

The Gender-Affirming Care Evaluation (GRACE) study

Fall 2023 update

The study has been a big success, thanks to you! Between September 2022 and July 2023, over 6,600 trans and gender diverse Veterans completed the GRACE survey and 40 were interviewed about their experiences with gender-affirming care. Please read below to see some of our key findings and important messages that Veterans shared with us.

KEY FINDINGS

- 78% of Veteran respondents reported wanting gender-affirming surgeries.
- Among Veterans interested in gender-affirming surgeries, **84% said that it would be acceptable to get gender-affirming surgery through VA** (14% said “possibly acceptable” and 2% said “not acceptable”)
- 53% of Veteran respondents delayed or went without needed gender-affirming care in the past 12 months and **cost** was the #1 reason.

Veterans’ words

“These are not just things we want to do. **These are not elective surgeries**, like they’ve been labeled. They’re lifesaving surgeries. This is no different than removing a gallbladder or replacing a heart. These are things that will save peoples’ lives.” -39-year old white woman

“What’s important? For people to basically care. **They don’t have to agree with it, but just treat you like you’re a human being.** Like you’re not different. You’re not crazy ... people [who] treat you with respect and treat you how you see yourself ... that’s important.” -34-year old Black man

You can make a difference!

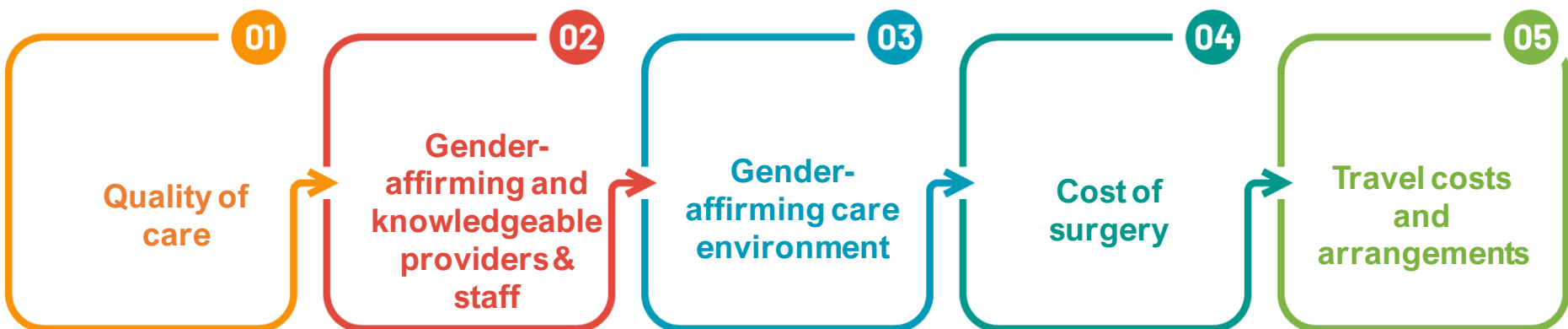
Voice your opinion to the federal government. When the public comment period opens , enter comments into the Federal Register site.

▶ **Check here regularly:** <https://www.regulations.gov/#!home>

Search for “gender alterations” and “remove exclusion”

