



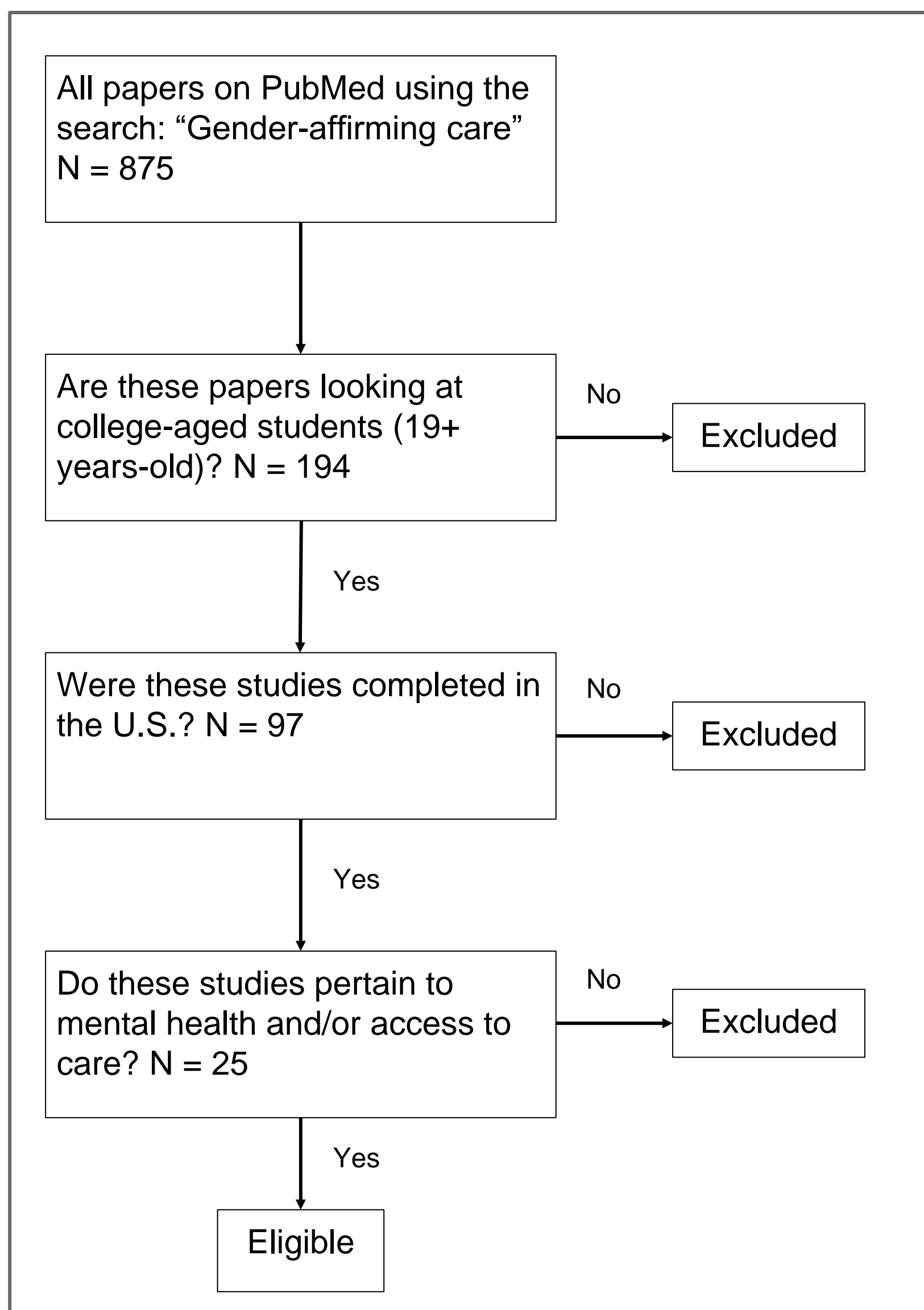
## INTRODUCTION

- Gender-affirming care includes a wide variety of healthcare services such as primary care, surgical subspecialties and various forms of therapies.<sup>1,2,9,11</sup>
- There are already disparities in this area of medicine, especially on college campuses and recent legislative actions can extinguish this area of healthcare altogether.<sup>1,2,3,5,9,11,13,15</sup>
- Transgender and nonbinary individuals have higher rates of suicidal ideation and victimization when compared with cisgender students.<sup>4,6,7,8,12</sup>
- LGBTQIA+ college students may face additional barriers such as financial stress, comfortability being out on campus or at home, and gender dysphoria.
- Universities can improve the health and wellbeing of their transgender and non-binary student population by providing quality gender-affirming care that is more easily accessible.
