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<th>A phenomenological study of occupational participation for people who identify as transgender</th>
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<td><strong>Author(s)</strong></td>
<td>Daly, Vivienne; Hynes, Sinéad M.</td>
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Title
A phenomenological study of occupational participation for people who identify as transgender.

Abstract
Introduction: The challenges that transgender people face, caused by a multitude of factors, have been well-documented but changes in occupational participation are less well known. The aim of this research was to explore changes in occupational participation of transgender people. Method: The study used a phenomenological research design. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with five participants. Data was analysed using an interpretative phenomenological analysis approach. Findings: Three themes were identified: Work, Self-presentation, and Role change. Positive reports from transitioning were described as well as ongoing challenges in occupational participation. Various impacts on work and life role changes were reported. The study is limited by not including an “emic” perspective and member checking. Conclusion: The findings indicate that gender transitions can influence occupational participation positively and negatively. A gender transition has the potential to foster a renewed sense of meaning and enjoyment in the everyday lives of people who identify as transgender. For clinicians, it is important to support people who are transgender and those undergoing a gender transition to maximise occupational participation.

Keywords: gender transition; qualitative research; transgender persons; occupation
Introduction

There is a growing awareness in the profession of occupational therapy that identifying as transgender may affect participation in occupations (Beagan et al, 2012), in particular productive occupations, such as employment and education (Doan, 2010; McGuire, Doty, Catalpa & Ola, 2016) and can negatively impact relationships with partners, family and peers (Beagan et al., 2012). Following the disclosure of transgender identity, relationships with families, friends and romantic partners are often strained, and in some instances, relationships end (Dispenza et al., 2012).

Unique physical and psychological health impacts have been documented for this community. Older transgender and gender non-conforming adults have been found to have significantly higher levels of depressive symptoms compared with older cisgender sexual minority adults (Fredriksen-Goldsen et al., 2014). This population of older adults have specific worries related to future care including the use of preferred name and gender identity, visitation access, culture of respect and bathroom use. Discrimination and identity concealment also put this older adult group at an increased risk for social isolation and loneliness (Fredriksen-Goldsen et al., 2014), which have been linked to poorer physical and mental health (Cornwell & Waite, 2009) and increased mortality (Steptoe, Shankar, Demakakos, & Wardle, 2013). Negative impacts are not unique to older individuals.

Within universities, students have reported adverse social interactions with peers, such as experiencing derogatory slurs or physical attacks, which negatively impact academic grades as well as leading to avoidance of social situations (Pryor, 2015).

Compounding effects of multiple sources of stigma also create barriers to accessing routine health care. Shires and Jaffee (2015) surveyed 1711 transgender people in the United States and found over 40% experienced discrimination, verbal abuse, physical assault or
denial of treatment whilst accessing healthcare due to their transgender identity. Likewise, Lindroth (2016) gathered data from twenty transgender people and found that they reported discrimination and disrespect accessing healthcare with estrangement from services highlighted as an implication of this.

Work-related opportunities and challenges that have been discussed in the literature include experiences of transitioning in the workplace, the recruitment process and disclosure of transgender identity at work. Brewster, Velez, Mennicke, and Tebbe (2014) conducted a large-scale qualitative study of 139 transgender people’s experience of gender transitioning in the workplace. Participants found gender neutral uniforms to be a facilitator which made negotiating the workplace during a gender transition easier. Participants found facilities which are divided into gender binaries, such as toilets and locker rooms, can foster conflict with co-workers and negatively impact work. Much research to date has been dedicated to the challenges that are specific to toilet and locker room facilities. The locker room has been found to be an intimidating environment for people who are transgender (Hargie, Mitchell & Somerville, 2017) and discussions with management around what toilets and changing facilities employees were permitted to use can be very uncomfortable (Ozturk & Tatli, 2015).

