Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand

LGBTIQA+ Inclusive Practice and Data Collection Guide

Good Shepherd
Australia New Zealand

Purpose

The purpose of this LGBTIQA+ Inclusive Practice and Data Collection guide (Inclusive Practice Guide) is to detail Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand's (Good Shepherd) position on data collection with respect to LGBTIQA+ people who come into our services and programs, and articulate the expectations of employees when working with LGBTIQA+ people. This document is intended to act as an internal resource to guide and support employees in their day-to-day work and their understanding of the importance of asking for and recording information about intersex variations, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Practice statement

Good Shepherd values and welcomes LGBTIQA+ people at our services and programs. Good Shepherd treats people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and intersex variations with dignity and respect. We collect information on a person's gender identity, sexual orientation and intersex variation to ensure that our service provision is holistic and meets the unique needs of LGBTIQA+ people.

As with all data collection, storage, use, sharing and destruction, Good Shepherd practice is governed by relevant legislation, and guided by our Privacy Policy.

Acknowledgements

Good Shepherd extends its deepest gratitude to all LGBTIQA+ employees who have supported and guided the development of this document and all of the work undertaken by the organisation to become more LGBTIQA+ inclusive. We thank you for your time, generosity, trust, faith and importantly, for keeping us accountable. We have been inspired and motivated by your lived experiences and as an organisation, we recognise and acknowledge the burden you have often carried as we have moved through our Rainbow Tick journey.

Good Shepherd also acknowledges the expert advice and guidance provided by Matthew Parsons, Shamini Joseph and Pam Kennedy from Rainbow Health Victoria and Dr Philomena Horsley. Thank you for your wisdom and critical lens which this resource has greatly benefited from. We also thank you for your leadership across the sectors, in supporting us all to become a more culturally safe space for all LGBTIQA+ people.

Acknowledgement of Country

Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging, acknowledging their continuing relationship to land and the ongoing living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.

Good Shepherd's specialist family violence program is a Rainbow Tick accredited program, servicing the Bayside Peninsula and Brimbank-Melton

Contents

A note on the LGBTIQA+ acronym and the rainbow flag

Good Shepherd uses the LGBTIQA+ acronym to refer to and describe people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer/ questioning, asexual and many other identities (such as non-binary and pansexual).

Whilst this acronym is often used as an umbrella term to describe a group of diverse people with diverse experiences, it is important to understand that the LGBTIQA+ acronym is used to describe people who are marginalised because of their sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status.

Good Shepherd acknowledges that there may be many people who do not identify with any of these categorisations, or who eschew any such labels for themselves or their relationships, but who are nonetheless affected by heterosexism, cisgenderism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and/or discrimination based on intersex status.

Good Shepherd uses the "Progress Pride" flag (as seen above) which includes the chevron (v shaped piece) which represents people of colour (brown/ black) and trans people (white, pink and pale blue), superimposed over a more traditional rainbow flag which aims to cover a range of rainbow identities.

Good Shepherd acknowledges that some members of LGBTIQA+ communities may not feel that this flag is inclusive of their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status. On LGBTIQA+ specific days like Bi-Awareness week, Transgender Day of Visibility and Intersex Awareness day, Good Shepherd will use and promote the flags used by respective groups within LGBTIQA+ communities.

We also recognise that LGBTIQA+ people of colour, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQA+SB people (including Sistergirls and Brotherboys), may not identify with this flag, nor feel that this flag is inclusive of their identity. The LGBTIQA+SB acronym will be used whenever directly referring to this part of the community.

Good Shepherd is committed to addressing all forms of discrimination and oppression, including but not limited to, racism, heterosexism, cisgenderism, ableism, sexism, ageism and discrimination based on intersex status.

Principles of LGBTIQA+ inclusive service delivery

As an organisation committed to providing inclusive and culturally safe services for LGBTIQA+ people, we are guided by Good Shepherd values and The Good Shepherd Way. Further, when working with members of the LGBTIQA+ community, our work is also guided by the following principles (adapted from LGBTIQ+ Health Australia).