- The primary aim of this review is to summarize literature that supports access to gender-affirming care on college campuses can better the outcomes of transgender and nonbinary students and the role healthcare providers can play.

## METHODS

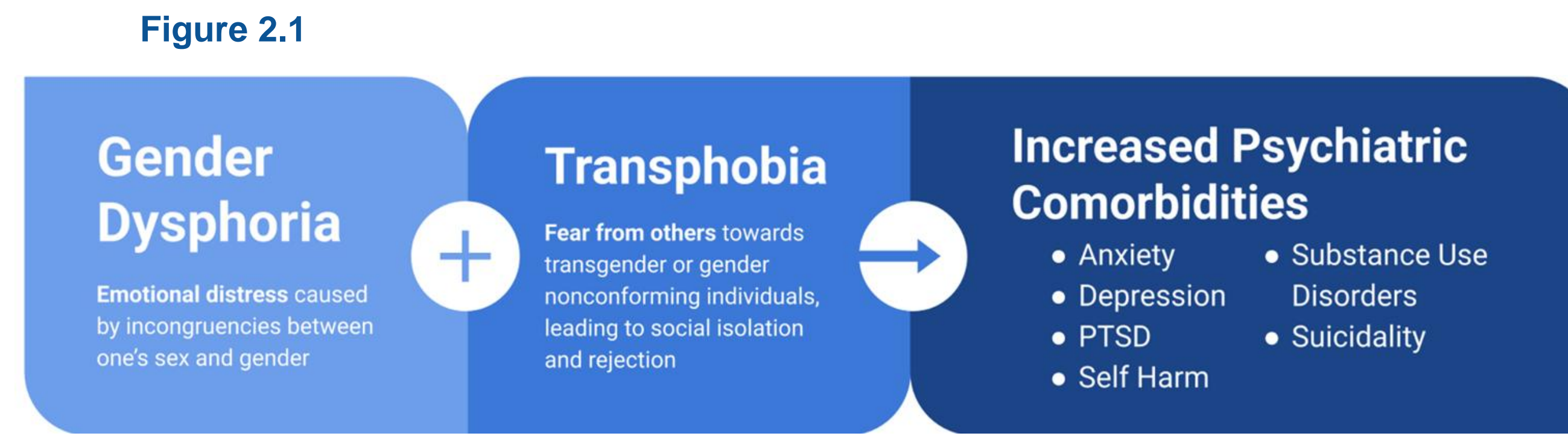
- This focused literature review aimed to summarize **current research on transgender, gender non-conforming, or nonbinary college students** who are:
  - Over the age of 19, and
  - Reside in the United States
- Primary sources were found via **PubMed** search & narrowed using strategic criteria (See Figure 1.1).
- Contextual resources from **The Trevor Project, The Human Rights Campaign and The National Center for Transgender Equality** were also summarized.
- Sources underwent **thematic analysis** to identify the most frequent, overarching findings, organized by topic in the "Results" section.

Figure 1.1. Flow diagram of articles eligible for this review.