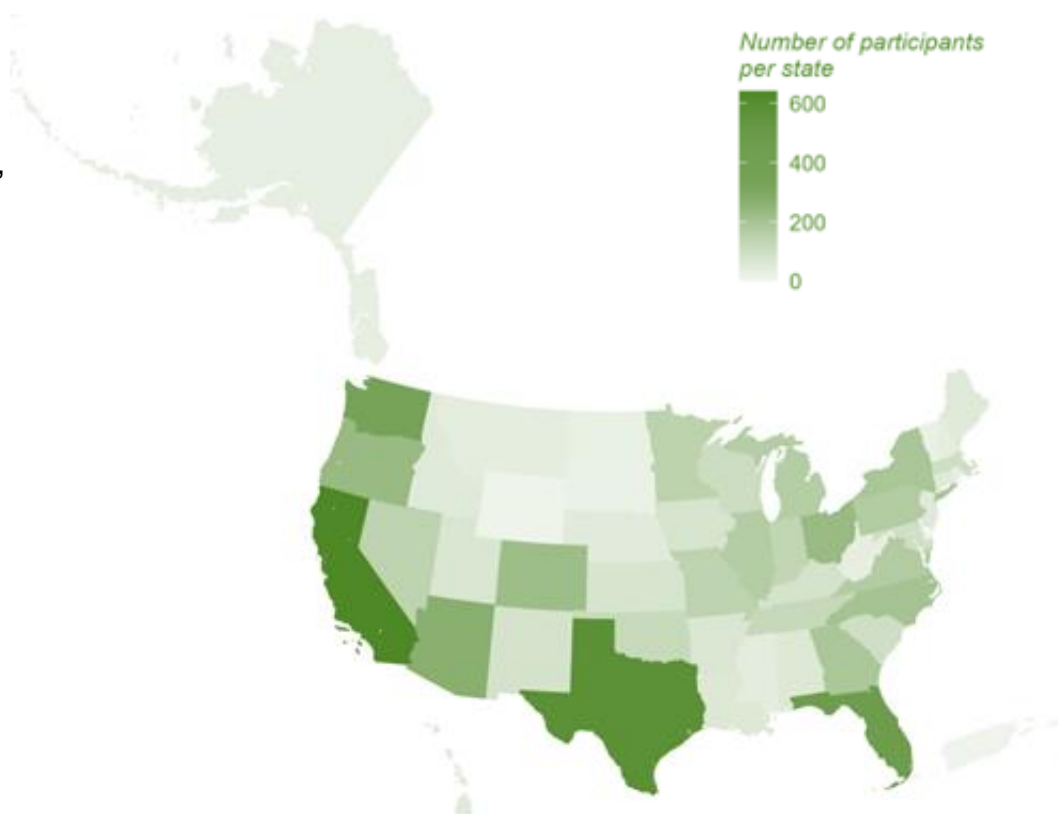
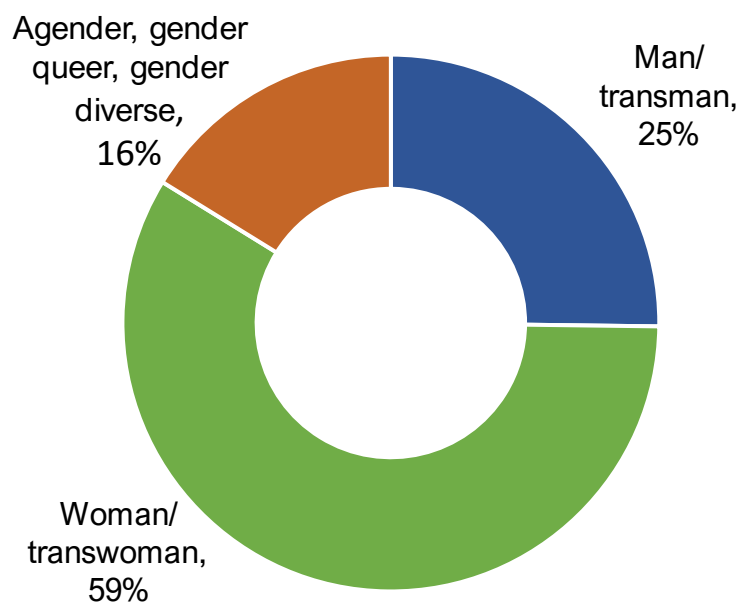
Note: We acknowledge that “gender alterations” is an outdated and problematic term. We suggest using it as a search term because that was the language used in the medical benefits package that is being considered for removal.

What factors* are most important to Veterans related to receiving gender-affirming surgeries through VA?



**Ranked by importance*

Who participated in the GRACE study?



VA Resources



Find your VHA LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinator:

There is an LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinator (LGBTQ+ VCC) in every VA hospital to help you get the care you need. VHA policies require that your health care is delivered in an affirming and inclusive environment and that VHA employees respect your identity.

<https://www.patientcare.va.gov/LGBT/VAFacilities.asp>

VHA LGBTQ+ Health Program

<https://www.patientcare.va.gov/lgbt/>



<https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>