

THANKS FOR THE WORK YOU DO:

Gender-Affirming Plastic Surgeon Dr. Aron Kressel



For the past 20 years, Dr. Aron Kressel has been a plastic surgeon at NYC Health + Hospitals/ Metropolitan. In 2017, when Metropolitan’s Pride Health Center began offering gender-affirming surgery, Dr. Kressel took on a new role in supporting transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming patients. So far, he has performed more than 40 gender-affirming surgeries.

The Insider asked Dr. Kressel five questions to learn more about his work and how he has transformed patients’ lives.

Q: Where are you from originally?

AK: I was born in Philadelphia and raised in New Jersey. I graduated from Columbia College, followed by Rutgers Medical School. I completed a residency for general surgery at St. Vincent’s Hospital and for plastic surgery at Mount Sinai. In addition to my work at Metropolitan, I also have a private practice in Manhattan.

“Treating patients seeking gender-affirming surgery has been very rewarding personally and professionally. I have a surgical skill that can be used to help them be the person that they feel most comfortable being.”

Q: How did Metropolitan begin offering gender-affirming surgery?

AK: Patients coming to the Pride Health Center at Metropolitan and others in the community had been asking about the availability of gender-affirming surgery. Some shared with us the difficulties they were having accessing safe, affordable procedures, including long wait times. Leadership decided this was a service we could add to meet that need, and I was asked to spearhead the program.

Q: What are some things you tell a patient as they prepare for this surgery?

AK: Most patients come in very informed about the surgery. They’ve done careful



Dr. Kressel chats with patient Stephen Rodriguez.

research before selecting us. I discuss the different procedures and the most appropriate one for their anatomy. We also review the approval process, their expectations and the post-operative care that will be necessary for a successful outcome. Patients are seen in initial consultation and then scheduled for surgery once they have all of the necessary clearances and documentation, as required by their insurers.

Q: What is the follow-up process between you and one of your patients?

AK: Most patients go home the same day. They are seen at least once post-op in the first week. We also try to schedule

to see them during the second week, fourth week and ideally at three months after the procedure. I usually have their mobile numbers to keep track of them in the first month.

Q: How can doctors within the health system refer their patients interested in these procedures to Metropolitan?

AK: We welcome referrals from other doctors and staff within the health system. Referrals are best handled through the NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan Pride Health Center (212-423-7292 or metlgbt@nychhc.org). Our staff can work directly with referring clinicians to ensure that they provide authorization letters the patient may need for their insurer. Pride Health Center staff can also speak with interested patients to review the process and help ease their way through the system to surgery.

We welcome your feedback!
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