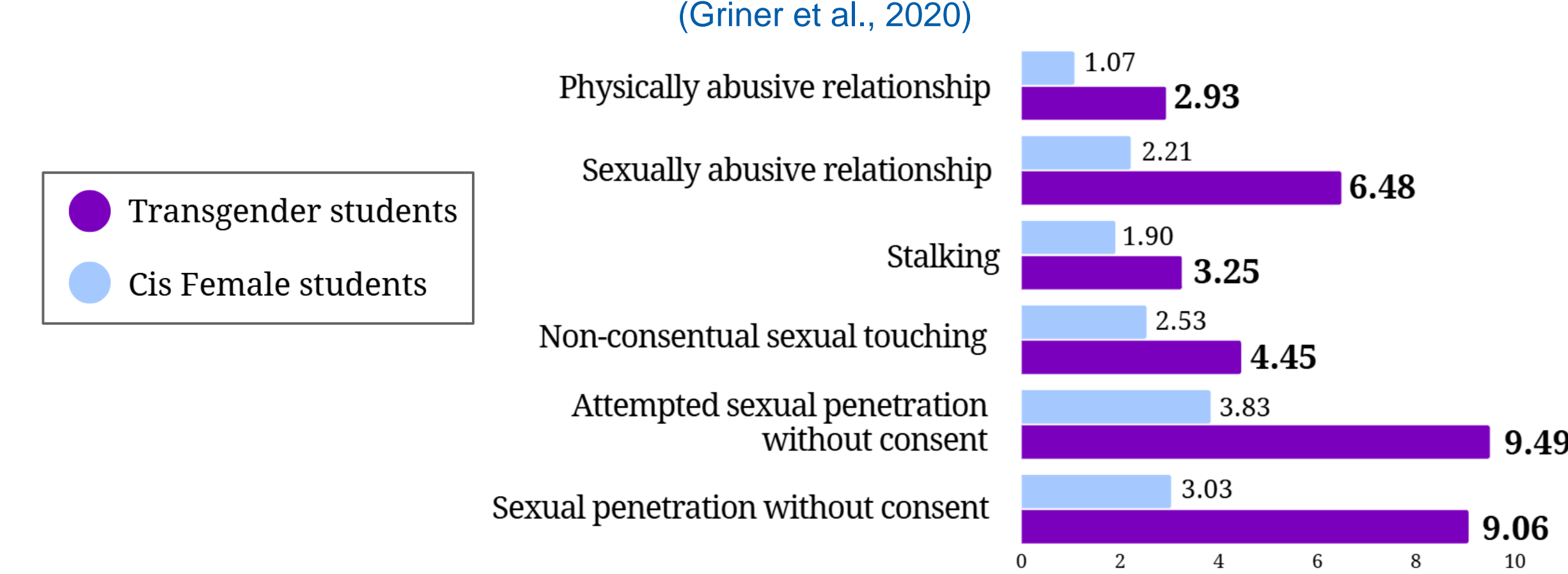
## RESULTS

### Mental Health Disparities



Pascale, A. B., & DeVita, J. M. (2024). Transgender college students' mental health: Comparing transgender students to their cisgender peers. *Journal of American College Health*, 72(1), 135-141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2021.2024212>

