

## THE PURDUE CENTER FOR VOICE

# *GENDER-AFFIRMING VOICE AND COMMUNICATION TRAINING*

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is “gender-affirming” voice therapy?**

The Gender Affirming Voice and Communication Training program within the Purdue Center for Voice serves gender diverse and trans individuals seeking to adapt their voice and communication in a way that is safe and authentic, resulting in communication patterns that are congruent with their gender identity. Clients are guided to establish healthy and achievable goals, and they are in the driver’s seat when it comes to determining progress. Skilled training is provided in a structured approach in order to transfer new communication skills to everyday situations. This clinic provides affirmative therapy; a non-pathologizing approach to clinical practice that accepts and validates all experiences of gender.

### **What can I expect in my first session?**

In the first session, the lead Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) and graduate student clinicians will seek to get to know you and understand your individual goals. They will obtain some basic acoustic data on your voice and vocal range in order to establish a baseline. The parameters of voice and communication as they relate to the gender spectrum will be introduced. Exploration of these parameters is crucial to establishing communication that is congruent with your identity.

### **What is the format of therapy?**

Sessions are conducted on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, lasting between 45-60 minutes. There are individual sessions and group sessions available. Group sessions can be particularly helpful when the client is working towards establishing habitual use of their desired communication patterns in social, interactive settings.

### **How much does it cost?**

The M.D. Steer Speech, Language, and Swallowing Clinic is now able to accept insurance through Medicare, Anthem, and Aetna. However, not all insurance policies cover voice therapy for gender expression. It is important that each individual contact their insurance company to determine what is covered under their particular policy. Self-pay options continue to be available. Individual sessions are \$45 each and group sessions are \$27 each. Purdue University students are entitled to a 40% discount, and the discount for Purdue Employees is 10%. Those experiencing financial hardship and who do not qualify for a student or staff discount may apply for a need-based reduction of clinic fees.

### **Who can attend gender-affirming voice therapy?**

Adults of any gender identity are welcome. There is no requirement to be affiliated with Purdue University.

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Please call the clinic office at 765-494-3789 to inquire about availability. Please note, sessions are scheduled by semester (fall, spring, and summer). If the semester is underway, we likely will not be able to add new clients to the roster. However, you can give your information to the office and be added to the waitlist for the upcoming semester. You will then be contacted by the program coordinator/head SLP to discuss scheduling options. If you will be using insurance for the sessions, an order from a physician is required and must be faxed to 765-494-0771.

**What is the timeline for achieving my goals?**

This varies from person to person. A realistic goal for your first semester in therapy is to gain an understanding of the various vocal and communication parameters that can be adjusted to be congruent with your gender identity, and to have a pitch range specified to work towards. By the end of the first semester, some folks are already speaking at that pitch and using other parameters successfully to achieve feminization pretty regularly. Others aren't, or are still exploring. By the end of the second semester, most people are using their desired pitch and communication patterns at least half of the time, and are working towards generalization to all of their daily situations.

**Additional Resources**

The National Center for Transgender Equality - <https://transequality.org/>

The World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) - <https://www.wpath.org/>

Gender Spectrum - <https://www.genderspectrum.org/>