Discrimination in recruitment processes have also been reported, where jobs are chosen by transgender people because the employer appeared supportive rather than choosing work based on competency, job aspirations or relative experience in that field (Ozturk & Tatli, 2015). Some people choose not to disclose their transitions in the workplace for fear of losing their job or not being considered for promotions (Brewster et al., 2014; Budge, Tebbe & Howard, 2010). There is also evidence to suggest that people who are transgender
are willing to work harder and accept less money, in an attempt to be accepted as members
of the workforce (Budge et al., 2010).

There is a need to for occupational therapists to understand the experiences of transitioning
for people who are transgender. The occupational experiences of people who are
transgender are also not well understood. In this study, we aimed to explore occupational
participation for people who identify as transgender who have or are in the process of
transition. It is important to note that the term “transition” that is used here is highly
variable, and not something all transgender people want or pursue. Transition can mean
different things to different people. Examples include using a different name and/or
pronouns, changing identification, using hormones or hormone suppressants, and/or any
number of surgical interventions - all or none of those is a perfectly suitable route for a
person who identifies as transgender. The participants in this study decided themselves if
they had transitioned or were still in that process, this was not decided by criteria set by the
researchers.

This study aimed to address the following questions:

1. What changes occur in the occupational participation of transgender people after or
during transition?

2. What is the influence of gender transition on daily life and roles?

Method

Design

The study used a qualitative phenomenological design as the researcher sought to gather a
detailed narrative of the lived experiences of the individuals (Green & Thorogood, 2004;
Giorgi, 2012) and why these experiences transpired (Sutton & Austin, 2015). An
interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach was chosen as it can facilitate understanding of how an individual experiences and attributes meaning to their engagement in everyday occupations (Clarke, 2009a; Smith & Osborn, 2008). IPA encourages the researcher to simultaneously document their own interpretation of the meaning of the phenomena for the individual (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). An IPA approach is also appropriate when analysing data from small populations (Smith & Osborn, 2008; Sutton & Austin, 2015). Ethical approval for the study was granted by the National University of Ireland Galway College of Medicine Nursing and Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee 19/02/2018.

Participants

Purposive sampling was used to select participants, based on common qualities that are pertinent to the research (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). Participants were eligible for inclusion in the study if they 1) had experienced gender transition, irrespective of what that meant to the person, and 2) were over the age of 18 years at the time of recruitment. Administrators in transgender support groups and poster advertisement across REMOVE FOR BLINDED REVIEW facilitated recruitment. Prospective participants contacted the researcher if they were interested in participating. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants.

Data Collection

Data was collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews- an appropriate data collection method with socially marginalized groups (Hartey & Muhit, 2003; Mullen & Moane, 2013). Face-to-face interviews are suitable for exploring sensitive topics participants may not want wish to discuss within a group environment (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008). An open-ended topic guide was used. Topics were chosen
based on previous research in the area and guided by the research question. While the
questions acted as a guide, the open-ended format enabled flexibility in participants’
responses. In accordance with IPA, the researcher perceived the interviewees to be experts
of their experiences (Geer, 1988). The topic guide was piloted on two cisgender
participants (participants whose gender identity and gender expression are aligned with the
sex assigned at birth). This may have caused normative bias and is a flaw in the design of
the study but was done as the target population was difficult to recruit from. Piloting led to
rephrasing of some of the questions to foster a broader discussion of certain topics.
During the interview process, the researcher led continuous co-construction of the meaning
of the data. The co-construction of data is considered essential in ensuring rigour in data
collection, particularly in IPA studies (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004; Lietz, Langer &
Furman, 2006). A number of questions were used to ensure co-construction of experience,
for example “Am I correct in saying that [experience] has [the interviewer’s interpreted
meaning of the experience] for you?” The researcher also kept a reflective journal in order
to record and reflect upon their observations and responses to the interviews (Clarke,
2009b). The journal was used during the entire research process as a method of exploring
and analysing actions and thoughts. The positionality of the researcher within the study
was a key part of the reflective process. Critical reflection on positionality was completed
through the research process by responding to set questions such as “How do my personal
identity, views, perspectives and experience fit within the context of my research?”