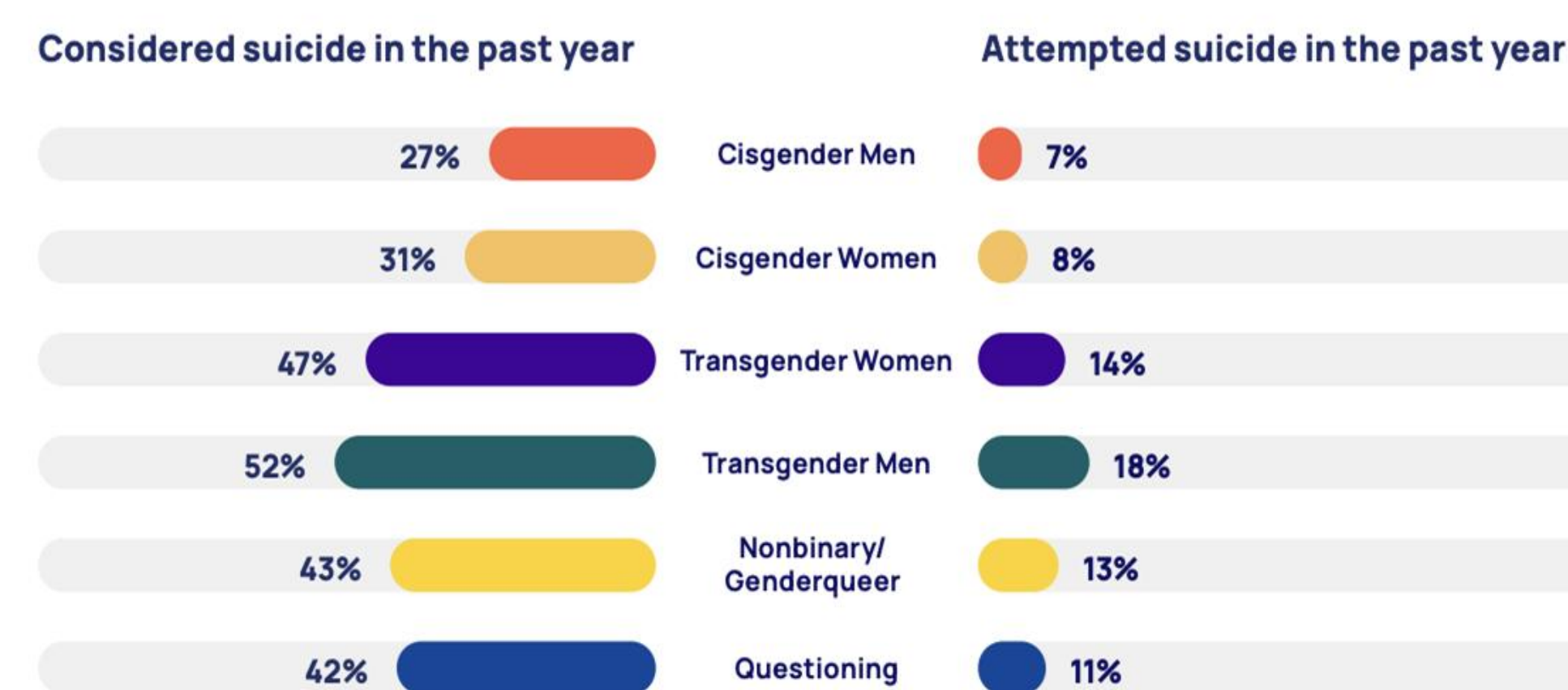
Figure 2.2: Odds Ratios of Violent Victimization Among Transgender & Cisgender Female College Students, Relative to Cis Males (Griner et al., 2020)



Griner SB, Vámos CA, Thompson EL, Logan R, Vázquez-Otero C, Daley EM. The Intersection of Gender Identity and Violence: Victimization Experienced by Transgender College Students. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. 2020 Nov;35(23-24):5704-5725. doi: 10.1177/0886260517723743. Epub 2017 Aug 8. PMID: 29294863.

