

**Even though Chase Brexton does not provide Gender Affirming Surgery, we are dedicated to supporting your journey.** If you are seeking Gender Affirming Surgery, we are here to help you get the care you need by offering information and resources. We can also help you get any necessary assessments and documents that may be requested by your surgical team.

### WHAT DOES THE GENDER AFFIRMING SURGERY PROCESS LOOK LIKE?

- 1. YOUR GOALS.** Make a list of your Gender Affirming Surgery wants, needs, and questions.
- 2. YOUR SURGICAL TEAM.** Find potential surgeons to work with. Confirm that they take your insurance.
- 3. DISCUSS WITH YOUR PROVIDER.** Schedule an appointment and discuss the surgery of interest with your Primary Care Provider (PCP) and discuss having a surgical referral sent to the surgeon's office.
- 4. SURGICAL SCHEDULING/INTAKE.** Contact the surgeon's office and confirm the requirement for scheduling a consultation appointment. Certain documentation may be required prior to scheduling, including:
  - a. **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT.** Your surgeon and/or your insurance may require you to complete an assessment with 1-2 Behavioral Health Therapists. If you have a therapist, either within or outside of Chase Brexton, ask them if they can write a letter of support for you.
  - b. **LETTERS OF SUPPORT.** Letters of support for the procedure may be required. If so, send the letter(s) to the surgeon's office.
  - c. **MEDICAL RECORDS.** Some surgeons may require medical records, such as office notes or lab results, to be sent from your providers.
- 5. CONSULTATION.** A consultation appointment is where you and the surgeon meet and discuss the surgery, including your medical history, current health status, and details about the procedure(s).
  - a. For the consultation, create and bring a list of your wants, needs, and questions to this appointment.
  - b. Not sure what to ask? Check out these resources:
    - i. Healthy Trans Consultation Check List: [bit.ly/HTquestions](https://bit.ly/HTquestions)
    - ii. Preparing for Surgery and Recovery YouTube series by Dr. Colt: [bit.ly/GAprepqs](https://bit.ly/GAprepqs)
- 6. INSURANCE AUTHORIZATION.** The surgeon's office will submit your medical records and other applicable documentation to your insurance company to obtain authorization for surgery. Once authorized, you will be able to schedule the surgery.
- 7. SURGERY PREPARATION.** There may be additional procedures to complete before surgery, such as hair removal and completing tests or labs.
  - a. **PRE-OP APPOINTMENT.** Once all necessary documents are sent to the surgeon's office, you will schedule a pre-operative appointment to review details regarding preparations, including tests and lab work, for the surgery, the surgery itself, post-operative care, and follow-up appointments.
  - b. **SCHEDULE PRE-OP MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS.** These could be labs, radiology exams, and/or wellness check-ups. For example, it is often required for individuals to have a physical with their PCP 30 days prior to the surgery date. Be sure to schedule an appointment with your PCP during that timeline.
- 8. SURGERY.** Your procedure is completed by your surgeon.
- 9. POST-SURGERY HEALING.** Rest, heal, follow all your surgeon's post-surgical care instructions, and attend any post-operative appointments.

**HOW DO I FIND A SURGEON I CAN TRUST?** It's important to select a surgeon who has experience with Gender Affirming Surgery and with whom you feel safe.

- 1. SEARCH TRUSTED SOURCES.** To begin looking, you start with a trusted source such as [TransHealthCare.org](https://transhealthcare.org) online.
- 2. TALK WITH MORE THAN ONE SURGEON.** Did you know that you can consult with more than one surgeon? It can be helpful to meet with a few surgeons to find one that best meets your needs.
- 3. ASK COMMUNITY MEMBERS.** Check in with community members about their experiences with local surgeons. There are support spaces to connect with other folks who have had Gender Affirming Surgery online and in-person. Please refer to the "Gender Affirming Surgery" section in the *Resources for Transgender, Nonbinary, and Gender Expansive Care*, created by the Center for LGBTQ Health Equity at Chase Brexton Health Care: [bit.ly/CLHEresourceelist](https://bit.ly/CLHEresourceelist)

## **DOES INSURANCE COVER GENDER AFFIRMING SURGERY?**

- 1. CHECK YOUR PLAN.** Most insurances cover many gender affirming surgeries but it's good to confirm what they cover. Remember, there may copay and co-insurance fees!
- 2. CONTACT YOUR INSURER.** The following resources offer suggestions and advice on how to contact your insurance company: [healthytrans.com/insurance-101](https://healthytrans.com/insurance-101) and [bit.ly/transhealth-insurance](https://bit.ly/transhealth-insurance)
- 3. CHECK WITH YOUR SURGEON.** Confirm that the surgeon accepts your health insurance.
- 4. BUDGET FOR YOUR OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSES.** You will receive information about your Out-of-Pocket Maximum expenses prior to the surgery date. This will indicate the maximum potential personal cost of your surgery - not including medications and after surgery expenses.
- 5. UNINSURED OR UNDERINSURED?** If you are uninsured or underinsured and a Chase Brexton patient, you can connect with our Social Work & Outreach Department for support with insurance and healthcare costs. You can contact them directly at 410-837-2050 ext. 8806

**I RECEIVED AN INSURANCE DENIAL FOR MY SURGERY. WHAT DO I DO NEXT?** There are many reasons why a Gender Affirming Surgery may be denied by insurance. There are appeal processes in place to support individuals who experience this.

- 1. DENIAL LETTER.** If you receive a letter or communication from your insurance company that indicates a denial of services, hold onto that letter. It will explain why the surgery was denied and include information about how to appeal the denial.
- 2. GET YOUR SURGICAL TEAM'S HELP** and call them to plan next steps. They may have already submitted an appeal on your behalf.
- 3. SEEK YOUR PCP'S HELP.** Your Chase Brexton providers are also able to provide additional documentation as needed for your appeal.
- 4. LEGAL SUPPORT.** If needed, there are legal resources that can assist with appeals such as FreeState Justice and their legal support services: [freestate-justice.org/need-help/](https://freestate-justice.org/need-help/).

## **I'M UNDER THE AGE OF 18. WHAT DO I DO?**

- 1. DO SOME RESEARCH.** For folks under 18 who are seeking Gender Affirming chest surgery, some surgeons provide this care and some insurance companies cover it.
- 2. TALK WITH YOUR PCP.** Chase Brexton is here for you! We work with gender diverse folks of all ages. Discuss your gender care goals and surgical options with your provider. Even if you may not be able to access surgery until you are 18 years old, you can begin the assessment and pre-surgical preparations sooner.
- 3. FIND SUPPORT.** Consider joining a surgery preparation and recovery support group to gather information and build support.