When working with LGBTIQA+ people, we:

1. Recognise and affirm every individual's sexual orientation, sex, intersex status, and gender identity/expression.

2. Adopt a client-centred approach, guided by The Good Shepherd Way, that takes into account the broader social determinants that impact on the wellbeing of LGBTIQA+ people.

3. Provide culturally safe and welcoming environments, service systems and services that are free from all forms of discrimination.

4. Recognise the negative impact of discrimination and stigma on a person's health, wellbeing and quality of life, and actively address the power imbalances associated with these impacts.

5. Recognise that due to discrimination, stigma and violence (including bullying in all settings), that LGBTIQA+ people are at a higher risk of suicide and mental health issues, and we consider this in organisational planning and service delivery.

6. Critically analyse the assumption that all clients/service participants or employees are heterosexual and not diverse in terms of sex or gender and improve our awareness of our unconscious biases and assumptions.

7. Commit to providing a culturally safe workplace by taking personal responsibility for becoming culturally competent professionals who are knowledgeable and responsive to the lived experience of LGBTIQA+ people.

What does data collection mean?

Data collection refers to the collection of information. It is not limited to formalised processes for collecting data, such as forms and documents specifically designed to collect certain kinds of information. Data collection also includes data collected from sources including face-to-face communication, telephone conversations, online forms and communication, documents, and visual cues.

Data collection tools refer to anything used to collect data, both quantitative and qualitative. Tools include checklists, surveys, questionnaires, forms, emails, verbal conversations, focus groups and interviews.

Inclusive data collection

Social justice and inclusion are central to Good Shepherd's work. To realise our Mission and Vision and by living our values, it is our responsibility to ensure our data collection practices are inclusive. Although some elements of our data collection are driven by our funding bodies, other improvements have been made because it demonstrates our commitment to inclusion and cultural safety.

Good Shepherd is committed to service excellence and providing inclusive services to all our clients. Underpinning this commitment is ensuring our clients are made aware that any information they provide us is done so voluntarily, and that information they choose to disclose will be treated with respect and confidentially. This also applies to information employees provide Good Shepherd as an employer.

Ensuring that our data collection processes are inclusive of people with diverse sex characteristics, gender identities, and sexual orientations, communicates to LGBTIQA+ people that they are welcome, respected and valued. When we accurately record the sex, gender identity and sexual orientation of LGBTIQA+ clients, we make them more visible at a program level.

Inclusive data collection also allows Good Shepherd to:

- Provide the best services to meet an individual's unique needs.

- Plan and (re)design services to meet the needs of various population groups.

- Advocate for change where datasets are not inclusive.

- Advocate for systemic change to challenge structures which adversely impact population groups who have been marginalised.

Creating a culture of inclusivity and cultural safety and one that celebrates diversity requires effective policies, procedures, and practice. In acknowledging diversity, we take an intersectional approach - we treat each individual with respect, dignity and sensitivity. In doing so, we acknowledge the multiple and overlapping experiences of systemic and societal oppression and discrimination that an individual or a group of people may face.

Why collecting and maintaining sex, sexual orientation and/or gender identity data is important

The collection of accurate demographic information enables us to provide both tailored services to LGBTIQA+ people and assess the efficacy of such services we offer.

Accurate data collection is also important in advocating for future funding and resources for services for LGBTIQA+ people, by demonstrating the need for these services for the community.

This information also enables inclusive practice in our service design, the development of policies, and our policy and advocacy work, for example, social, political and legislative reforms.

As an employer, we can also ensure greater support and resources for our LGBTIQA+ employees.

What we ask

As detailed above, clients and employees are under no obligation to answer any question we ask of them. A statement to this effect will be included in all forms to ensure individuals are aware that they have a choice as to whether to disclose information to Good Shepherd.