### Benefits of Gender Affirming Care

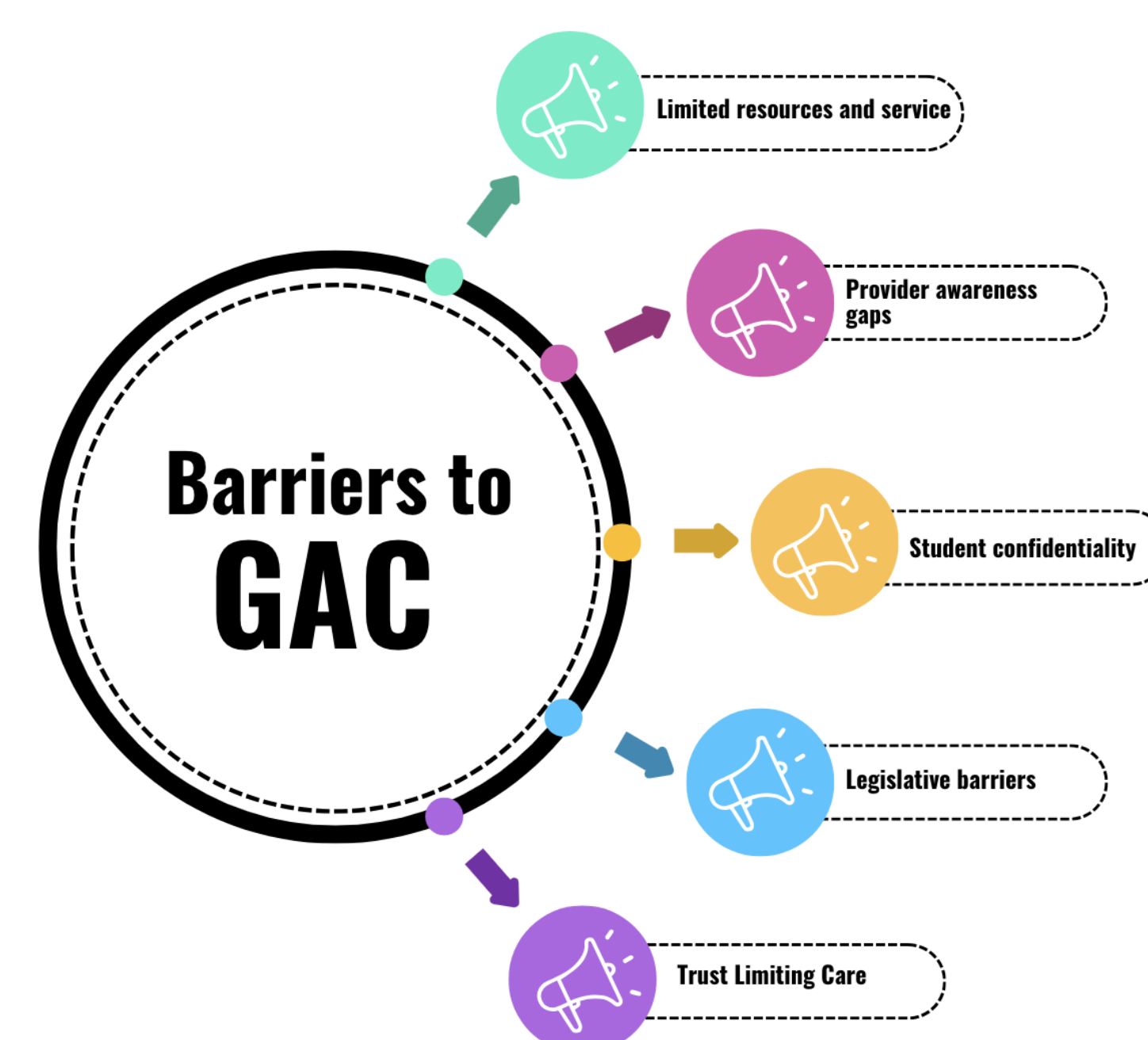
Figure 2.3. Rates of considered and attempted suicide among LGBTQ+ young people by gender identity. (2024 U.S. National Survey...)



2024 U.S. National Survey on the Mental Health of... [www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2024/assets/static/TTP\\_2024\\_National\\_Survey.pdf](https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2024/assets/static/TTP_2024_National_Survey.pdf). Accessed 9 Jan. 2025.

