

## **WPATH President's Message regarding Standards of Care for the Health of Transgender and Gender Diverse People, Version 8**

**28 July 2022**



Dear WPATH Members and Supporters,

I hope this message finds you and yours all well, safe and healthy.

I am pleased to share with you the latest update regarding the Standards of Care for the Health of Transgender and Gender Diverse People, Version 8 (SOC-8).

The development of the SOC-8 has been a long and complex process, which started 5 years ago (on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2017 to be precise!) with the start of establishing the Guideline Steering Committee, including the SOC8 Chair Dr Eli Coleman, and the SOC8 Co-Chairs Dr Asa Radix and Dr Jon Arcelus.

This was followed by the development of the scope of the guidelines and determining the individual SOC8 chapters. Following a number of calls for application, in March 2018 the process of selecting SOC8 Members based on expertise commenced. The Evidence Review Team for the SOC8 was selected in May 2018. WPATH selected Johns Hopkins University with

Dr Karen Robinson, Director, of JHU Evidence-based Practice Center to assist the SOC8 Chair and Co-Chairs to refine the topics, review questions for systematic reviews and conduct systematic reviews (March 2019).

Subsequently, the recommendation statements were drafted by the Working groups of all 18 SOC8 Chapters. From September 2019–February 2022 all SOC8 Members voted (during various rounds) on the recommendation statements using a Delphi process.

There was also a global pandemic of COVID-19 raging for much of this period, which caused many people and their families around the world grief, upset, and hardship; and inevitably the COVID-19 has had a profound impact on healthcare systems and societies globally; and has caused delays in many more than one way – travel was significantly impeded.

Nevertheless, under the determined and resilient expert leadership of the SOC8 Chair Eli Coleman and the SOC8 Co-Chairs Asa Radix and Jon Arcelus and the energetic perseverance and stamina of all the SOC8 Members the processes of grading of the recommendation statements and the writing the text supporting the recommendation statements progressed steadily and surely.

The references used in the text supporting the recommendation statements was independently validated by external reference checkers from our communities. The first draft of the SOC-8 was finalized on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

Feedback on the statements by International Advisory Committee was requested and provided followed by a public comment period of 6 weeks during December 2021 and January 2022, which generated a total of 2,688 comments from 1,279 people.

Subsequently, a revision of the final draft of the SOC8 considering all comments was undertaken from January until May 2022. The approval of the final Draft by Chair and Co-Chairs took place on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2022. The final Draft of the SOC8 was approved by the WPATH Board of Directors on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022.

Another round of final revisions and editing followed to ensure that all formatting, use of language, etcetera was similar and consistent and the more than 1500 references in the references section appeared in the text of the 18 SOC8 chapters and were also referenced correctly using APA-7.

So, the SOC8 was submitted to the International Journal of Transgender Health on the 8<sup>th</sup> July and we are currently eagerly awaiting the proofs for review, and expect these sometime next week.

Anyone, who has published an article knows how long the production publishing period (typesetting, formatting, etcetera) usually takes for one article, let alone a manuscript as big as the SOC8. The attached graph shows where we are in terms of our timeline.



Let me assure you that we are doing everything we can to ensure the SOC8 is ready and available online at the start of the 27<sup>th</sup> WPATH Scientific Symposium in Montreal, Canada, but it will be a very tight race against time!

With warm regards and stay safe, and we all hope to welcome you in Montreal, Canada.

Walter

WPATH President

