

Affirming Trans and Non-Binary Gender Identities
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Faculty/Presenter Disclosure

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 Relationships with commercial interests:
 - Grants/Research Support: None
 - Bureau/Honoraria: None
 - Consulting Fees: None

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 Relationships with commercial interests:
 - Grants/Research Support: distinct from work at Gender Clinic
 - Bureau/Honoraria: None
 - Consulting Fees: None

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Gender Clinic Team

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Psychiatrists
 Dr. Katherine Ram
 Dr. June Lam
 Dr. David Matthews
 Dr. Bruce Fage

Primary Care Physician
 Dr. Louie Chan

Department Secretary
 Rachael Bubb
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What We Do

- Diagnostic Assessment for Trans, Non-Binary, and Gender Expansive Clients
- Assess and Recommend MOHLTC funded transition-related surgeries
- Promote Systems Change/Capacity Building Across Ontario
- Reducing Waitlist/Wait Times

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AGENDA

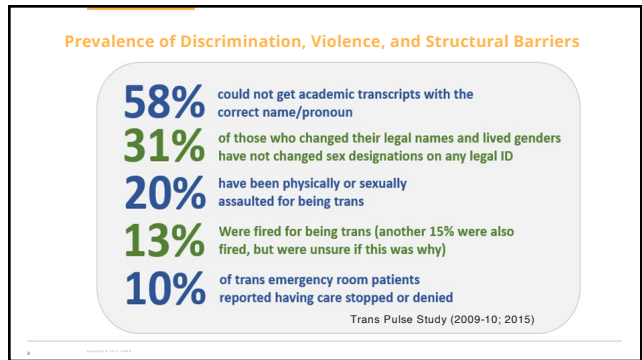
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Statistics and Findings	Gender 101: Basic Overview	Gender 201: Key Terms and Concepts	Transgender Health: Overview and Landscape	Creating Inclusive Environments

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Statistics and Findings

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- ### Discrimination, Violence, and Structural Barriers in Ontario
- Everyday transphobia - 96% have heard that trans people were not normal
 - Public spaces - 97% report avoiding at least one type of public space
 - Employment barriers and economic marginalization
 - Violence
 - Identity documents
 - Primary and emergency medical care
 - Exclusion from communities
 - Amplified impacts for racialized transpeople
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Racialized Trans and Nonbinary People

Among racialized trans and non-binary respondents:

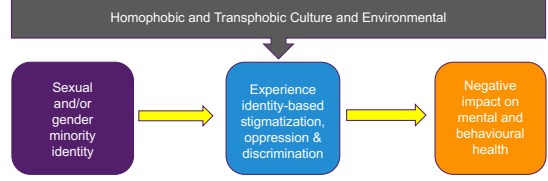
- >72% had experienced verbal harassment in the past 5 years
- > 45% had ever been harassed at work or school
- >73% worried about being stopped or harassed by police or security because of who they are



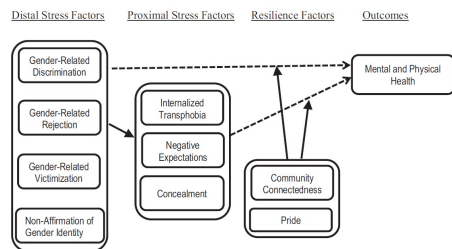
C. Chih, J. Q. Wilson-Yang, K. Dhaliwal, M. Khatoun, N. Redman, R. Malone, S. Islam, & Y. Persad on behalf of the Trans PULSE Canada Team. Health and well-being among racialized trans and non-binary people in Canada, 2009-11-02. Available from: <https://tr.pulse.ca/2014/03/research-type/reports>

Minority Stress Model (Meyer, 2003)

- > Meyer's (2003) minority stress model highlights the cumulative impact of widespread stigmatization, prejudice, and invalidation
- > Frequency of LGBTQ+ individuals with mental health struggles as a consequence of minority stress



Gender Minority Stress Model (Testa et al., 2015)




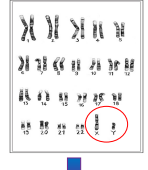
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Gender 101: Basic Overview

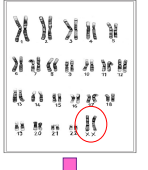
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Gendering Begins Before Birth

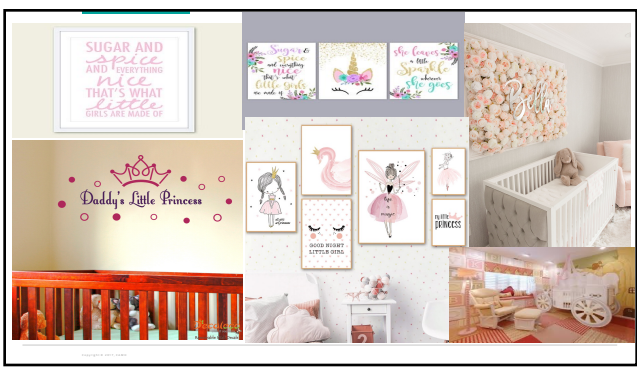


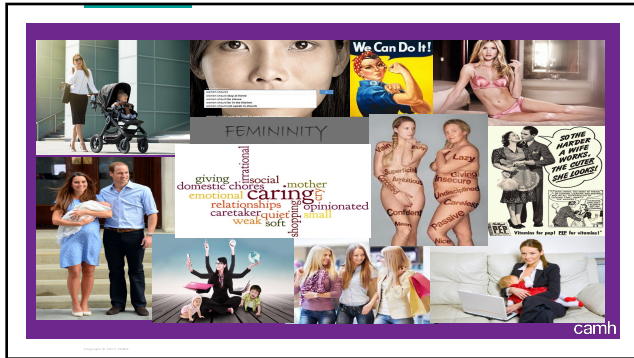


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Gender 201: Key Terms and Concepts