### Barriers to Care

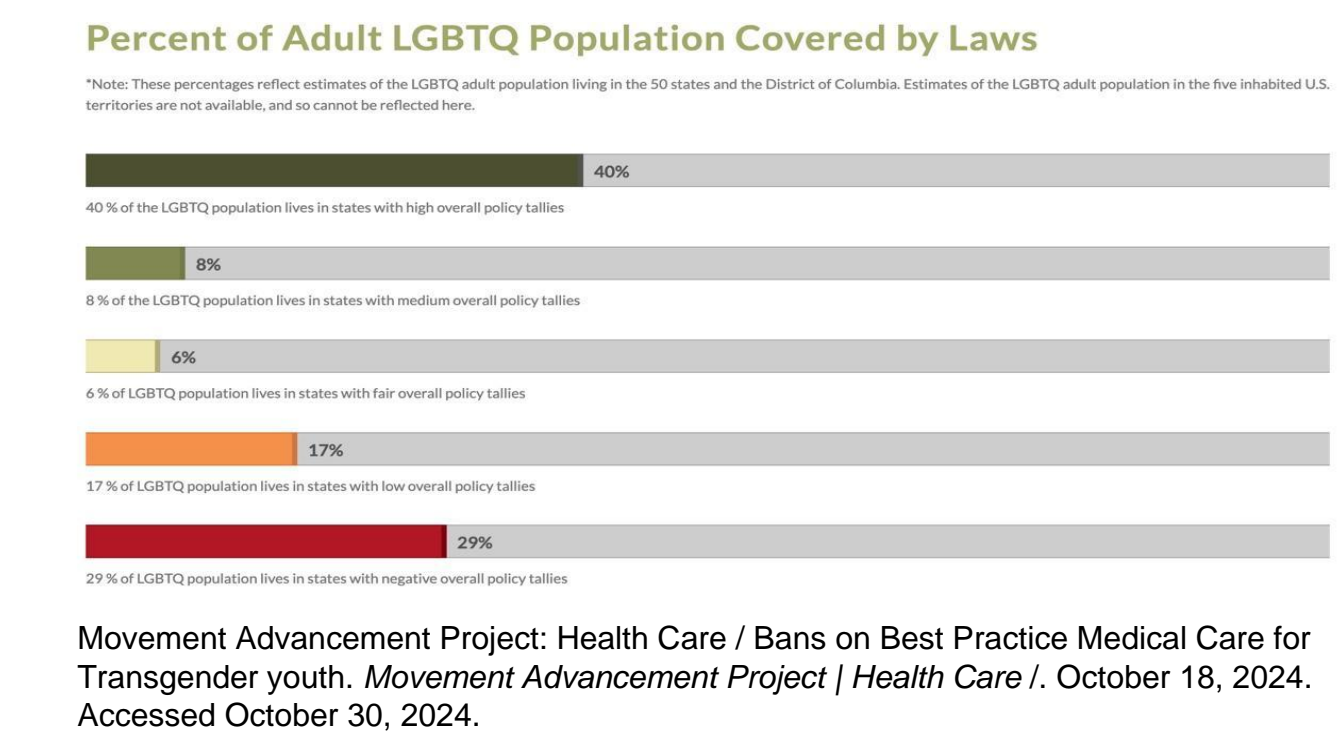
Figure 2.5. List of Barriers to Gender-Affirming Care



