

Transgender Youth Program: September 2018

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TOP STORY



Caregivers of Trans Youth Facebook Page

By **Charlotte Safran**

Greetings! The Trans Youth Program Advisory Council (known as 'TYPAC') is excited to announce the launch of our (closed) Facebook Group.

It is our hope that this social media platform supports parents and caregivers of trans youth in connecting with one another: we encourage you to ask questions, share stories, and revel in the successes and challenges that come with all the light and joy of raising children. (Please speak to the youth in your care about joining this group to honor their confidentiality!)

Thank you for being here. 'Together we can do so much.'
Happy connecting!

Please [click on this link](#) to request to join the group.

Light And Joy: Creating Opportunities for Collaborative, Intersectional Care for Transgender Youth and Their Families

By Ciaran Gilmore

In June, I had the privilege of attending the 8th Annual International Patient- and Family-Centered Care Conference in Baltimore, Maryland with Transgender Youth Program Advisor Toni Foote and Coordinator Charlotte Safran. We were invited as presenters to share about UVM Children's Hospital's Transgender Youth Program and how we've sought to incorporate a diversity of voices and experiences in the Advisory Council.

The conference was a powerful experience on many levels. As a relatively new advisor, being immersed in learning about patient- and family-centered care principles was inspiring. It was heartening to see other instances of LGBTQ initiatives being implemented in several hospitals across the country. Hearing their Advisory Councils' processes and obstacles to overcome in launching gave me a greater appreciation for the partnership that UVM Children's Hospital leaders have demonstrated with the Transgender Youth Program from its inception.

Our presentation, "Light and Joy," highlighted the success we've experienced in forming the Advisory Council simultaneous with the development of the Transgender Youth Program. It was amazing to see our small room fill with people for our breakout session and to receive the feedback that the way we approach including community voices and reach beyond the doors of the clinic to support patients and their families was inspiring to others. I was so grateful for the courage of my co-presenters in sharing their stories of becoming involved with the clinic and Advisory Council. And equally grateful for the moral support of several other advisors and leaders from across UVM Medical Center who attended our session and cheered us on.

As the program grows, so does our invitation to include diverse voices and varied ways of participating in the work we do to support gender variant youth and their families, both in clinic and in the context of the larger community. The Advisory Council partners with Outright Vermont as support for families beyond those in clinic, and we participate in the Translating Identity Conference at UVM to both spread awareness and invite members of the community to participate in the Advisory Council. We have been working on a variety of projects including presenting at staff trainings and Grand Rounds, providing input on upgrades to electronic health records systems, updating informational material, and creating social media forums for caregivers. One of the things that makes our Advisory Council great is that there are opportunities for varied and flexible participation. Advisors can participate in person, over the phone or by email, and the variety of projects allows each member to use their unique skills towards the common goal of improving the intersectional care for gender variant youth and families across the hospital.

BECOME A PATIENT FAMILY ADVISOR

Want to make a difference in the development of the Transgender Youth Program? The Transgender Youth Program is seeking patient/family advisors to bring the patient and family voice and perspective to all aspects of planning and decision making at UVM Children's Hospital. Our patient/family advisors become part of our team on committees and workgroups designed to improve patient care. If you are interested in learning more or to become a patient/family advisor please email theresa.emery@uvmhealth.org or charlotte.safran@uvmhealth.org



Transgender Youth Program: Two Years in Review

By Theresa Emery

On September 12, 2016, the Transgender Youth Program officially opened. Now, almost two years later, we take a look back at the development that has occurred in this short amount of time. In 2016, Martina Drawdy, MD and Jamie Mehringer, MD recognized the need for a program specifically focused on medical transition for youth. Both had been working with a few trans youth in their individual practices, and they saw the opportunity to meet the needs of trans youth across Vermont and northern New York.

With the support of the UVM Children's Hospital Administration, Drs. Drawdy and Mehringer began to formulate a team of collaborating providers dedicated to serving trans youth. They connected with providers across disciplines including Primary Care, Urology, Psychiatry, Psychology, Plastic Surgery, Reproductive Endocrinology & Gynecology, community providers, Patient- and Family-Centered Care, and Endocrinology, where the program was officially opened.

At the time of the program opening, the Transgender Youth Program Advisory Council was created through the Patient- and Family-Centered Care model. The Advisory Council has been imbedded in each step of the development of the program. The Trans Youth Program and the Advisory Council continue to grow together and provide support to our youth and families at the clinic, across the hospital, and with our partnering community agencies. Our advisors remain at the heart of the program, keeping the focus directed on patient- and family-centered care.

As the program developed and the needs of our youth were being identified, the Transgender Youth Program recognized the need for a skilled nurse. Candy Bedard, RN was approached for this position and gladly accepted, although she recognized she had limited knowledge in this area. Candy is a seasoned nurse having been at UVM Medical Center for over 30 years. Candy whole heartedly began to develop her knowledge base to best serve our trans youth with compassionate and comprehensive care. Candy remains an integral part of the Trans Youth Program and many families look forward to seeing her bright smile when they come to clinic.

