

Fostering an LGBT Inclusive Environment

Collecting Patients' Gender Identity Data

Hospital for Special Surgery
2017

Introduction: Why is this important?

- All patients have the right to respectful, sensitive, non-discriminatory and effective medical care.
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) communities experience barriers in accessing such care.
- Transgender patients in particular may face unique challenges in interactions with physicians, other healthcare providers, and hospital staff.
- Research shows that increasing healthcare provider education can have positive health outcomes for transgender individuals.

Our Hospital Mission and Non-Discrimination Policy

- As a member of the Healthcare Equality Index, HSS is designated as a “Equality Leader” in providing equitable care for the LGBT community.
- Gender identity and sexual orientation are protected categories in our non-discrimination policy.

MANUAL CODE: 2.38

Patient Nondiscrimination Policy

Hospital Personnel will treat all patients and visitors receiving services from or participating in other programs of HSS with equality in a welcoming manner that is free from discrimination based on age, race, color, creed, ethnicity, religion, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, veteran or military status, or any other basis prohibited by federal, state, or local law.

State and National Regulations

- The New York State Attorney General's Office, in presentations at Greater New York Hospital Association in 2014, has advised the New York healthcare community that it views discriminatory treatment of transgender patients as unlawful gender discrimination.
 - New York City's Human Rights Law prohibits discrimination based on "actual or perceived . . . gender".

N.Y.C. Admin. Code § 8-107(4).

- The Joint Commission, the American Medical Association, and the Institute of Medicine, have each published reports focusing on issues related to the delivery of healthcare for the LGBT community.

Overview: LGBT Health Disparities

- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people, like all people, want health care environments where they feel welcomed and respected.
- However, LGBT people face several barriers to accessing inclusive and affirming care. Many have experienced discrimination in health care settings, or know of someone who has.^{1,2}
- Even when providers have done nothing to suggest bias, LGBT people often approach health care with the expectation of a negative encounter. Some delay or avoid care altogether.^{1,2}
- Yet, access to care is especially critical for LGBT people – a population that experiences higher rates of HIV infection, depression, suicidal behavior, homelessness, smoking, substance use, and other health concerns.^{3,4}

www.empirestatephtc.org/resources/res/curr/lgbt/LGBT-101.ppt

Overview: Deeper Disparities for Transgender Patients

Transgender people often experience higher rates of:

- Stigma and discrimination
- Violence – the rate of violence for transgender people is 1 in 12, while it is 1 in 18,000 for the general population.
- HIV/STDs – in 2010, transgender individuals had the highest rate of new HIV infection (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015).
- Alcohol/Substance Abuse and Mental Illness Concerns
- Suicide – nearly one-third of transgender individuals attempt suicide in their lifetime (Grant et al, 2011).

Overview: Deeper Disparities for Transgender Patients

In addition:

- Hormones/Injection Silicone Use – some people have access to safe and legal hormones and some do not. They can be found on the black market, where dirty needles and contaminated or diluted hormones can be a concern.
- Access to healthcare – many transgender people document being uninsured, not feeling they have access to safe and appropriate health care, or being hesitant to purchase healthcare coverage for lack of affordability.
- Unemployment/Homelessness – it is legal in the US to discriminate against trans people in housing and employment, and as such, this group experiences disproportionate rates of both. Compared to cisgender people, transgender persons are twice as likely to be unemployed and make less than \$10,000 a year (Grant et al., 2011).

Why is this important?

- Hospitals are an important source of health care for LGBT people in all parts of the United States. It is essential we create environments that are affirming for this vulnerable population.
- Creating an inclusive and supportive environment involves dedicated effort and focus from all of us.
- Collection of gender identity data in a clinical setting is considered to meet requirements by the Institute of Medicine and The Joint Commission for meaningful use of Electronic Health Records (EHR) (Cahill et al., 2014).

Sexual Orientation vs. Gender Identity

- LGBT – This term is used commonly by people in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community for the sake of brevity.
- LGBT is used as an umbrella term to reflect the many identities covered in what used to be called the “gay community”. This was a term that oversimplified the community, and was rejected by many it was intended to describe.
- The term LGBT is confusing to some, so it is important to break down its components to understand the rationale for the inclusion of each letter.
- The first component (LGB) applies to sexual orientation – one’s attraction to another person.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation: Sexual orientation is about how people identify their physical and emotional attraction to others. It is not related to gender identity.

- Lesbian – A woman or girl whose attraction is to the same sex.
- Gay – A man or boy whose attraction is to people of the same sex.
- Bisexual – A person whose attraction is to people of either sex.

www.empirestatephtc.org/resources/res/curr/lgbt/LGBT-101.ppt

Gender Identity

Gender Identity: A person's internal sense of being a man, woman, both, or neither. Gender identity usually develops at a young age.

