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New Rule Proposed by Health and Human Services Department Would Limit Access to Life-Saving Healthcare for Transgender and Gender Diverse Communities

This morning the Health and Human Services Department announced a proposed rule that would change the definition of gender - severely limiting access to life saving gender affirming healthcare. We know that even with some of the strongest anti-discrimination laws here in Washington State transgender and gender diverse communities face persistent barriers to accessing gender affirming healthcare. Our Healthcare Access Manager Mattie Mooney shares, "This newly proposed rule will only further complicate the already complex process of accessing gender affirming healthcare. We regularly support community members who have extreme anxiety in accessing care and advocating for themselves in healthcare systems. Rules like the one proposed today are at the root of that anxiety and are incompatible with a culture of health; if this ruling were to go in to effect it will undoubtedly lead to poorer health outcomes for transgender and gender diverse people."

From our Executive Director, Karter Booher:

"Access to gender affirming healthcare is life saving for transgender and gender diverse people. For decades we have worked with leaders from transgender and gender diverse communities and our allies to expand access to gender affirming healthcare here in Washington State. We still have work to do to ensure that transgender and gender diverse people can access life saving gender affirming healthcare no matter their zip code, race, gender identity or income but one thing is certain: this proposed rule will erode the progress we have made and result in poorer health outcomes for our communities."

Transgender and gender diverse communities here in Washington State should continue to access the gender affirming care they need. If community members face barriers to care or denials of care we encourage them to reach out to us directly or make a report to the Washington Office of the Insurance Commissioner.

Additionally, we encourage transgender and gender diverse communities and our allies to **take action**. You can submit a comment to the Health and Human Services Department protesting this proposed rule and learn of other ways to take action by going to www.protectranshealth.org.

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