Approximately 1.4 million adults and 150,000 youths identify as transgender, meaning those individuals’ gender identity is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth.

Transgender patients often face discriminatory hurdles in accessing medically necessary health care services. A national survey of transgender individuals found:
- Twenty-five percent of those who sought coverage for hormones in the past year were denied
- Fifty-five percent of those who sought coverage for transition-related surgery in the past year were denied

Medically necessary services that affirm gender or treat gender dysphoria include mental health counseling, gender-affirming hormone therapy, gender-affirming surgeries and non-medical social transition.

Improving access to gender-affirming care is an important means of improving health outcomes for the transgender population. Receipt of gender-affirming care has been linked to:
- Dramatic reductions in the rate of suicide attempts
- Decreased rates of depression and anxiety
- Decreased substance use
- Improved HIV medication adherence
- Reduced use of harmful self-prescribed hormones, construction-grade silicone injections and other interventions that have potential to cause adverse events

Positive health effects from gender-affirming care extend to children and adolescents.

The AMA supports public and private health insurance coverage for treatment of gender dysphoria and opposes the denial of health insurance on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.