## Summary of Results

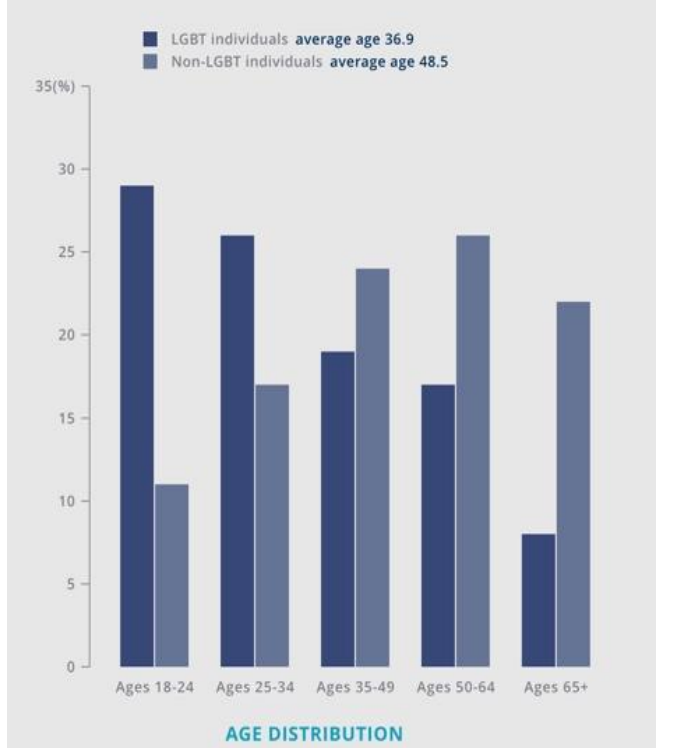
- Unique stressors like gender dysphoria and transphobia are additional sources of emotional burden.<sup>2</sup> (Figure 2.1)
- Both factors put trans & nonbinary students at higher risk for psychiatric disorders.<sup>2,3,4</sup>
- Physical harm plays a key role in mental health and wellbeing.
- Trans & nonbinary college students are especially vulnerable to interpersonal violence and assault.<sup>4</sup>
- Transgender individuals were more likely to attempt suicide than their cisgender counterparts.<sup>13,16,17</sup> (Figure 2.3)
- Mental health is an important aspect of gender-affirming care that can also be affected by physical appearance.<sup>14,15,19</sup>
- Gender-affirming surgery has been found to improve psychological distress.<sup>18,19,21</sup> (Figure 2.4)
- Travel and out-of-pocket costs can vary.<sup>20,21,22</sup>

Figure 3.1



Movement Advancement Project. Health Care / Bans on Best Practice Medical Care for Transgender Youth. *Movement Advancement Project | Health Care*. October 18, 2024. Accessed October 30, 2024.

Figure 3.2



LGBTQ+ Demographic Data Interactive. (January 2019). Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law.

## DISCUSSION

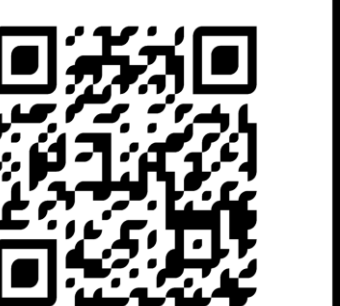
- Gender affirming care improves mental health and overall well-being of transgender and gender non-conforming college students
- Transgender students experience high rates of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation due to discrimination, rejection, and lack of support
- High rates of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and harassment worsen mental health and academic outcomes
- Laws restricting access to gender-affirming care, in the US and Kentucky, significantly impact mental health and well-being (Figure 3.1)
- Anti-LGBTQ+ policies contribute to increased mental health struggles
- Access to hormone therapy, primary care, and counseling improves mental health and academic performance
- Universities must implement policies and resources to promote safety, support, and success to gender-affirming care
- Legislative restrictions, provider knowledge gaps, and lack of referrals prevent access to necessary healthcare
- While some general mental health services exist, they often fail to address the specific challenges faced by transgender students

## CONCLUSION

- Gender-affirming care addresses challenges like discrimination, social stigma, and victimization.
- It also enhances inclusion, mental health, & self-esteem, while reducing suicide rates.
- Current literature on gender diverse college students has several limitations, including:
  - Lack of longitudinal studies
  - Small sample sizes
  - Confidentiality risks
- This review did not account for differences among nonbinary students compared to transgender students, such as decreased social belonging due to gender non-conformance.<sup>12</sup>
- Further research is needed to better understand these student populations, improve gender affirming care on college campuses, and inform healthcare guidelines.

## References

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