards of Care guidelines.
- You will need to be using hormone replacement therapy (HRT) for **at least 12 consecutive months** before we are able to review your referral letters. Your referral letters must state that you have been using HRT for at least 12 consecutive months.

What are my next steps to have a phalloplasty?

1. Meet with your licensed mental health providers to obtain referral letters and sign a Release of Information Form for them.
 - **Referral Letters:**
 - Your letter writers must be licensed mental health providers willing and able to write referral letters for you to undergo phalloplasty.
 - You will need to meet with both of your providers face-to-face (in-person).
 - You will need to have separate appointments with each provider.
 - If your provider has a limited license, their fully licensed supervisor will need to cosign the letter.

- **Release of Information Forms:**
 - You should receive a copy of the Release form with along with this handout. If you need a copy of the form, please contact our office.
 - You will fill out this form for each of your providers and send your completed form back to us.
 - When you sign this form, you give us your permission to review your referral letters and contact your providers if necessary.
 - We **cannot** review your referral letters until we have this form.
- 2. Make sure your providers send the referral letters directly to our office (see instructions below).
 - We **must** receive both referral letters within 6 months of each other.
- 3. Read through the “*What to Expect: Phalloplasty*” packet that you received with this handout. This provides more information on the process from consultation appointment to surgery and recovery.
- 4. Contact our office by phone or email if you have any questions or concerns about the letter-writing or letter-reviewing process.

How do I send my Release of Information Form to the CGSP office?

You should send your form to us in one of the following ways:

Mail: Michigan Medicine - CGSP
2025 Traverwood Dr. Suite A1
Ann Arbor, MI, 48105

Fax: (734) 998-2152

Email: genderservices@med.umich.edu

- If you use email to send the Release of Information form, you **must** send us a scanned image of the form. We **cannot** accept a photograph of the form.
- Please **do not** send the Release form directly to the Health Information Management office (the contact information listed on the form itself) as this

will cause delays the review process. **Only** send the Release form directly to CGSP using the contact information above.

- Your providers will send their referral letters to our office in the same way.

What do you do with my referral letters once you receive them?

Once we receive your referral letters, we will review them within 10 business days. This review makes sure that the referral letters address the WPATH Standards of Care guidelines.

There are 2 ways that we can respond once we have reviewed your referral letters:

1. We will contact your letter writers if the referral letters **do not** address the WPATH Standards of Care guidelines or if we have questions about the referral letters. Your letter writers **must** discuss the referral letters with our office so that they can update the referral letters as needed.
2. We will refer you to a surgeon when we have 2 complete referral letters for you that addresses the WPATH Standards of Care guidelines.

What happens when you refer me for surgery?

When we refer you for surgery, we will schedule consultation appointments for you with a Urology surgeon and an Ob-Gyn surgeon. We will then contact you with information about your consultation appointments and about how you can reschedule, if you need to.

You will also be referred to Plastic Surgery for a consultation appointment. The Plastic Surgery office will contact you within 3 weeks of receiving the referral to schedule this consultation appointment.

Before scheduling your consultation appointment:

You **must** be smoke-free and nicotine-free for **2 months** before you can schedule your consultation appointment with Plastic Surgery.

- You **must** stop using **all** nicotine containing products (for example: cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vape pens, nicotine patches, nicotine gum, and chewing tobacco).
- You **must** stop smoking and vaping marijuana.
- You **may** continue to use marijuana products that are **not** smoked or breathed in.

At the consultation appointments, you will:

- Talk to your surgeons to determine if you are a good candidate for surgery.
- Ask your surgeons questions about the proposed surgery.
- Talk with your surgery schedulers about your next steps, including potential insurance coverage and out-of-pocket costs.

Please note: You will **not** schedule your surgery date at the consultation appointments.

When can I join the waitlist?

- You will need to complete required permanent hair removal at the surgical site to prepare for surgery **before** you join the waitlist. Your Plastic Surgeon will provide a diagram for where you will need to remove hair after the consultation appointment. You will then need to begin the process of permanent hair removal at that site.
- The surgeons' team will also need to get insurance pre-authorization for payment from your health insurance provider.
- You will join the waitlist for surgery once the surgeons' team has confirmed that you have completed permanent hair removal and they have obtained insurance pre-authorization from your insurance company for you.

Your surgeons' offices will review all of these steps in depth with you at your consultation appointment.

Can I start the permanent hair removal process now?

No, you will not begin permanent hair removal at the surgical site until you have your consultation appointment with the Plastic Surgeon.

There are multiple potential surgical sites. You will discuss which surgical site is used with your Plastic Surgeon. Starting the process of permanent hair removal before meeting with your Plastic Surgeon may result in the unnecessary permanent removal of hair.

Who do I contact if I have questions about this process or my referral letter?

You can contact our office by phone or email.

Phone: (734) 998-2150

Email: genderservices@med.umich.edu

Our office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm.

We can also help your providers with their referral letters if they have any questions about the letter writing process and how they can make sure that their referral letters address the WPATH Standards of Care guidelines.

How can I keep track of this process?

Use our Phalloplasty Checklist.

- I have met with both of my providers face-to-face (in-person).

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- I have talked to my providers about how to write and send my referral letters to CGSP.
- I have completed a Release of Information form and returned it to CGSP.
- I have received a call or email from CGSP letting me know that they have received my referral letters.
- I have received a call from CGSP letting me know that they have referred me for surgery, they have scheduled 2 consultation appointments for me, and I should expect a call from Plastic Surgery to schedule a third consultation appointment.
- I have received a call from Plastic Surgery to schedule my consultation appointment.
- I have made sure that I can attend my consultation appointments and I have rescheduled them if I need to.
- I have completed the required permanent hair removal at the surgical site and I have contacted Plastic Surgery to discuss my next steps.

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Author: Elizabeth Rooney
Reviewer: Sara Wiener, LMSW

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