Two Years in Review—Continued

Through the hard work of the Trans Youth Program team and the support of the Children’s Miracle Network, the position of social worker was introduced in the spring of 2017. The role of the social worker was developed to provide further education, care coordination and advocacy for the trans youth in our community. Theresa Emery, MSW stepped into the position to meet this need and has since gone on to connect with each of our families at intake, appointments and follow-up. Theresa serves as “unofficial program director” and helps to coordinate hospital-wide initiatives in collaboration with our Transgender Youth Program Advisory Council.

In August 2018, Erica Gibson, MD took over as medical director of the Transgender Youth Program, following Dr. Drawdy’s departure. Dr. Gibson comes into this role with extensive experience working with LGBTQ adolescents in her Adolescent Medicine Clinic. Under the direction of Dr. Gibson, we hope to continue to stay at the forefront of providing leading comprehensive care to trans youth in a rural state.

At the time of the opening of Trans Youth Program, twelve patients were initially being served. Two years later, we are working with over 85 families. We recognize that the need for the Transgender Youth Program is ongoing, and we strive to provide the best care to trans youth in our community.



Pride Parade

The Transgender Youth Program, along with the UVM Children’s Hospital, UVM Medical Center and the Larner College of Medicine will be walking in the [2018 Burlington Pride Parade](#).

“I am proud to be the coordinator of the Patient- and Family-Centered Care program for The University of Vermont Children’s Hospital. I have had the privilege of working in active partnership with patients as well as families of LGBTQ youth to build an inclusive Trans Youth Clinic at UVM Children’s Hospital. I want folks in our marvelous community to know that we are here and we will continue to partner with patients, families, and our community to create a high-quality, safe and inclusive health care setting for all.”

- Charlotte Safran

If you would like to walk with the Transgender Youth Program, please contact Theresa Emery at theresa.emery@uvmhealth.org or **meet us at the Hood Plant Parking lot on King Street at 11:30am.**

Please visit us at our table during the festival in Battery Park immediately following the parade. We will be there on hand to answer questions about the services offered by our program and other hospital initiatives.

BECOME A FOSTER PARENT

The Department for Children and Families is currently seeking trans and queer affirming families throughout Vermont for youth of all ages. Many of these LGBTQ youth have experienced significant trauma and need safe, stable homes with caring adults to help them heal. Might that adult be you?

Consider becoming a foster parent. You will be supported through trainings and education, peer support, stipends, and professional services.

To learn more please visit fostercare.vt.gov and complete the Foster Care Inquiry form. You can also call your local [Family Services District Office](#) and ask to speak with a resource coordinator.

Upcoming Events in the Community

Outright Vermont Fire Truck Pull

Saturday, September 22

The Outright Vermont Fire Truck Pull is September 22nd from 12-2 pm! It's YOUR chance to show your solidarity with LGBTQ youth in Vermont by joining in on this hilarious, hands-on fundraiser to support Outright's work across the state.

This year, you can help us raise \$60,000 to make sure Outright is there for young people across the state who need safety, support, and community. Your life-saving support goes directly to our work across the state in schools and communities, and with youth and their families.

Bring 11 of your best friends and together you'll raise \$2,000 in solidarity with LGBTQ youth. Join in at: <http://give.outrightvt.org/ftp>

Pride Week

Make sure to check out all the events associated with Pride Week! Check out the [Community Calendar](#) on the Pride Center VT's webpage for more information.

M or F? Vermont Pride Youth Theater

Friday, January 25

For grades 8-12

Youth theatre artists from throughout central VT present this stage adaptation of *M or F?*. Based off the 2005 novel written by Lisa Papademetriou and Chris Tebbets. Adapted by Gene Heinrich and directed by Cher Laston. *M or F?* examined questions of gender identity, dating and social relationship among adolescents.

TRANSGENDER YOUTH PROGRAM

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To find health information, or for convenient and secure access to your medical record through MyHealth Online, please visit UVMHealth.org or call us at (844) 886-4325.

If you are interested in learning more or to become a patient/family advisor please email Charlotte.safran@uvmhealth.org

ADDRESS

111 Colchester Avenue
East Pavilion, Level 4
Burlington, VT 05401

PHONE

(802) 847-3811

Support Groups

- Trans Parent Group meets the first Monday of each month at Outright, 6:30 - 8 pm. <http://www.outrightvt.org/trans-parents/>
- Queer Care Group meets the second Monday of each month at Outright, 6:30 - 8 pm. <http://www.outrightvt.org/queer-care/>
- Trans Group meets the last Tuesday of each month at Outright, 4:30 - 6 pm. <http://www.outrightvt.org/trans-group/>
- Gender Creative Kids Group meets the second Sunday of each month at Outright, 2 - 4 pm. <http://www.outrightvt.org/gender-creative-kids/>
- Check out the OutrightVT [event calendar](#) for ongoing events like Trans Parent Group and Queer Care Group (for parents/caregivers of trans and queer youth).