The questions listed on the next page (and accompanying statements) will be included in all relevant service participant/client and employee forms. These questions give clients and employees the opportunity to identify themselves more accurately, and in turn makes them more visible to us as a service delivery organisation and an employer.

This information will only be collected from the service participant/client or employee themselves, or their nominated representative where relevant.

1. Please indicate your gender identity/expression:

Woman   Man   Trans   Sistergirl   Brotherboy

Gender diverse/ GenderQueer   Trans masculine   Trans feminine

Trans woman   Trans man   Non binary   Prefer not to disclose

Prefer to self-describe   _____

2. Do you have an intersex variation?

Intersex is a term for people born with atypical sex characteristics, and there are many different intersex traits or variations.

Yes   No   Prefer not to disclose

3. What are your pronouns

Pronouns are used when referring to people/groups of people. Using correct pronouns is like using a person's correct name and shows you acknowledge and respect their identity.

She/Her/Hers   He/Him/His   They/Them/Theirs

I prefer people to use my first name

Prefer to self-describe   _____

4. How do you describe your sexual orientation?

(select all that apply)

Asexual   Bisexual   Heterosexual   Gay   Lesbian

Queer   Questioning/Unsure/Don't know   Prefer not to disclose

Prefer to self-describe   _____

Other updates and changes

In addition to the above four (4) questions, relevant client and employee forms will be amended to reflect the following.

Emergency contact

Emergency contact fields will be an open category for preferred contact, as determined by the individual i.e. such fields will not default to family of origin or biological family options.

Relevant forms will be amended to include the following questions when collecting information pertaining to an individual's emergency contact information.

Emergency contact full name _____

Contact details _____

Relationship to you (optional)

Partner/Spouse(s)   De facto   Wife

Husband   Sibling   Parent/Guardian   Child

Other, friend, family member or significant person (please specify)

_____

Personal titles

Where we ask a client or employee to nominate their personal title, the title Mx will be listed as an option e.g. Miss/ Ms/ Mrs/ Mx/ Mr

Relationships and relationship status

Where we ask a client or employee to define their relationship to another person (e.g. when we ask about an emergency contact) and a list of options is included, the following list will be used:

- Spouse/Partner(s)
- Husband
- Wife
- De facto
- Sibling
- Parent/Guardian
- Child
- Other friend, family member or significant person (please specify)

The term 'relationship status' will replace 'marital status'.

When we ask an individual about their relationship status, the following list will be used:

- Single
- Partnered
- Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed

Living arrangements

When we ask a client or employee to define their living arrangement, the following list will be used:

- Alone
- With child(ren)
- With spouse(s)/partner(s)
- With spouse(s)/partner(s) and child(ren)
- With parent(s)/guardian(s)
- With parent(s)/guardian(s) and other family members including child(ren)
- With other adults and child(ren)
- With personal care attendant
- Other arrangement, please specify.

Gendered language

Wherever possible, gender neutral language will replace gendered language. For example, 'his/her manager' will be replaced by 'their manager' or 'the employee's manager'.

For gender specific services/programs (e.g. a program only for women), ensure that eligibility considerations and statements are inclusive of all women (i.e. the program is for everyone who identifies as a woman, including trans women).
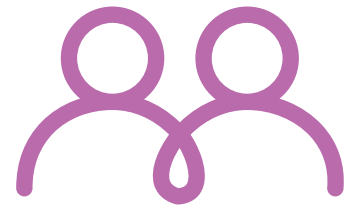
How and when we collect data

Clients/service participants

Guided by The Good Shepherd Way, we engage with clients/service participants in a way that is empowering, respectful and safe. It is especially important to provide a safe space for clients to share their personal information and experiences with us.

Part of creating a safe space is providing clients with information – informing them why we are collecting their personal information, where their information is stored, who has access to their information, and what we do to ensure their privacy and confidentiality is protected *(refer to Good Shepherd Privacy and Confidentiality Policy)*.

