



Trans Primary Care Guide:

a web-based, illustrated resource guide for the primary health care of trans and gender-diverse clients

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Introduction

Trans people are individuals whose assigned sex at birth is incongruent with their current gender identity or expression.¹ Accessing health care for basic and transition-related medical services remains a frequent challenge for them.^{2, 3, 4}

Due to a lack of education on the unique health care needs of trans people in medical and nursing school curricula, many primary care providers are currently uncomfortable with, and avoid treating, trans clients because they perceive their own knowledge to be inadequate to meet their clients' needs.^{2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9} Readily accessible, credible informative sources for primary care providers are scarce and in-person training sessions are often limited by time, place, and instructor availability.^{10, 11, 6, 12, 13}

This project aims to help meet Rainbow Health Ontario's goal to decentralize trans expertise out of Sherbourne Health Centre and Toronto in order to reach care providers in remote locations across the province of Ontario, and potentially across Canada.

Objectives

Overwhelmingly, existing online resources lack visual communication and focus on teaching cultural competency and communication skills without addressing the fear or hesitation health professionals experience about meeting the health care needs of trans people.⁸ Hence the purpose of this project was to create a web-based resource guide that prepares primary care providers in serving trans clients by:

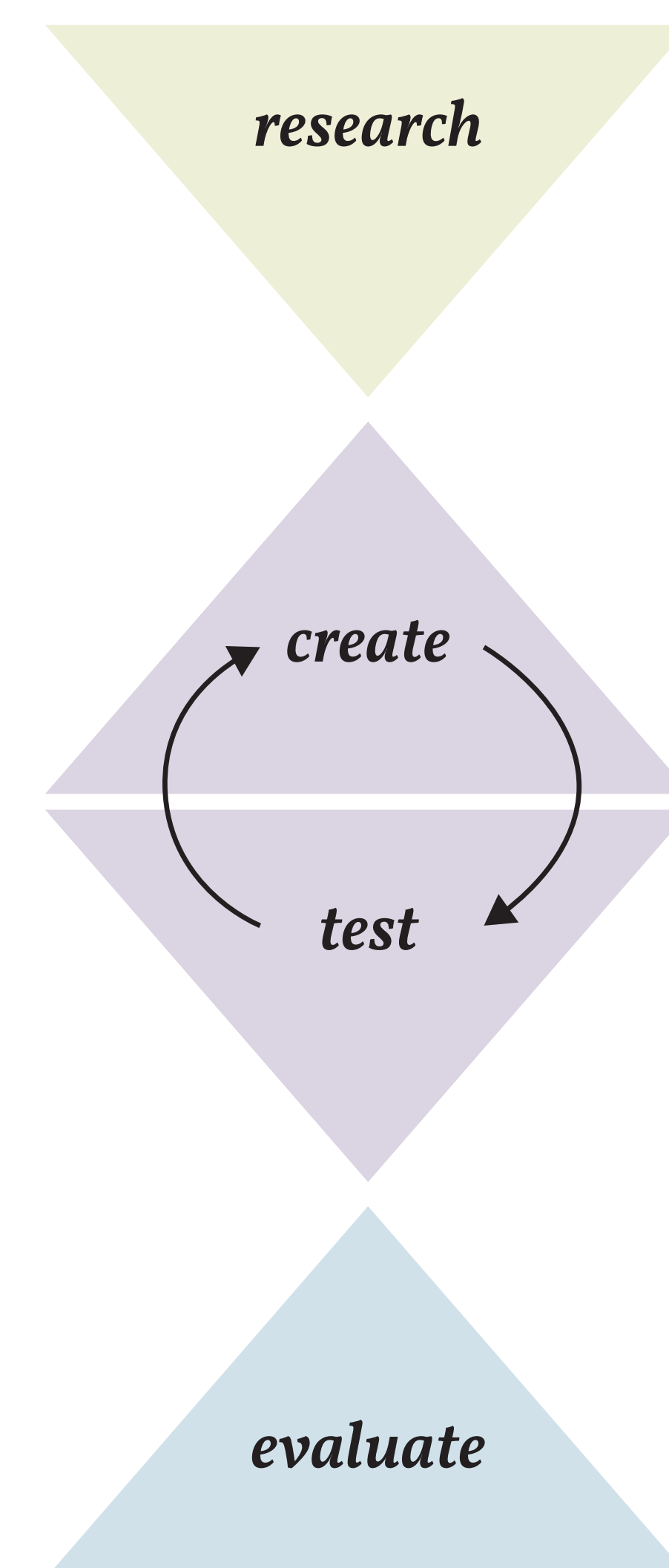
1. Creating interactive visualizations that raise awareness for health inequities faced by trans people and that clarify commonly held misconceptions held by primary care providers.
2. Enriching the medical discourse with illustrations that help care providers envision how to deliver care in a culturally competent manner.

