



dsd-LIFE ABSTRACT FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Title

Gender Dysphoria and Gender Change in Disorders of Sex Development/ Intersex Conditions: Results from the dsd-LIFE Study

Authors

Baudewijntje P.C. Kreukels, Birgit Köhler, Anna Nordenström, Robert Roehle, Ute Thyen, Claire Bouvattier, Annelou L.C. de Vries, Peggy T. Cohen-Kettenis, on behalf of the dsd-LIFE group

What did we want to know? Information on psychosexual outcome of persons with disorders of development (DSD)/intersex conditions is of great importance for the sex assignment at birth of some newborns with DSD, and for appropriate counseling when a person shows signs of gender dysphoria. We therefore wanted to know more about the experienced gender, gender changes, and gender dysphoria in a 1040 individuals with a variety of DSD.

What did we do?

We collected information on gender change and gender dysphoria in a multicenter study in 14 European tertiary care referral centers (in France, Germany, Poland, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, and Sweden). Information was gathered through interviews and questionnaires.

What were the main results? Gender changes were reported by 5% of the participants. However, only in 1% (3% if Klinefelter syndrome and Turner syndrome - conditions in which gender issues are not prominent - are excluded) the gender change had taken place after puberty and was likely patient-initiated. Thirtynine participants (4%) reported gender variance: to feel in-between male or female, to belong to another gender than male or female, or feeling gender queer, reported alternating gender roles, or showed a gender expression that differed from their reported gender. This group had a lower self-esteem and more anxiety and depression than the other participants.

What does that mean ?

Clinicians should be aware of and sensitive to the possibility that their patients with DSD may not only have transgender feelings and a desire to change gender entirely, but also identify as different from male or female. The complexity of their feelings may make counseling needed for some. To make appropriate gender care possible for people with DSD, the gender normative and gender variant development of children with DSD should be studied in longitudinal studies.

Reference:

Kreukels BPC, Köhler B, Nordenström A, Roehle R, Thyen U, Bouvattier C, de Vries ALC, Cohen-Kettenis PT; **dsd-LIFE** group. Gender Dysphoria and Gender Change in Disorders of Sex Development/Intersex conditions: Results from the dsd-LIFE Study. *J Sex Med.* 2018 Mar 29. pii: S1743-6095(18)30143-7. doi: 10.1016/j.jsxm.2018.02.021.