Data Analysis

During the process of data analysis, the researcher aimed to formulate an interpretive
account of the individuals’ unique experiences. Audio recordings of interviews were
transcribed verbatim by the researcher following data collection. Pseudonyms were applied
during the transcription, analysis and presentation of results and discussion.
The researcher first immersed herself in the data by reading transcripts several times, as recommended in the literature (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). This is one of the key steps in the analysis of qualitative data (Bird, 2005), which enables the researcher to gain an overall understanding of the narrative accounts.

The researcher was then able to assign codes and write interpretive summaries within the margins of each individual narrative account (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In accordance with applying an IPA approach, the researcher did not impose a predetermined theory of the results (Smith & Eatough, 2006; Smith & Osborn, 2008). This approach introduced outcomes that the researcher had not considered previously. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) emphasise the need for researchers employing IPA to analyse each interview individually.

Having established codes, these codes were then interpreted by the researcher to establish themes, with corresponding subthemes established where necessary. The relevance of these themes and subthemes were consistently checked against the transcripts to ensure that they appropriately summarised the narratives within the data (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher adapted an etic position (Reid, Flowers & Larkin, 2005; Smith & Osborn, 2008) which meant using verbatim quotes to make sense of the data and to solidify interpretation of the narrative account (Clarke, 2009b).

**Rigour**

To increase rigour during the research process (Mays & Pope, 1995), a number of strategies were implemented. The researcher used a reflective journal from the outset of the research process to identify and acknowledge her own views (Smith et al, 2009). Moreover, the reflective journal acted as a marker of development of the opinions and the decision-making processes to allow for auditability.
Reflection and discussion (with co-author SH) regarding the analysis of the data is noted to help in achieving rigour in qualitative studies (Pringle, Drummond, McLafferty & Hendry, 2011). Moreover, rigour is enhanced by exposing oneself to external auditing, with this process ensuring that the data analysis is credible (Pringle et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2009). The researcher demonstrated this by providing the second author with sections of coded transcriptions from the data collection, who further ensured the codes, themes and subthemes were reflective of the narrative accounts gathered from the interviews.

Findings
Five people were recruited to the study - three people identified as trans masculine and two as trans feminine. Four participants described themselves as having transitioned while one participant reported still being in the process of transition. Table 1 describes the demographic characteristics of participants.

**INSERT TABLE 1 HERE**

Table 2 presents the themes, sub-themes and coding excerpts. Three themes were identified from the data.

1. Work
2. Self-presentation
3. Role change

**INSERT TABLE 2 HERE**

**Theme 1: Work**
All participants found that their gender transitions impacted them at work. Participants described both negative and positive experiences. Discussions related to the type of work they chose to engage in, their performance at work, and how disclosing or not disclosing their transgender identities has impacted them.
Some participants reported that their transgender identity impacted their career choice. During the pre-transition stage, some participants stated that they chose to work in particular fields in efforts to conform with the gender assigned to them at birth. Marian described how, prior to transitioning, she found herself choosing to engage in many leadership roles, and was very competitive in order to maintain an image of masculinity.

“I always felt that as a male, I always had to be competing against other men...” [Marian]

This was not the case for Mike, who stated that prior to transitioning, when he was presenting as female, he always pursued jobs that were typically male.

“I was pretty good at doing manual things, girly stuff was never for me...and before, I was a textile worker, and it was a manly job you know...”. [Mike]

Rose, who has always worked in what she describes as a masculine environment, never felt the need to change her career because of her transition.

“...I’m still doing the same job...It doesn’t feel dramatically different in that respect”. [Rose]

For Marian, currently retired, she felt her gender identity impacted her ability to maximise her potential in furthering her career. She was reluctant to get too close to co-workers or employers and thought this was the reason she did not achieve more at work.