It is also important to assure clients that they have access to their information and can choose what information they give us. Clients must also be advised of their right to change or remove any information at a later date.

The gathering of personal information from clients will only be performed by authorised employees. It is up to these employees to determine when, during the initial stages of contact and assessment, is the most appropriate time is to go through questions with the client – this is applicable to all personal information, not only questions related to gender identity, intersex status and/or sexual orientation.

Employees

Employee-related records will accurately reflect the individual employee. New employees will be provided with relevant forms and documents as part of their induction and onboarding process.

The employee's direct manager and/or the People & Capabilities team will inform the new employee why we are collecting their personal information, where their information is stored, who has access to their information, and how their information is protected. All employees will be informed that they have a right to change and/or remove any of their personal information at a later date.

By creating a space to safely ask and accurately record personal demographic information of our employees, including volunteers and contractors, we demonstrate our commitment to providing an inclusive and culturally safe workplace.

Inclusive practice

It is important not to assume that someone does or does not identify as LGBTIQA+ based on their name, appearance, dress, voice, or initial impressions.

Good Shepherd will ask all clients and new employees how they describe themselves and what pronouns they use. This information will be collected directly from the client or employee themselves.

With respect to clients, data collection will be completed discreetly and in private.

Fundamental to creating a safe space for both clients and employees requires the building of trust. This includes highlighting the importance of ensuring privacy and confidentiality and assuring clients and employees that answering questions (or not) is completely voluntary, and they can change and/or remove information at a later date. The building of trust is an ongoing process, not only at the point of intake or when a new employee joins the organisation.

To maximise comfort and foster cultural safety, it is important that employees practise the following steps when working with clients or when onboarding new employees:

Respectful communication – general

- Provide information to the client about why we ask a range of questions, including questions about gender identity, intersex status and sexual orientation – to assist in providing the best service possible to meet their unique needs and to support effective planning and improvement of our services.

- Introduce questions regarding sex, gender identity and sexual orientation by explaining why you are asking these questions.

- Consider using additional prompts when knowing a service participant/client's sexual orientation or gender identity impacts on their quality of care (for example, 'in our service we see and work with a lot of straight and gay people…').

- Respond positively and respectfully when LGBTIQA+ people are open about their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status. Be aware that some clients may be unsure of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and others may be in the initial stages of 'coming out' and/or affirming their gender.

- Be sensitive to the different ways in which LGBTIQA+ people talk about their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex variation. Address LGBTIQA+ service participants using terms that are respectful and consistent with their preferences. For example, if a client identifies herself as a "gay woman", mirror that language rather than substituting for another term you might this is equivalent (i.e. "a lesbian woman"). If unsure, ask the individual how they would like to be addressed or described.

- Understand that sexual orientation and gender identity may be fluid, and it is not uncommon for everybody to question or explore their sexuality or gender identity. GSANZ will respect an individual's right to identify how they wish to identify, irrespective of how the individual identified in the past.

- Provide extra support and sensitivity to LGBTIQA+ people who disclose experiences of discrimination based on intersex status, homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic discrimination and violence.

It is important to call out any discriminatory remarks or behaviours made against LGBTIQA+ people.

You can do this by:

- Explaining why that language is not acceptable for use within Good Shepherd - because we value LGBTIQA+ people and want everyone to feel safe.

- Explaining that the language that the client/employee used can be upsetting to other staff or clients who might identify as LGBTIQA+.

- Reminding the client/employee of their rights and responsibilities and consequences if they continue to use discriminatory or prejudicial language or behaviours.

- Asking the client if they would like to continue with the rest of the intake process.

Clients who are part of the LGBTIQA+ communities may themselves react negatively to being asked questions about their sexual orientation, gender identity, pronouns or intersex status.

Respectful communication – data collection

- Signal to the client that they are welcome to discuss their sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status with us, and that it is safe to do so. Reinforce that we do not presume that everyone is cisgender nor heterosexual.