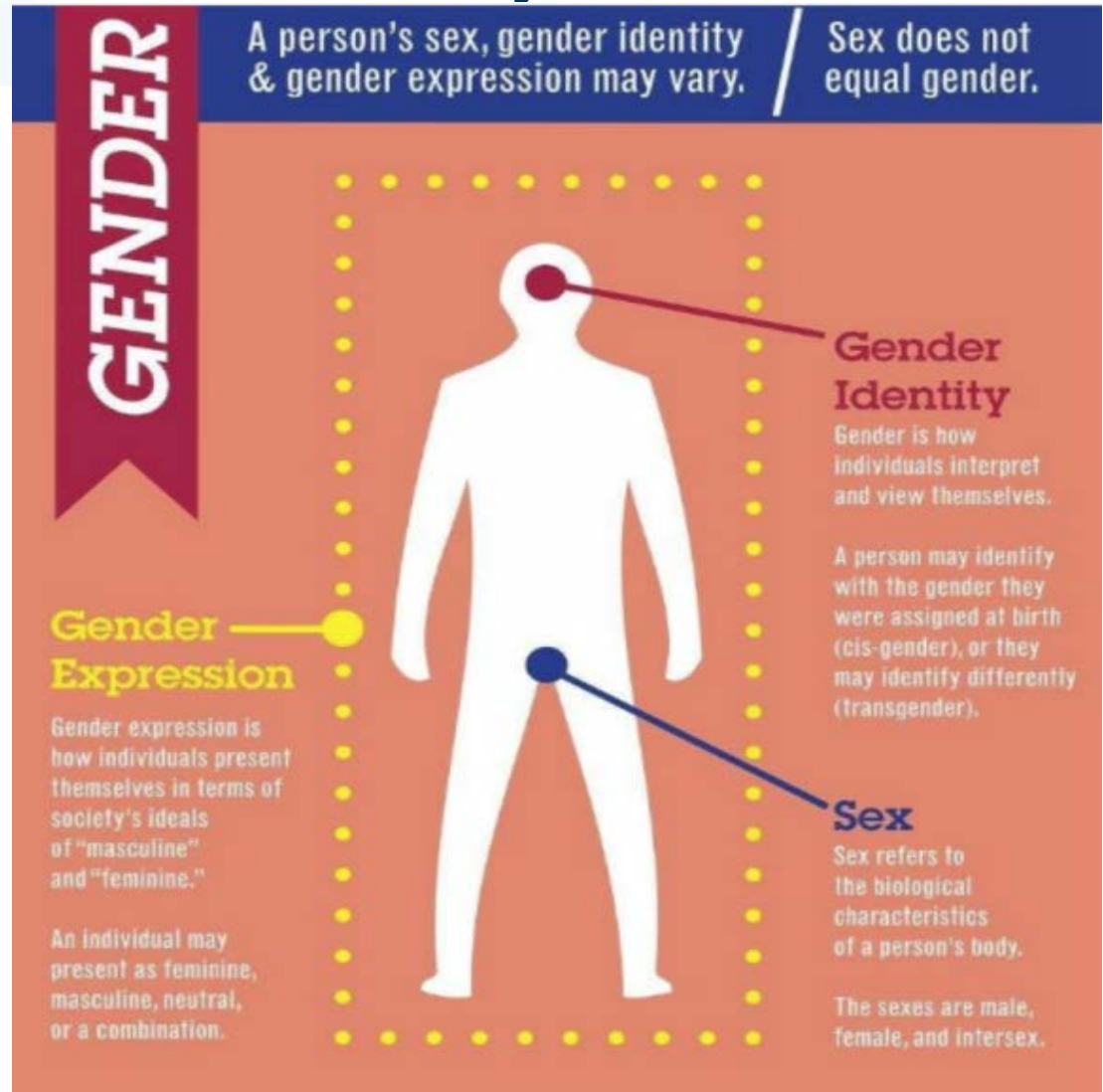
- The latter component (T) refers to gender identity – how a person feels about their own gender. This can include how masculine, feminine or unisexual a person feels, regardless of their presentation or how they express their gender in obvious ways to the outside world.
 - **Transgender:** People whose gender identity is not the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.

www.empirestatephtc.org/resources/res/curr/lgbt/LGBT-101.ppt

Sexual Orientation vs. Gender Identity

Transgender people can be any sexual orientation (gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual/straight, no label at all, or some other self-described label).

www.empirestatephtc.org/resources/res/cur/lgbt/LGBT-101.ppt



What are Gender Pronouns

What is a pronoun?

A pronoun is a word that refers to either the people talking (like I or you) or someone or something that is being talked about (like she, it, them, and this). Gender pronouns (like he and her) specifically refer to people that you are talking about.