Materials & Methods

The *Trans Primary Care Guide* is a website which offers non-sequential access to guidelines and protocols for hormone therapy and primary health care for trans clients.¹⁴ It details tasks involved in the assessment of clients for hormone therapy and provides point-of-care practice tips and guides for the management of hormone therapy and long-term preventive care.

Design strategy

A community-centred, participatory, four-stage research design strategy focused on iterative improvement has informed the design and development of the *Trans Primary Care Guide*.



Needs assessment

Participation in Rainbow Health Ontario's Trans Health Connection training sessions allowed the researcher to gather community expertise and identify the needs of current health care providers.

Formative evaluation

Feedback on draft illustrations was gathered from trans participants through an anonymous, online survey in order to collect responses on how acceptable and respectful the visualizations are.

Usability testing

Biomedical Communications students tested an early prototype of the website as proxies for educated health care professionals. Assessments included the ease of finding information, ability to keep track of location and satisfaction with the user interface design.

Summative evaluation

The researchers are currently conducting an online survey with primary care providers that allows participants to test and evaluate sections of the *Trans Primary Care Guide*.

Implications

Participant responses from the formative evaluations have informed the redesign of the illustrations and ensured they are acceptable and respectful. Qualitative and quantitative data from the evaluations are currently being analysed in order to determine the website's effectiveness and usefulness to primary care providers. The *Trans Primary Care Guide* will be launched by Rainbow Health Ontario on July 14th 2016.

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Design decisions

The author used contextual illustrations in order to exemplify trans competent care in a clinical encounter and interactive graphics in order to help actively engage providers with the medical content from published guidelines.¹⁴



Figure 1: Targeted interactive graphics
Common fears and misconceptions related to the provision of hormone therapy are directly addressed with the use of interactive illustrations. The user is able to explore clarifications and learn what their role in the primary care of trans clients is.