- Be open and accommodating if an individual prefers to fill out service-related forms/questions themselves. Where this is the case, ensure that the same information is provided to the client about why this information is collected, that collection is voluntary and treated confidentially, and what happens to data collected by GSANZ.

- Assure service participants that information and discussions are confidential unless otherwise required by law.

- Explain the purpose for which the information is being collected, how it will be used and stored, and to whom it will be made available (e.g. referrals to internal and/or external programs/services). Refer to Privacy Policy.

- Respect an individual's right not to disclose their information. Where a client chooses not to disclose (e.g. answers 'prefer not to say'), assure them that they can provide additional information at any time during their care.

- Where appropriate, ask service participants whether they are happy to have their responses recorded in the system.

- Be aware that there may be conflicts in official documents for some people; where this is the case, the client's self-identified status prevails for service delivery. For example, a person's name on a driver's licence may be different to their Medicare Card.

Legal protections for employees and clients

- The Privacy Act 1988 (Australian Privacy Principle 3 and 5), states that when collecting personal information, we must ensure individuals are made aware of the purpose for which the information is being collected. Notification must occur at or before the time the information is collected, or as soon as practicable afterwards. Refer to GSANZ Privacy Policy for more information.

- The Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) includes protections against unlawful discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status.

- The Sex Discrimination Amendment (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status) Act 2013 includes additional attributes protecting people on grounds of intersex status, and gender identity and sexual orientation. This piece of legislation introduces more inclusive definitions and addresses gaps such as a lack of coverage for acts or practices of the federal government. It also significantly expands the protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in federal law and fully recognises intersex people in anti-discrimination legislation.

- State and Territory anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation identifies a number of personal characteristics or attributes that are protected. This means a person cannot treat someone unfairly or unfavourably because they have that characteristic(s) – or because it is assumed they do. Protected attributes include: age, sex, gender identity, race, disability, and sexual orientation.

- Victoria, Queensland and the ACT are the only Australian jurisdictions with a Human Rights Act or Charter. These pieces of legislation in these jurisdictions ensure that government services, including health care and community services, respect people's basic rights and that people are not unfairly treated.

Sample scripts

The following scripts have been developed to support Good Shepherd employees in asking specific questions to collect sex, gender identity and sexual orientation information.

Employees are encouraged to explore and practice the wording/phrasing they are most comfortable using, so that they can respectfully use them with confidence when speaking with clients or employees.

Refer to the Key terms section of this Guide for further definitions if clients or employees are struggling to understand some questions or words.

You may be the first person who the client or employee has disclosed their identity to. If this is the case, it is important to respond positively, affirm their identity and provide support and/or referral options as needed.

- *Thank you for telling me. Do you consent for this information to be recorded in your service participant/client record?*

- *Would you like me to reaffirm your gender and pronoun/s with others, either within Good Shepherd and/or external service providers or any other people from your personal life we might come into contact with?*

  If yes, "I want to protect your information, so let's make a list of all the people, services or workers who you give me permission to share this information with"

- *How would you like to be referred to by other people and services, and in correspondence such as mail?*

- *Is there anyone or any organisation that you would prefer not to know about your gender identity, pronouns, intersex status and/or sexual orientation?*

I appreciate that many of the questions we ask are of a personal and sensitive nature. Having information about your gender identity and sexual orientation will help us provide you with appropriate services and support. This information will also support our advocacy work and improve the way our services can be provided in the future.

We know that everyone is different, so I'm going to ask a few questions about how you identify, such as your cultural background or sexuality. You don't have to answer these questions if you don't want to, and I want you to know we keep this information confidential and only ask to ensure we can be respectful of who you are, and provide appropriate services to you.

We use pronouns when referring to people/groups of people. Personal pronouns are important to a person's identity. In English, personal pronouns are often gendered. Using correct pronouns is like using a person's correct name, and shows you acknowledge and respect their identity.

What is your sexual orientation?

