

JUSTINE DAVIS MLA
INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR JOHNSTON

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Statement: Children's Healthcare Should Never Be a Political Battleground

Monday 22nd December 2025

The CLP Government's harmful and reckless decision to ban gender-affirming healthcare for Territory young people is a profound failure of leadership.

Releasing this decision just days before Christmas, without consulting health professionals, service providers or families, has left vulnerable children and young people to process devastating news at a time when support services are least available.

If the Government genuinely cared about our children's safety, it would listen to the doctors and healthcare providers who care for them.

The CLP is misleading voters by suggest this decision brings the Northern Territory into line with other jurisdictions.

It does not.

Gender-affirming care for under-18s remains lawful and available in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania and the ACT, where safeguards and clinical oversight have been strengthened, not withdrawn.

The Northern Territory is now choosing to go backwards.

In April, CLP Health Minister agreed the safeguards in place were adequate when he rejected the Australian Christian Lobby's petition.

"NT Health provides evidence based clinical and support services and care in line with the policy and the Australian Standards of Care and Treatment Guidelines for Trans and Gender Diverse Children and Adolescents," he said.

This ban is a clear backflip on medical evidence, and the Health Minister must explain why he has reversed his position.



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This decision appears driven by pressure from conservative lobby groups, with no regard for the harm it will cause. It will increase distress, destabilise families and force Territorians to leave the NT for essential healthcare.

The evidence shows gender-affirming care, including puberty blockers, give young people time to explore their identity safely, and significantly reduces distress, self-harm, and suicide risk.

These treatments are reversible and cause no long-term harm if stopped.

To ban these treatments defies reason.

I stand with Territory families, health professionals and the LGBTQIA+ community in calling for this decision to be reversed. We owe our children healthcare guided by evidence, compassion, and care - not politics.

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