“...even though I was quite successful, I never really achieved what I thought I was truly capable of”. [Marian]

Prior to transition, some participants put a lot of time and best efforts into their work, using work as a distraction.

“You fill up your life to divert you from the big thing...I was a workaholic...I kept my head down and worked. But on reflection...I didn’t want to admit what the issue was”. [Eric]

Some participants found that disclosing or discussing their transgender identity at work was a challenge, largely due to the fear of adverse reactions from co-workers.
“...Because...the males are very, bitchy. And I felt that if I was to come out as ‘in transition’, I would’ve been isolated...you’re not going to last five minutes in that job there”. [Mike]

Paul spoke about moving jobs frequently so he did not have to deal with questions or comments from work colleagues.

“I was always really hiding before which is why I moved jobs as well”. [Paul]

Rose was also guarded at work with regards to her colleagues. She did not try to make friends at work because she wanted to keep her work-life separate from her life outside of work.

“I’d be a bit careful about what I’d say at my job. There has been issues. I’ve almost compartmentalized my life so much that I’m like two different people. There’s the (Rose) of the workplace and the (Rose) who’s off duty”. [Rose]

Some participants reported that during the transition period they found it too difficult to look for work and as a result were unemployed during this time.

“And you can’t go for a job interview, if you’re in the middle of transition...And transgender people are usually quite high achievers...We are very high achievers who go from whatever to nothing”. [Eric]

Paul cited that the reason he is currently unemployed is that, until he has completed all of the necessary surgeries to physically transition, having to explain to employers why he needs time off for recovery and dealing with the curiosity of co-workers would be too challenging.

“...it would’ve been very difficult to work throughout this...Mentally and physically I am totally fit for work, as I’m coming out the other end of the transition. It’s just during the transition that it’s exceptionally difficult”. [Paul]

Theme 2: Self-presentation

All participants noted that they modified self-care routines post-transition, doing so to ensure that their physical presentation corresponds with their gender identity, to avoid
being mis-gendered. Wearing make-up and dressing were the main issues discussed by participants.

Most participants in the study experienced considerable changes in their self-care routines. For the two transgender female participants in the study, incorporating makeup into their self-care routine was valued. Both participants felt that everyday activities would be affected if they did not wear make-up. Participants felt the need to incorporate makeup into their everyday routines before setting out to do anything else.

“Even if it’s only to go and empty my bin or take something to the communal laundry or whatever, nobody has ever seen me without my makeup”. [Marian]

The importance of not being mis-gendered was discussed by Rose.

“...I don’t want anyone to mistake my gender... I suppose I’m always being judged, and think that transgender women are always being judged”. [Rose]

Rose stated that she felt “higher on the social sphere” if her gender was not mistaken by others. There were financial and time commitments that went hand-in-hand with the new self-care routines that both Rose and Marian had.

“It gets quite tedious...it causes me quite a lot of frustration, as a lot of time and effort has to go in to making me look like a passable female. At the very least, you’re talking about two hours of head-to-toe body hair removal, makeup, clothing...”. [Rose]

Most of the participants stated that how they dressed changed after their transition. For Paul, dressing as what he would consider a typical male was imperative as it affirms his male identity to other people. It is important to him that so that people do not call him by his previous female name.

“...once I started looking more the part, I started going to my local shop again...if you see somebody who’s now dressing how they feel...they’re less likely to call me by the old name”. [Paul]

For most participants in the study, this change was an important part of their transition, and dressing and style have now become valued aspects of their daily routines.
“...I never cared about clothes before, and all of a sudden I want to look smart when I go outside”. [Paul]

Knowing how to dress after initiating a transition was something that was a challenge for some participants, with implications of this discussed by Rose.

“...colour coordination, how to put on a pair of tights, what goes with what. You make mistakes, you face public ridicule you know, in presenting properly”. [Rose]

Mike felt that he always presented in a masculine way growing up, with the way he dresses not being overly different to before he began his transition.