What is a “preferred gender pronoun”?

A "preferred gender pronoun" (or PGP) is the pronoun that a person chooses to use for themselves. It helps you to refer to a person as they wish.

<https://www.ccsu.edu/lgbt/files/PreferredGenderPronounsForFaculty.pdf>

Gender Pronouns (cont.)

What are some commonly used pronouns?

- She, her, hers and he, him, his are the most commonly used pronouns. Some people call these "female/feminine" and "male/masculine" pronouns, but many avoid these labels because, for example, not everyone who uses he feels like a "male" or "masculine".

There are also lots of gender-neutral pronouns in use. Here are a few you might hear:

- They, them, theirs (Xena ate their food because they were hungry.)
- Ze, hir (Xena ate hir food because ze was hungry.)
- Ze is pronounced like "zee" can also be spelled zie or xe, and replaces she/he/they.
- Hir is pronounced like "here" and replaces her/hers/him/his/they/theirs.

Some people prefer not to use pronouns at all, using their name as a pronoun instead.

- Just my name please! (Xena ate Xena's food because Xena was hungry)

<https://www.ccsu.edu/lgbt/files/PreferredGenderPronounsForFaculty.pdf>

Terms and Definitions

- Terms are always changing. You don't have to know them all, but it helps to be familiar. Remember that words change based on the time, context, environment and people using them.
- Ask individuals what terms they like to use to describe themselves, and to define them if you don't understand.
- Self definition is important, and in healthcare it is crucial!
- People's behaviors, attractions and identities may not be same. For instance, a man might be attracted to other men, but identify as straight and be married to a woman.

www.empirestatephtc.org/resources/res/curr/lgbt/LGBT-101.ppt

Common Terms

Gender Expression/Role

The way a person acts, dresses, speaks and behaves in order to show their gender as feminine, masculine, both, or neither.

Birth Sex

The sex (male or female) assigned a child at birth, based on a child's genitalia.

Gender Non-Conforming

People who express their gender differently than what is culturally expected of them. A gender non-conforming person is not necessarily transgender (for example, a woman who dresses in a masculine style but who identifies as female; a boy who likes to play with girl dolls but identifies himself as a boy, etc.).

Common Terms

Transition/Gender Affirmation Process

For transgender people, this refers to the process of coming to recognize, accept, and express one's gender identity. Most often, this refers to the period when a person makes social, legal, and/or medical changes, such as changing their clothing, name, sex designation, and using medical interventions. This process is often called **gender affirmation**, because it allows people to affirm their gender identity by making outward changes. Gender affirmation/transition can greatly improve a transgender person's mental health and general well-being.

Female-to-Male (FTM) or Transgender Man

A person born with female genitalia at birth who feels they are male/a man and lives as male/a man. Some will just use the term male.

Male-to-Female (MTF) or Transgender Woman

A person born with male genitalia who feels they are female/a woman and lives as female/a woman. Some will just use the term female.

http://www.lgbthealtheducation.org/wp-content/uploads/13-017_TransBestPracticesforFrontlineStaff_v6_02-19-13_FINAL.pdf

Common Terms

Transsexual

A term used to describe a subset of transgender individuals who have transitioned to the opposite sex, often but not always through a combination of hormonal therapy and sexual reassignment surgery.

Genderqueer

A relatively new term, genderqueer is used by some individuals who do not identify as either male or female; or identify as both male and female.

Intersex

Intersex is a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male. For example, a person might be born appearing to be female on the outside, but having mostly male-typical anatomy on the inside.

Trans

Abbreviation for transgender.

http://www.lgbthealtheducation.org/wp-content/uploads/13-017_TransBestPracticesforFrontlineStaff_v6_02-19-13_FINAL.pdf

Terms to Avoid

The following terms are considered offensive by most and should not be used:

- she-male
- he-she
- it, tranny
- “real” woman
- “real” man

HSS will be Collecting Gender Identity Data

How does this affect my work?

- HSS has a **standardized method of collecting** gender identity data
- You are key to this information being **collected respectfully, consistently, accurately, professionally, and completely**
- Patients or their caregivers are **asked to self-report gender identity** to help ensure quality care for all

Why are we collecting this information?

- To provide welcoming and respectful care it is essential that providers address patients by their correct name and preferred pronouns.
- Gathering gender identity data in a clinical setting will allow providers to better understand and treat their patients optimally.
- A provider's knowledge of a patient's sexual orientation and gender identity is essential to providing appropriate prevention screening and care.
- Research shows, for the most part, LGBT people said that they accepted the gender identity questions because they allow for people to accurately self-report and people of all ages generally expressed their understanding that gender identity questions provide health providers with important data about their patients (Cahill et al., 2014)

Why are we collecting this information?

