

Improving LGBT patient provider relationships

Definitions Resource

Definitions:

Sexual Orientation: A legal term found in laws and policies that means the sexual, emotional, romantic and/or physical attraction of a person to other people.

Gender Identity: (Also a legal term found in laws and policies.) A person's inner sense of their gender as male, female, a blend of both, or neither. It's what gender an individual knows themselves to be, and it may be at variance to sex and gender assigned at birth.

Gender Expression: How one expresses their gender. This could include dress, speech, name, actions...etc.

SOGI: Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

Lesbian: A woman attracted to other women. Lesbian only applies to a person who identifies as a woman.

Gay: Sometimes just used for men attracted to men. Sometimes used as an umbrella word for the entire community (but it's better to use LGBT as a more inclusive term).

Bisexual: Those attracted to both men and women. Some people prefer the term Pansexual - meaning attracted to all genders.

Transgender: A broad term used to describe people whose gender expression is non-conforming, and/or whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth.

Queer: An identity marker used to signify political, social, and sexual differences from the majority population. Many LGBT+ people use the word Queer as a single simple word that fully includes all variations of the community, inclusive and beyond LGBT. However, many LGBT people may find the word Queer offensive because it has been historically used as a demeaning word for this population.

Questioning: (Often indicated as the second Q in longer acronyms.) Those not yet sure of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Frequently references youth.

Cisgender: People whose sex assigned at birth matches their gender identity. Cisgender means not Transgender.

Asexual (Ace for short): A person who is not sexually attracted to other people.

Pansexual: Attracted to all genders.

Omisexual: Attracted to multiple genders.

Two Spirit (TS or 2S): A term indigenous people may use for LGBT.

Intersex: People born with multiple or ambiguous biological sex characteristics of both male and female - that can include chromosomes, DNA, and sex organs. Intersex is always a biological circumstance.

Ally: A person who does not identify as part of the LGBT community but who wholeheartedly supports legal and social equality for LGBT people. One who is not offended if they're assumed to be LGBT. One who recognizes their heterosexual and/or cisgender privilege, and works to even the playing field.

Sex Assigned At Birth: The marker of either "male" or "female" on a baby's birth certificate based on visible genitalia at birth.

Gender Assigned At Birth: The societal assignment of male or female assigned at birth, based on the assigned sex at birth.

Gender Binary: The socially constructed dichotomy of male or female as a rigid interpretation without any acknowledgement of similarity, crossover, variation, or fluidity

Gender Non-Conforming: A term for people who don't fit the gender binary. Gender non-conforming terms include - gender expansive, non-binary, genderqueer, or gender-fluid.

Same Gender Loving: People who have romantic/sexual relationships with people of the same gender, but who may not identify as Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual.