

BRIEFING PAPER: CONVERSION THERAPY BAN CONSULTATION

PRACTICAL DETAILS

The government has made a commitment to ban so-called 'conversion therapy' for people experiencing distress about their sexual orientation or gender identity. This consultation seeks views on their proposed plans.

Description and background materials: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/banning-conversion-therapy>

Online portal for submissions: <https://equalityhub.citizenspace.com/government-equalities-office/banning-conversion-therapy>

Deadline: Friday 10 December 2021 at 11:45pm.

KEY ISSUES

We acknowledge and deeply regret the harm that has been experienced by LGBT+ people as a result of coercive and even abusive attempts to change their sexual orientation or gender identity and fervently believe, with the petitioners, that such practices should be stopped.

However, the proposed law would rightly criminalise harmful, coercive attempts to change a person's sexuality or gender identity, but it would also criminalise work that seeks to challenge homophobia and other unbiblical attitudes towards LGBT+ people that are sadly still present in some churches. The freedom to tell and teach a better story – the historic Christian sexual ethic – would be replaced by a fear of transgressing the law. Harmful attitudes would go unchallenged and pastoral support and prayer would be inhibited.

CMF wishes to acknowledge the good intentions of those who have drafted this consultation. They are clearly alert to the dangers of unintended consequences of too broad a law. However, we will be raising concerns about some significant issues, including lack of clarity on the definition of terms and other wording, conflation of sexual orientation and gender incongruence as comparable phenomena, and the lack of any evidence base on which the premise of the proposed ban rests.

We wish to ensure that harmful practices are prohibited, while protecting the rights of parents, pastors and healthcare professionals to exercise freedom of speech, freedom of religion and clinical best practice without fear of prosecution.

WHAT HAS CMF SAID ABOUT THIS TOPIC BEFORE?

Our response to the Scottish consultation on this, from August 2021, is [here](#). The Scottish consultation was different, but many of the concerns are the same.

FURTHER RESOURCES

We will upload our response to this consultation on our website as soon as it is complete. In the meantime, you may find the briefings from the following organisations helpful:

- Living Out: <https://www.livingout.org/resources/posts/62/conversion-therapy-ban-consultation>

- Evangelical Alliance: <https://www.eauk.org/what-we-do/public-policy/ending-conversion-therapy/have-your-say-on-the-governments-conversion-therapy-ban-consultation>

The EA are holding a webinar on how to respond to the consultation on **Wednesday, 24 November at 6pm**. Details: <https://www.eauk.org/what-we-do/public-policy/ending-conversion-therapy/conversion-therapy-webinar>

CMF has produced a one-page guide to completing consultations, which you can download here [link].

IF YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT ETHICS@CMF.ORG.UK.
VIEW OUR PREVIOUS CONSULTATION RESPONSES [ON OUR WEBSITE](#).