How do you describe your gender? For example, I identify as a man

Is this the first time you have told anyone this information?

Were you born with a variation of sex characteristics (sometimes called an intersex variation)?

Would you like to disclose an intersex variation?

We ask these questions of everyone. You do not have to share this information with us, but you are welcome to discuss your gender identity and sexual orientation with us at any time. I would like to respect your gender and sexuality; do you mind if I ask you a few questions about these?

Thank you for trusting me with your information about who you are. I understand it can be really hard to tell people, especially strangers like me.

Good Shepherd is committed to providing a safe and welcoming place for all LGBTIQA+ people. Would you like us to explore making a referral for you to a LGBTIQA+ specific service as well?

What pronouns, if any, do you use for yourself?

For example, I identify as female, and my pronoun is she/her. When other people talk about me they use these words in place of my name "That is Jane, she is a great worker"

Questions about partners and living arrangements

- Do you have a partner or partners?
- Are you in a relationship currently?
- What is your partner's name?
- How does your partner describe their gender identity?
- Are you co-parenting your children with anyone?
- Do you live with anyone?
- Do you feel safe with your partner(s)?

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Key terms

This section lists a range of terms used within this document. It is important to note that acceptance and use of terms change over time, both within LGBTIQA+ and the broader community, and new terms are constantly being revised or added.

Ableism
The institutional, cultural and individual set of beliefs, attitudes and practices that perceives and treats people with a disability as being less worthy of respect and consideration, less able to contribute and participate, or of less inherent value than able-bodied individuals. Ableism results in the systematic and institutional exclusion and marginalisation of people with disability.

Ageism
The process of systematic stereotyping of, and discrimination against people based on their age. Although ageism is more generally used in relation to the discrimination against older people, ageist attitudes and norms also adversely affect young people.

Ally
A person who is an active and visible advocate for LGBTIQ+ inclusion. Allies are friends, advocates or supporters for LGBTIQ people and their rights. An ally takes on the responsibility for sharing information about LGBTIQ inclusivity with others; corrects harmful myths and stereotypes of LGBTIQ people; calls out inappropriate behaviour and harmful comments; and displays symbols of LGBTIQ inclusion. The term 'ally' can be used for non-LGBTIQ allies as well as those within the LGBTIQ community who support each other, e.g. a gay man who is an ally to the trans and gender diverse community.

Asexual/Ace
A person who has little or no sexual attraction towards other people.

Aromantic/Aro
A person who does not experience any romantic attraction towards other people.

Biphobia
Prejudice, fear and/or hatred directed towards bisexual people or bisexuality. This includes invalidating bisexuality as a sexual orientation (e.g. insisting that bisexuality is "just a phase" or a "stepping stone" to being either gay or heterosexual).

Bisexual
A person of any gender who self-identifies as being emotionally, romantically and/or sexually attracted to people from more than one gender.

Brotherboy
Brotherboys are "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were assigned female at birth, but live our lives through our boy spirit. We take on male roles in community and society, and are accepted as such within our cultural world views. Therefore, Brotherboy encompasses both our gender identity and our cultural identity".[1]

Cisgender
A term used to describe a person whose gender identity aligns with those typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth. For example, a cisgender man is someone who was assigned male at birth and identifies as a man. They may refer to themselves as a 'cisman'. The term 'cis' is often used as an abbreviation.

Cisgenderism
A term referring to the cultural and systemic ideology that denies, denigrates, or pathologises self-identified gender identities that do not align with assigned gender at birth. This ideology endorses and perpetuates the belief that cisgender identities and expressions are to be valued more than all other gender identities and expressions, creating an inherent system of associated power and privilege.

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1   Issac Roberts cited in Hayden Noon, 20 July 2020, "Brotherboys and Sistergirls: We need to decolonise our attitude towards gender in this country" Junkee, https://junkee.com/brotherboy-sistergirl-decolonise-gender/262222

Gay

A self-identified man who is emotionally, romantically and/or sexually attracted to other men. This term is sometimes used by women (rather than using the term 'lesbian').