“...I was always manly anyway, for me it didn’t make any difference...I always wore something that wouldn’t be showing anything”. [Mike]

For some participants prior to transitioning, the type of clothes they were required to wear resulted in uncomfortable experiences. For Mike, the requirement to wear a skirt at school was distressing, causing him to detest going to school as a result.

“I hated school, because you had to wear a skirt, I detested a skirt”. [Mike]

Theme 3: Role change

Gaining new life roles was a concept most participants discussed during interviews, predominantly citing it as a positive aspect of a transition. The extent to which individuals gained new roles differed. Participants reported feeling a responsibility to take on the role of advocate for other transgender people. They stated that this role was enjoyable and valued, bringing with it responsibilities.

“Taking a friend for a coffee...having a chat with someone who’s having difficulties, helping someone who’s having difficulties with a member of their family”. [Eric]

Paul reported going to trainings and conferences and trying to make a difference to the people around him. He stated that he is “feeding back into the world in a way I didn’t do before”.

12
This increased sense of enjoyment in activities is associated with an increased sense of confidence and authenticity in daily life, which participants attributed to their gender transitions.

“I’ve developed a strength and a confidence that I never had before. It extends into everything”. [Paul]

For Marian, while she supports and advocates for other transgender people, it is not her only role. It is important to her that as an individual she is recognised as more than a transgender woman.

“That’s not my exclusive activism... I try to be as representative of and engage myself in society as much as possible. I don’t want or need to be recognised as a trans person, I am a woman, I am a woman of many, many different aspects”. [Marian]

Participants stated that they have not lost roles, instead the roles they have been enacting throughout their lives are reconceptualised under different titles. For Rose and Marian they spoke about their roles within the family. For Rose she “should’ve been a son, a father” but instead is a daughter and a mother. To her it felt the same; it was just the title that was different. She said, “My core sense of being is the same”. For Marian this was the also the case. Nothing changed much within her role in the family, only her title:

“...I thought I was performing the surrogate father role in our family, protecting everybody, but now...I realise now that I was the mother hen, protecting her flock”. [Marian]

The detailed positive experiences of role change and transitioning were surprising for the researcher, as recorded in the reflective journal. While experiences of occupational marginalisation were noted, it was not to the same extent as seen in the literature.

Discussion
The impacts of gender transitions on participation and engagement were described through the everyday activities and occupations of participants in this study. Opportunities and challenges were discussed within this, particularly regarding participants’ satisfaction in occupations since initiating a gender transition.

Notably, work was impacted in a variety of ways. Some participants’ felt their career choices were influenced by their gender transitions, such as feeling obligated to choose particular jobs that they saw as a match with the gender assigned to them at birth. This resonated with previous research (Beagan et al., 2012; Panter, 2017), which found that initial motivation to work in a certain area was often to conform with the gender assigned to at birth. Nevertheless, other participants’ experiences in the current study contradicted these findings. Some participants worked in the same industries prior to and after transition. The support of management and the type of work involved appear to be important factors here.

Participants had differing opinions on whether disclosing their transgender identities in the workplace had an impact on their work. Some participants decided not to disclose or discuss their transgender identities at work to avoid creating uncomfortable or hostile situations with co-workers. It has been found that people who begin gender transitions while remaining in their current role often face instances of transphobia (Schilt & Connell, 2007; Sangganjanavanich, 2009; Mizock et al., 2017). Other participants’ in the current study have disclosed their transgender identities and have not experienced instances of transphobia at work. The exact reasons for the different experiences are not clear but it may be down to different industry norms and cultures (Ozturk & Tatli, 2015), or because of a supportive workplace.

Participants reported becoming completely preoccupied with their work when they were having challenges with their gender identity, with one participant labelling themselves as a
Previous research has found gender transitions can lead to individuals increasing their work performances (Budge et al., 2010; Mizock et al., 2017). Participants in these studies noted that they coped with challenges in the workplace by working harder and maintaining strong work ethics, feeling under pressure to validate their roles as workers. There was also evidence to suggest that some participants kept away from work or disengaged from work during their transition. Because people who are transgender have an increased risk of loneliness compared to cisgender sexual minority adults (Fridriksen-Goldsen et al., 2014) it is especially important that people are supported through this period, if not engaging at work.

Research has also emphasised the value and importance transgender people place on self-care activities (Beagan et al., 2012; Budge et al., 2010; Ericston, 2016). The implications of participants not carrying out their full self-care routines with regards to hair, makeup and dress were discussed. Most participants cited that they would not complete many activities if they did not look in accordance to their gender identity. Participants spoke about some of the challenges that existed around the constant need for maintaining physical appearance including not attending events or leaving the house when participants’ own standards of physical presentation were not met. Beagan et al (2012) similarly highlighted that being mis-gendered has negative implications in causing individuals to avoid certain activities, which in turn could have negative implications. Literature also shows that participants sometimes avoid activities for safety reasons (Veldhuis, Drabble, Riggle, Wootton & Hughes, 2018) such as going to pub or walking in the dark alone.

Role change was experienced by most participants, with subsequent impacts on their occupational identity. Some participants found that this change in roles was solely a reconceptualization of the title of their roles- the significance and the activities involved in carrying out the roles were the same. Gaining the role of an advocate was one role
participants took on since their gender transition. This was similarly highlighted by Beagan et al (2012), who found participants were actively involved in educating and advocating on behalf of transgender people. Levitt and Ippolito (2014) report that transition had allowed participants to act in a way that fit authentically for them and this led to increased confidence in their everyday lives. Participants in the current study felt a greater sense of confidence and authenticity in their everyday lives since transitioning. This increased confidence positively impacted everyday activities.

The limitations of the current research must be acknowledged. The people who participated in the study began their transitions between six and twenty years ago. The potential cultural and societal differences for an individual transitioning in recent years in comparison to transitioning more than five years ago may be considerable. Transferability of the findings is limited; nevertheless, the intent of this qualitative research was not transferability to a wider population, but rather to detail a narrative account and conduct an interpretative phenomenological analysis of findings.

While an IPA approach was deemed most suitable, there are limitations within the approach which should be acknowledged. Researchers implementing this type of approach must be careful of findings being imposed by one’s predispositions, biases and theories (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006). Completely eradicating assumptions and biases in IPA research has been conceptualised as idyllic (Flick, 2009). Despite this, the literature finds the most suitable course of action is to maintain honesty and transparency to reduce the influence of the researcher’s views on the research (Austin & Sutton, 2014; Russell & Kelly, 2002). These are efforts that the researcher attempted to employ through maintaining a reflective journal. It was also not possible to have an “emic” perspective as the researcher is not a member of the trans community. This may have affected the interpretation of the results. Member checking would have been useful in accounting for
this to ensure that the data presented is representative of the experiences of the participants. Member checking is important for this group, given the positionality of the researcher, to safeguard against misinformation and mis-representation. Future research should adopt collaborative practices from the start, ensure the process is community-led, the research is reviewed by gender diverse people which was a significant limitation of this study (Vincent, 2018).

This current research has implications for clinical practice. Occupational therapists need to be aware of the types of challenges faced by the transgender population. The findings should encourage occupational therapists to address these challenges when working with people in practice. Occupational therapists in practice seeking to assist clients undergoing a gender transition should ensure that the service is approachable and inclusive (Beagan et al., 2013). Most occupational therapists will not be working with people who are transgender because of their gender identity. It will be much more likely that they will be working with clients who have a physical or mental health condition who also identify as being transgender.

Occupational therapists could play a key role in advocating alongside or on behalf of the individual for supports in the workplace (Beagan et al., 2012), including, but not limited to, installing gender-neutral toilets and encouraging people to work towards job promotions. Occupational therapists also possess a unique skillset to assist individuals in changing careers or adapting their current workplace if needed. (Désiron, de Rijk, Van Hoof, & Donceel, 2011; Lee & Kielhofner, 2010).

