

5 Ways to Create Gender-Affirming Health Environments

1. ASK PRONOUNS

Standardize asking and sharing your pronouns (e.g., she/her, he/him, they/them) at every encounter. This simple act signals to clients that providers are dedicated to respecting their gender identity and pronouns. The more consistent providers are, the greater likelihood that clients will feel safer disclosing identity.

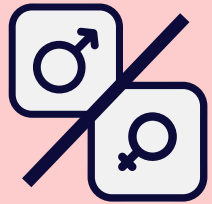


2. CHECK ASSUMPTIONS

Do not make assumptions about how someone identifies by appearance alone. Physical and emotional safety, fear of discrimination, and interpersonal dynamics with friends and family all affect someone's comfort with expressing gender. Don't assume that someone's expression matches their gender identity.

3. AVOID GENDERING SERVICES

Offer services to all clients regardless of perceived gender or sex. Regularly review sex-segregated spaces and services to determine if it is necessary and meeting the needs of Transgender and Non-binary (TGNB) clients. Include TGNB people in the review process.



4. REVISE FORMS

Include options for gender identity, gender expression, and sex at birth on demographic forms. Ask clients for any updates to identity information at every service. Allow clients to include a current or chosen name and collect legal name and legal gender marker only when necessary.

5. LINK TO RESOURCES

Learn about and provide resources for gender affirming care, including microgrants, name change clinics, and social support spaces. Resources should be vetted to evaluate if they are gender-affirming and willing to provide services to TGNB people.



1. Cahill, S. & Makadon, H. (2013). Sexual orientation and gender identity data collection in clinical settings and in electronic health records: A key to ending LGBT health disparities. *LGBT Health*, 1(1), 1-8. DOI: 10.1089/lgbt.2013.0001
2. Deitz, E. & Halem, J. (2016). How should physicians refer when referral options are limited for Transgender patients? *AMA J. Ethics*, 18(11), 1070-1080. doi: 10.1001/journalofethics.2016.18.11.ecas1-1611
3. Denaro, A., Pflugeisen, C. M., Colglazier, T., DeWine, D., & Thompson, B. (2022). Lessons from grassroots efforts to increase gender-affirming medical care for Transgender and gender diverse youth in the community health care setting. *Transgender Health*, ahead of print. doi: 10.1089/trgh.2021.0092
4. The GenIUSS Group. (2014). *Best Practices for Asking Questions to Identify Transgender and Other Gender Minority Respondents on Population-Based Surveys*. J.L. Herman (Ed.). Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/geniuss-trans-pop-based-survey/>