



Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

5600 Fishers Lane • Rockville, MD 20857

www.samhsa.gov • 1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727)



March 6, 2025

Dear Colleagues and Grantees:

The behavioral health needs of children, youth and their families are one of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) highest priorities. We know from our national surveys that far too many young people report mental health and substance use challenges. To address these needs, we have received a significant increase in funding from Congress to support children and youth, especially in schools, to strengthen the system of care. Yet, there remains a great need and opportunity to ensure children and youth are receiving all the appropriate care and services they need to thrive.

As you may know, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) sent a Quality and Safety Special Alert Memo (QSSAM) yesterday, alerting providers to the dangerous chemical and surgical mutilation of children, including interventions that cause sterilization. The QSSAM reminds providers of their duty to serve all patients, especially children, with dignity and adherence to the highest standard of care that is informed by robust evidence and the utmost scientific integrity. The QSSAM's message to providers on the dangerous chemical and surgical mutilation of children, including interventions that cause sterilization, was informed by a growing body of evidence and protective policies in other developed countries across the world. The memo notes that the U.S. is now an outlier in the treatment of gender-dysphoria in children, as the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Finland have recently issued restrictions on the use of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones for children.

Moving forward, SAMHSA will review its policies, grants, and programs in light of the concerns discussed in the QSSAM and may begin taking steps in the future to appropriately update its policies to protect children from chemical and surgical mutilation. SAMHSA may also consider re-scoping, delaying, or potentially cancelling new grants in the future depending on the nature of the work and any future policy change(s) SAMHSA may make. SAMHSA will follow any applicable substantive and procedural requirements in taking any future action.

Thank you for your continued partnership with HHS and SAMHSA and for your cooperation as we work together to improve the health and well-being of the children of this country and to Make America Healthy Again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher D. Carroll". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Christopher D. Carroll, MSc
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Mental Health and Substance Use

Enclosed:
CMS, Quality and Safety Special Alert Memo, "Protecting Children from Chemical and Surgical Mutilation," March 5, 2025