**Conclusion**

This study highlights the unique strengths and needs of people who are transgender. A gender transition has the potential to foster a renewed sense of meaning and enjoyment in
everyday life, though often the meaning of life roles and associated tasks remains constant for many people. Nevertheless, the challenges in occupational participation and actual or perceived exclusion highlight the need for ongoing support for people who are transgender and those undergoing a gender transition.

Key Points for occupational therapy:

- Occupational therapists should respect client’s right to disclose or not disclose their transgender history.

- Occupational therapy is key in helping people develop new self-care routines and in exploring career options, if required.

- Occupational therapists should acknowledging the role changes that people may have experienced and help to promote participation in these new roles.

References


Ericston, M.S. (2016). “Until that magical day… no campus is safe”: Reflections on how transgender students experience gender and stigma on campus. *Reflective Practice, 17*(2), 143-158.


Table One: Demographic Data of Participants

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<th>Participant Identification</th>
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<th>“Marian”</th>
<th>“Mike”</th>
<th>“Paul”</th>
<th>“Rose”</th>
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<td>Currently on sick leave – job not disclosed to maintain anonymity</td>
<td>Currently unemployed – previously employed in skilled office work</td>
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<td>Time elapsed since beginning gender transition</td>
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<td>6 years</td>
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<td>7 years</td>
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<td>Work</td>
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<td>“In an attempt to be as male as possible, I was a [lists three typically masculine jobs- not included to protect identity]”. [Marian]</td>
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<td>“Every single aspect of life…even what job you apply for”. [Eric]</td>
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<td>The impact of a gender transition on work performance</td>
<td>Work performance</td>
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<td>“When I go back…I’ll just be another guy in the office.” [Paul]</td>
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<td>“I think being trans made it better for me to do it, because you can see both sides of the coin”. [Mike]</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>“I worked as a lot of things. Looking back over my C.V., it tends to be every year I’ve changed jobs. I was always really hiding before which is why I moved jobs as well”. [Paul]</td>
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MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY I AM TOTALLY FIT FOR WORK, AS I’M COMING OUT THE OTHER END OF THE TRANSITION. IT’S JUST DURING THE TRANSITION THAT ITS EXCEPTIONALLY DIFFICULT”. [Paul]

“I Couldn’t Have Friends…Because If You Started Getting Close To Anybody, They Might Start Asking Questions”. [Marian]

“The Guy Who Did The Training Himself He Was Making Fun Of Trans People…You Know, Which I Thought Was Really Offensive. And I Couldn’t Say Anything”. [Mike]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-presentation</th>
<th>Using makeup and maintaining physical presentation</th>
<th>Value of makeup</th>
<th>Hair styling</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Nobody has ever seen me without my makeup.” [Marian]</td>
<td>“I feel duty bound to wear makeup…without it, I feel as though my femininity is almost stripped away.” [Rose]</td>
<td>“I just looked like a woman with a short haircut.” [Paul]</td>
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<td>“You can’t just dress like a man. You will just look like a female wearing a man’s suit”. [Eric]</td>
<td>“I’ve seen myself not going out on a night because I’m just too tired to go through the process of getting ready.” [Rose]</td>
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</table>
| Dressing as impacted by a gender transition | Dressing | “When I’m off work. I like to feel feminine and I express that by wearing a skirt.”  
[Rose] |
|------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                          |          | “Every single part of your life is coloured by that thing. From the clothes you wear, or could never wear.”  
[Eric] |
| Role change                             | Roles    | “I thought I was performing the surrogate father role in our family, protecting everybody, but now...I realise now that I was the mother hen, protecting her flock”.  
[Marian] |
|                                          |          | “I feel more confident, I feel more of the person, more certain of myself and my identity”.  
[Rose] |
|                                          |          | “You don’t fit in anywhere...yeah you can go play snooker in the previous life, but not with your mates. It’s just not the same”.  
[Eric] |