Gender

The socially learnt roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that any given society considers appropriate for men and women. Gender defines masculinity and femininity. Gender expectations vary between cultures and change over time.

Gender diverse

Gender diverse is used to refer to people whose gender expressions differ from what is socially accepted. People who identify as gender diverse include people who identify as agender (having no gender), as bigender (both a woman and a man) or as non-binary (neither woman nor man). Some non-binary people identify as genderqueer or as having shifting or fluid genders.

Gender identity

A person's gender identity is their deep and innate sense of self, and what a person identifies with, regardless of their biological sex. Gender can be female, male, neither, a combination of the two, or exist completely outside of that binary.

Genderqueer

A gender identity that is not necessarily male, female, or viewed in a binary manner. Can also be used to self-describe a gender-non-conforming gender expression.

Heterosexism/Heteronormativity

Refers to a general perspective that sees heterosexual experiences as the only, or central, view of the world, and assumes a linear relationship between sex, gender and sexuality (for example, that all men are heterosexual and cisgender). This includes the unquestioned assumption that all people fall into one of two distinct and complementary genders (man and woman), which corresponds to their sex assigned at birth. It also assumes that heterosexual is the only 'normal' sexual orientation, and that sexual and marital relations are only appropriate between a man and a woman.

Homophobia

Fear, hatred or intolerance of people who are same-sex attracted or are perceived to be same-sex attracted, including lesbians, gay men and bisexuals, that often leads to discriminatory behaviour or abuse.

Intersectionality

A theoretical framework for understanding how systems and structures operate and interact with one another to create a societal context where power imbalances arise, and where groups of people may experience multiple and intersecting forms of oppression, disadvantage and discrimination. For example, an Aboriginal person who identifies as LGBTIQ and has a disability may experience multiple and compounding forms of discrimination and oppression, driven by racism, heterosexism and ableism.

Intersex

Intersex people have innate sex characteristics that do not fit medical and social norms for female or male bodies, and that create risks or experiences of stigma, discrimination and harm.[2]

See page 20 for a definition of 'sex characteristics'.

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2   This is the definition currently supported by Intersex Human Rights Australia.

Intersex discrimination (discrimination based on intersex status)

When a person is treated less favourably because their physical, hormonal or genetic features are neither wholly female nor wholly male; a combination of female and male; or neither female nor male. This can include exclusion or mistreatment in medical settings.[3]

Lesbian

A woman who is emotionally, romantically and/or sexually attracted to other women.

Misgendering

A term for describing or addressing someone using language that does not match how that person identifies their own gender or body (e.g. incorrect name or pronoun use). Using inclusive language means not Misgendering people. Accidental misgendering commonly happens. A quick apology and correction then moving on is best practice e.g. "Sam said he will arrive shortly. Sorry, they said they are on their way". Deliberate repeated misgendering is a form of harassment.

Pansexual

Describes the sexual, romantic or emotional attraction towards people regardless of their sex, gender or gender identity.

Polyamory

The practice of, or desire for, intimate relationships involving more than two people with the knowledge and consent of everyone involved.

Pronouns

Pronouns are the words we use to refer to people. Rather than assuming what a person's pronouns are, we will ask. All GSANZ employees will ask service participants what their pronouns are to ensure that all people feel affirmed and welcomed.

Pronouns may include: She/her; He/him; They/them; or a person's name only.

Queer

The term queer is often used as an umbrella term to describe intersex, transgender, gender diverse people, and people of diverse sexual orientations. The term is also used by people wishing to indicate that their sex, gender and/or sexuality cannot be understood within the boundaries of normative, binary notions of sex, sexuality and gender. It can be an offensive term to some LGBTIQA+ people, especially older LGBTIQA+ folk.

Questioning/unsure

Questioning is a word that describes the way we naturally question our sexual or gender identity at some point throughout our lives.