- Patients who disclose their gender identity to health care providers may feel safer discussing their health and risk behaviors.
- By asking about gender identity, providers make it more likely that patients will come out and share personal information that could inform health discussions.
- Gathering gender identity data is consistent with key recommendations in Healthy People 2020 and the 2011 Institute of Medicine's report on LGBT issues and research gaps.
 - Health people 2020 call on health care providers to “ appropriately inquire about and be ...supportive of a patient’s sexual orientation and gender identity to enhance the patient –provider interaction and regular use of care.

The Fenway Institute 2015 “Why gather data on sexual orientation and gender identity.”

Why Collect Standardized Gender Identity Data?

Demographics on gender identity will provide the foundation for understanding the LGBT population's status and needs

- To assess care for appropriate clinical interventions in real time
- To link patient gender identity data with clinical information to *improve quality and examine any health care disparities*
- To use quality improvement tools/techniques to *address any health care disparities*
- To *ensure that all patients receive high-quality care*

The HSS Standard Gender Identity Script

“HSS collects gender identity information from all of our patients....

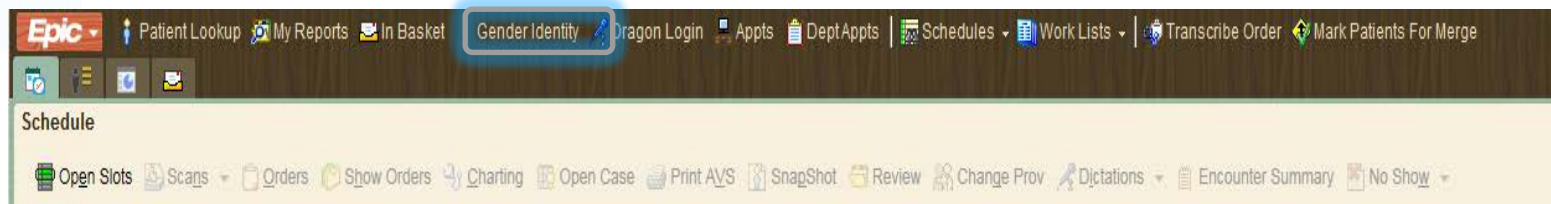
We would like you to tell us this information in order to ensure that everyone receives the highest quality of care and enhance our understanding of each patient’s individual identity and experiences.

When do I document this information?

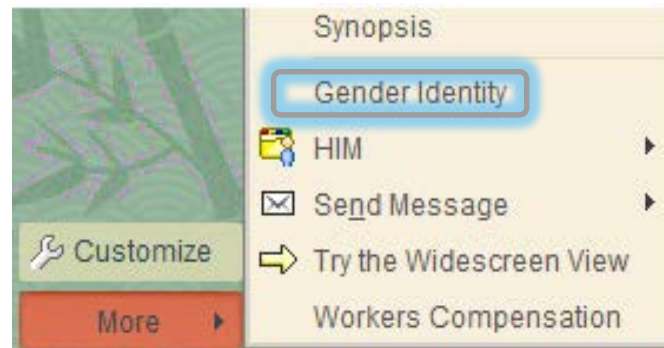
- If Gender Identity information is shared with you by your patient and that information is different from their sex at birth, you are expected to enter this information into the patient's EMR
- Please be sure to ask all the questions that are appropriate to complete the Gender Identity information fields in the patient's chart
- **Note:** Use the script to explain to the patient why we collect this information.

How Do Clinicians and Administrators Access the Gender Identity Activity?

- From the **Epic Toolbar**, select “Gender Identity” to launch this activity. Shortcut: Gender Identity (Ctrl+4).



If already in an encounter, access the Gender Identity activity through the **More Activities** button.



Gender Identity Activity

- Enter patient provided data in **Smart Form**.

Gender Identity

Gender Identity	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male	Female
		Gender non-conforming	Trans Male F to M
		Other	Trans Female M to F

Gender Identity Comments:

Sex assigned at birth:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male	Female	Intersex
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Preferred gender pronouns:	<input type="checkbox"/>	He/His/Him	She/Her	Ze/Hir
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How is your sex listed with your health insurance company?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male	Female
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Scenario: Patient reports *gender identity* is “Male” and *sex assigned at birth* as “Female.”
This patient is “Trans F to M.”
Ask for *preferred gender pronoun* and for their *sex listed with health insurance company*.

Summary

- HSS is committed to providing inclusive, respectful, welcoming and equitable care to all patients.
- Respect patient choices to identify themselves as they wish
- Allow patients to respond and use as much of their own description as possible, including different pronouns (he/his/him she/her, Ze/Hir)
- If a patient is upset or concerned, maintain a professional demeanor and try to avoid taking it personal and find out how you can best support them.