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Trump Orders Halt to US Funds for Kids' Gender-Affirming Care

- HHS required to produce report on such care within 90 days
- About half of US states already restrict such care for kids

By Jessica Nix and Kelsey Butler

(Bloomberg) --

President Donald Trump ordered US agencies to halt funds for gender-affirming care in children younger than 19, threatening research and clinical support for institutions that provide the services.

The executive order directs the Health and Human Services Department to release a report on gender dysphoria and gender-affirming care for children within 90 days. US agency and department heads should immediately stop funding hospitals or medical schools that provide such services in order to "end the chemical and surgical mutilation of children," the order said.

The broad move follows a campaign pledge from Trump to shut off government funds for gender transition procedures. Medicaid programs in 29 states and the District of Columbia cover at least one service for gender-affirming care, according to the health research firm KFF. About half of US states have restrictions on medical care for transgender youth.

The directive defines gender-affirming care as the use of puberty blockers or any intervention that delays puberty, including the use of sex hormones.

Such care at an early stage is crucial to the overall health and wellbeing of transgender and nonbinary children and adolescents, US government health officials have said. Just under half of transgender and nonbinary youth have attempted suicide, according to a 2024 survey from the Trevor Project, an advocacy group.

A 2024 report commissioned by England's National Health Service questioned the science behind early puberty suppression and related treatments, saying the evidence behind such care for minors was "remarkably weak."

The US Supreme Court in December suggested that it's likely to uphold laws that ban gender-affirming treatments for minors. The justices are considering a case that may determine whether transgender kids in two dozen states can access treatments.

The American Medical Association and other leading US medical groups in 2023 passed a resolution opposing any criminal and legal penalties against patients seeking gender-affirming care and health care facilities and clinicians that provide it. Supporters of the restrictions say the laws protect vulnerable children from risky and dangerous medical procedures. The AMA didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

The order is "a brazen attempt to put politicians in between people and their doctors, preventing them from accessing evidence-based health care supported by every major medical association in the country," Human Rights Campaign President Kelley Robinson said in a statement.
--With assistance from Fiona Rutherford and Robert Langreth.

To contact the reporters on this story:
Jessica Nix in New York at jnix20@bloomberg.net;
Kelsey Butler in New York at kbutler55@bloomberg.net

To contact the editors responsible for this story:
Cynthia Koons at ckoons@bloomberg.net
John Lauerman, Peter Vercoe

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