Some young people might be unsure of their sexuality (questioning) or experience fluid sexuality (when someone's sexuality changes over time). See additional resources below for a Tip Sheet on engaging LGBTIQ young people.

Racism

The systematic prejudice, discrimination and/or antagonism directed against someone of a different race, ethnicity, culture or religion. Racism can take many forms – attitudinal, institutional and cultural – and is based on the belief that one's own race, ethnicity, culture or religion is superior to another. This may be explicit, but in the contemporary context, is more often implicit (and therefore difficult to identify and counter), typically expressed as negative stereotypes and assumptions about particular individuals or groups and discriminatory organisational and institutional practices.

Sex (biological)

A construct based upon the biological characteristics related to sexual reproduction, such as chromosomes, hormones and external and internal reproductive organs.

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3   https://www.idahobit.org.au/index.php/get-active/the-stats

Sex characteristics

Sex characteristics are physical features relating to sex, including chromosomes, genitals, gonads, hormones, and other reproductive anatomy, and secondary features that emerge from puberty. [4]

Sexism

Discrimination based on gender, and the attitudes, stereotypes and cultural elements that promote this discrimination. Sexism refers to the language, attitudes, behaviours and conditions that create, support or reinforce gender inequality. Sexism can take many forms, such as joke or comments, sexual harassment, or sex discrimination. It can be perpetrated by individuals or embedded within the structures and systems of institutions and organisations. [5]

Sexual identity, sexual orientation or sexuality

Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practice, roles and relationships. Some terms used to describe a person's sexual orientation or sexuality include gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, heterosexual, straight, and homosexual.

Sistergirl

Sistergirls are Indigenous people who were classified male at birth but live their lives as women, including taking on traditional cultural female practices within the community. [6] Sistergirls have a distinct cultural identity and their cultural, spiritual, and religious beliefs are pivotal to their lives and identities. [7]

Trans or transgender

An umbrella term referring to people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. A trans or transgender person may identify specifically as trans or transgender, or just male or female, or outside of these binary categories. Being trans or transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Transgender people may identify as heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual etc.

In some societies, people choose their own gender when they come of age and more than two genders are recognised. These societies often use culturally specific terms instead of 'trans' or 'transgender'. For example, Sistergirl or Brotherboy are often used by Indigenous Australians.

Transphobia

A term used to describe negative beliefs, feelings, prejudices and stereotypes that exist about transgender or gender diverse people. Transphobia can include abusive threats or actual physical violence, sexual harassment and deliberately excluding someone because of their gender.

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4   Yogyakarta Principles plus 10 as cited from Intersex Human Rights Australia.

5   Our Watch et al., Change the story, DVRCV, Key terms

6   GLHV, 2016, The Rainbow Tick guide to LGBTI-inclusive practice (2nd ed). Melbourne: GLHV, La Trobe University.

7   Sisters and Brothers NT, 2015, www.sistersandbrothersnt.com/

Additional resources

For additional sample scripts, please see LGBTIQ Inclusive intake and assessment training slides (slides 31 – 36 inclusive).[8]

Andrews, C and R. McNair, 2020, LGBTIQ+ Inclusive Practice Guide for Homelessness and Housing Sectors in Australia. Melbourne: The University of Melbourne.

VincentCare, 2019, Gender & Sexuality Inclusive Practice Guide. Melbourne: VincentCare.

Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission, Guide for media – reporting on gender identity.

Trans Student Educational Resources, 2020, The Gender Unicorn.

QLife, 2016, Young People QLife Tip Sheet.

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8   Adapted from the National LGBTI Health Alliance, 2013, LGBTI Cultural Competency Framework: Including LGBTI people in mental health and suicide prevention organisations, Sydney: National LGBTI Health Alliance.

With the values of reconciliation, justice, zeal, audacity and the worth of each person at heart, Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand has for more than 150 years changed the lives of countless women, girls and families and supported them to stay safe, strong, well and connected.