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Campaigning for respect and equality for ALL trans people

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# Convicts win right to NHS sex changes (Evening Standard)



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A double murderer and an armed robber are among six prisoners likely to be given NHS sex change operations after a Prison Service decision to give in to a kidnapper's one-man campaign.

John Pilley, 46, serving a life sentence at Gartree prison, Leicestershire, for kidnapping taxi-driver Linda Charlesworth in 1981, will become the first man to be allowed "gender reassignment surgery" while in a British jail when he has an operation in Leicester next month, the service said today. "It has been approved for a prisoner at HMP Gartree," said a spokesman. "The Prison Service's published aims are to give prisoners access to the same quality and range of health care services as the general public receive from the NHS."

The Prison Service would not meet the bill for the surgery, he said. It is understood that the £11,000 operation will be paid for by the NHS. Afterwards, it was likely that Pilley, who is already allowed to wear women's clothing as long as he does so only in his cell, would be transferred to a women's prison, the spokesman added.

The change of heart follows an eight-year campaign by Pilley, known as Jane Anne, culminating in his decision to mount a legal challenge against the prison hierarchy, which had blocked his desire to have genital surgery. He has been undergoing hormone treatment for seven years, despite the known risk of liver failure, and having developed breasts he felt he was currently in a sexual limbo, neither fully man nor woman.

Treasury solicitors representing the service have been instructed not to continue fighting his case. The service is

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now drawing up new guidelines for prison governors on how to deal with transsexual inmates.

The decision gives fresh hope for at least five more prisoners seeking sex changes. Among them is another Gartree inmate, killer Matthew Richardson, 42.

In Channings Wood Prison, Devon, double murderer Douglas Wakefield has been diagnosed by a psychiatrist as having "gender identity disorientation", having grown, "to detest the body I live in".

Campaigner Susan Marshall, of Press for Change, said prisoners were entitled to the treatment. "They are supposed to lose their liberty, but they should not be further punished by removal of treatment for a recognised medical condition from which they are suffering," she said.

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