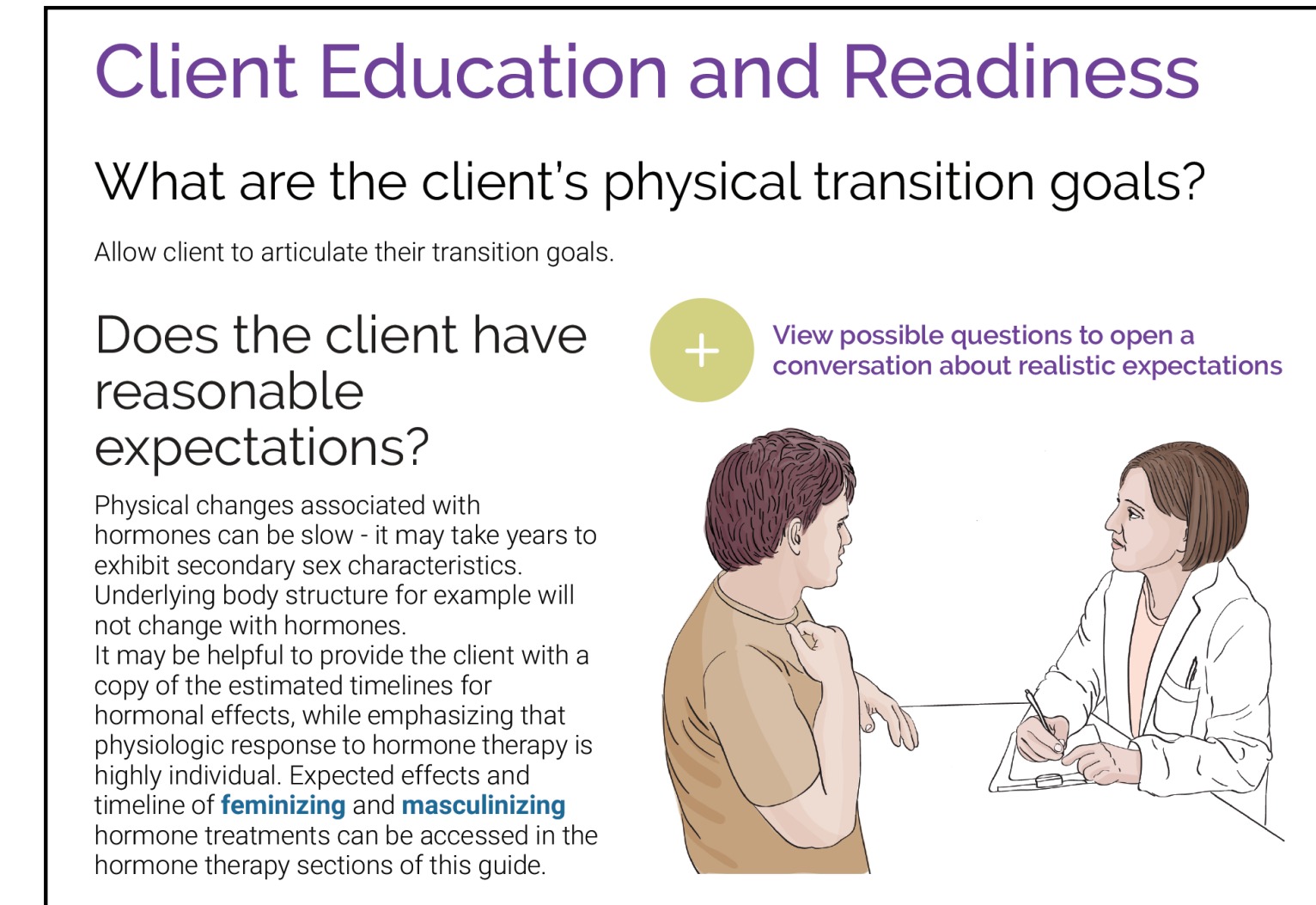


Figure 2: Illustrated cultural competency skills
Potential clinical encounters or conversations between the provider and the client are illustrated in order to help providers create a welcoming, supportive environment that acknowledges a diversity in gender identity.

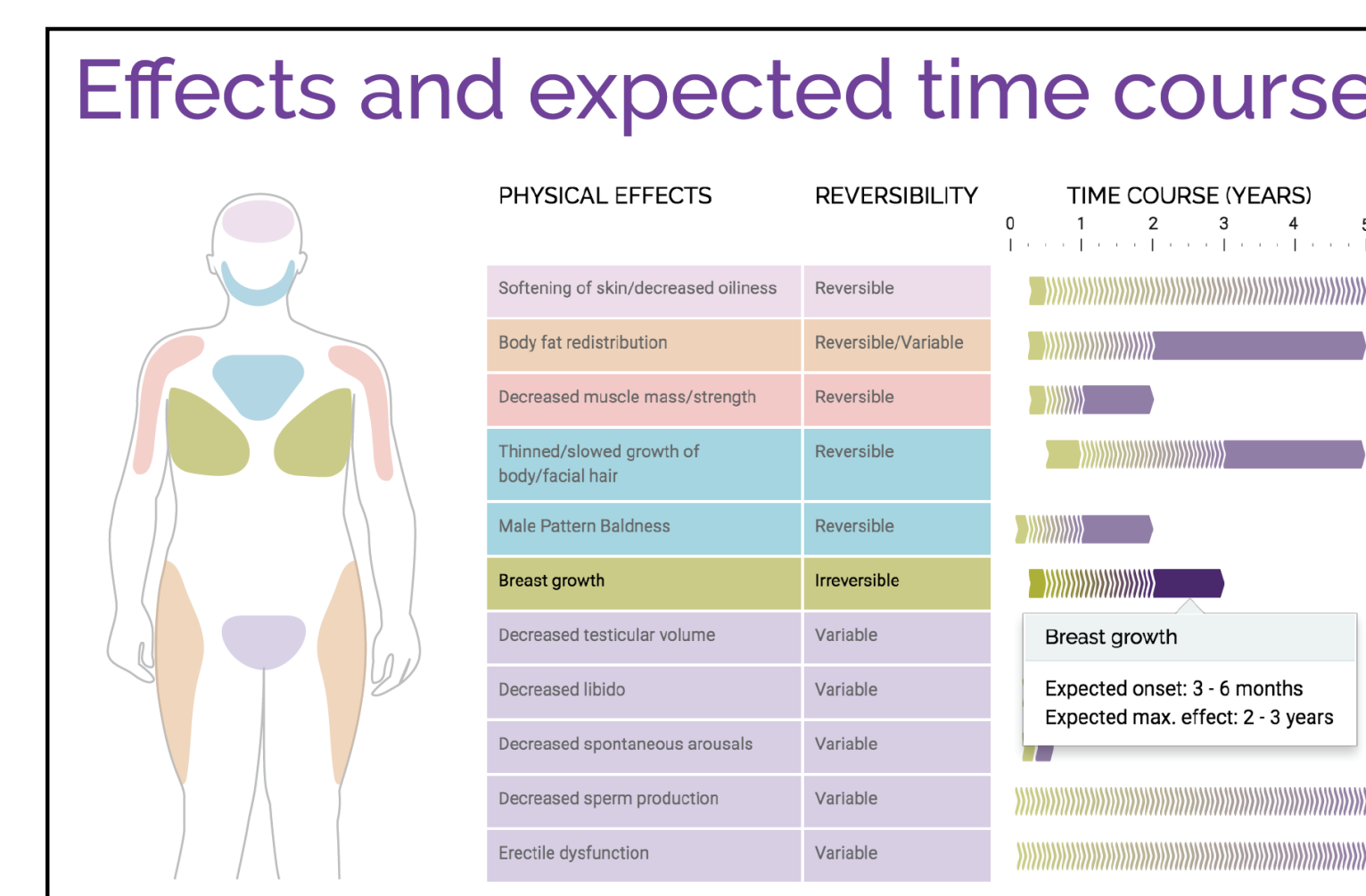


Figure 3: Interactive timelines
Interactive visualizations of the expected effects and time line of hormone therapy regimens. The user is able to hover over physical effects and click to learn more about individual expected changes.

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