

Transgender health in correctional systems

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In the article titled "Trans and Living in Prison: A First-Person Perspective," Ruth Utnage describes her experience in prison as a transgender woman. Her attempts to get appropriate medical and mental health care are described in a special issue on Transgender Health and Corrections in the *Journal of Correctional Health Care*.

Ms. Utnage writes openly about her experiences in custody and the treatment she received. "The environment that the state correctional system created and imposed upon me was incredibly threatening and traumatizing," she writes. After many years she was able to pursue hormonal treatment.

Also in this issue of *Journal of Correctional Health Care*, Kristy Clark, Ph.D., MPH from Vanderbilt University, and co-authors examine the "oppression-to-[incarceration](#) cycle" of Black American and indigenous (First Nations) Australian trans women. Black American and First Nations Australian trans women are overrepresented in prisons relative to White and non-Indigenous cisgender and trans people.

"This high burden of incarceration among trans women is produced in part by the disproportional experiences of discrimination, violence, and victimization trans women face across their lifespan," state the authors.

In the current study, the authors developed a conceptual model demonstrating how interlocking forces of oppression collectively inform, maintain, and exacerbate pathways to incarceration, incarceration experiences, and post-release experiences.

Journal of Correctional Health Care Editor-in-Chief Amy Harzke, DrPH, MPH, MDiv, from University of Texas Medical Branch, states, "Understanding the experiences of transgender and gender diverse people ultimately serves as the foundation for quality, gender-affirming health care, and respectful correctional treatment. Policy changes and

their implementation are driven and sustained as much by empathy and ethics as by evidence."

More information: Kristi E. Gamarel et al, Improving Access to Legal Gender Affirmation for Transgender Women Involved in the Criminal–Legal System, *Journal of Correctional Health Care* (2022). DOI: [10.1089/jchc.21.09.0085](https://doi.org/10.1089/jchc.21.09.0085)

Ruth Utnage, Trans and Living in Prison: A First-Person Perspective, *Journal of Correctional Health Care* (2022). DOI: [10.1089/jchc.2022.29020.ruu](https://doi.org/10.1089/jchc.2022.29020.ruu)

Kirsty A. Clark et al, Developing the "Oppression-to-Incarceration Cycle" of Black American and First Nations Australian Trans Women: Applying the Intersectionality Research for Transgender Health Justice Framework, *Journal of Correctional Health Care* (2022). DOI: [10.1089/jchc.21.09.0084](https://doi.org/10.1089/jchc.21.09.0084)

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