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Definitions and Terms

Transgender

A person is called **transgender** (in short: **trans**) if their **gender identity** – their *internally experienced* gender – differs from the gender identity expected on the basis of what they were **assigned at birth**.

Non-Binary

A person is called **nonbinary** (in short: **enby**) if their **gender identity** is any gender identity that does not fall within the strict categories of contemporary Western societies, which typically consider gender to be binary, e.g., either man or woman.

Two-Spirit

Aboriginal people who are trans might also describe themselves using the term two-spirit (2S), an umbrella term for Aboriginal individuals who live between socially defined male and female gender roles (Balsam et al., 2004).

Sex and Gender Identity

Cisgender person: When gender identity and expression **match** their sex assigned at birth (e.g. cisgender woman, cisgender man).

For **transgender and non-binary** individuals, gender identity or expression **differ** from their sex assigned at birth.

(World Professional Association for Transgender Health, 2001).

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by **TSER**

Gender Identity
Female/Woman/Girl
Male/Man/Boy
Other Gender(s)

Gender Expression
Feminine
Masculine
Other

Sex Assigned at Birth
Female
Male
Other/Intersex

Physically Attracted to
Women
Men
Other Gender(s)

Emotionally Attracted to
Women
Men
Other Gender(s)

To learn more, go to: www.transstudent.org/gender
Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

GENDER 101: SEX AND GENDER

Gender Identity
Cisgender: When gender identity and expression match their sex assigned at birth.
Trans and Non-Binary: gender identity or expression **differ** from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender Expression
The ways in which a person outwardly communicates gender identity to others through physical and social expressions.

A person's sex assigned at birth, gender identity, and gender expression can vary.

Sex
Sex is assigned at birth as either female, male or **intersex**, usually based on the appearance of the external genitalia.

GENDER 101: GENDER IDENTITY VERSUS ASSIGNED GENDER

Assigned Gender
Gender is assigned at birth based on **physical sex** – i.e. **it's a girl** or **it's a boy!** – and people are generally raised in this gender role.
This is called “assigned gender”
AFAB – assigned female at birth
AMAB – assigned male at birth

Gender Identity
An internal, subjective experience of one's gender.
Gender is how people interpret and view themselves. A person might identify as the gender they were assigned at birth (cisgender) or they may identify differently (transgender).

GENDER 101: GENDER IDENTITY VERSUS SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Sexual and Romantic Attraction
Who a person is sexually and/or romantically attracted to.
This is experienced as an intrinsic part of one's self-identification with regard to emotional, physical, romantic, sexual and spiritual attraction, desire and/or affection for another/others.

I know you know this already....
A person's gender identity does not tell you anything about someone's sexual orientation or sexual behaviour!

Non-Binary- What Does it Mean?

An umbrella term covering individuals who do not identify exclusively in the gender binary (male or female)

Is sometimes referred to as "NB" or "Enby"

Think of it as between, outside and beyond the gender binary

"Non-binary gender identity is any gender identity that does not fall within the strict categories of contemporary Western societies, which typically consider gender to be binary, e.g., either man or woman."



Non-binary: Another Definition

Non-Binary and genderqueer are umbrella terms used to describe many different gender identities that fall outside of the Western constructs of male and female.

The term non-binary includes people who identify with both male and female identities simultaneously or separately (e.g. intergender, bigender, genderfluid), those who do not experience having a gender identity or reject a gender identity (e.g. agender), and those whose gender falls between or outside male and female identities.

BETWEEN

OUTSIDE

BEYOND

Non-Binary Identities

Agender: Having no specific gender identity or having a gender identity that is neutral. Sometimes used interchangeably with gender neutral, genderless, or neutrois.

Bigender: Having two distinct gender identities or expressions, either simultaneously, at different times, or in different situations.

Genderfluid: Moving between two or more gender identities or expressions.

Genderqueer: A catch-all term for individuals who identify as non-binary

Non-Binary: The umbrella term covering all gender identities and expressions outside the gender binary. Also referred to as NB or enby.

Third Gender: Having a gender identity or expression that is not defined in terms of the binary options (male/female)

Gender isn't really like this:



Gender is more like this:



Do Non-Binary People identify as trans?

>Yes: some nonbinary people identify as trans; given that their gender identity is not congruent with their assigned sex at birth

>No: some nonbinary people do not identify as trans. **This should always be respected**

•Some identify as both trans and nonbinary

•Some nonbinary people experience the dominant connotation of the term transgender to only reference binary trans people.

"The definition of non-binary situates non-binary people as trans in because disidentification with being male or female inescapably means disidentification with the binary assignment made at birth" – Ben Vincent (2019) Breaking down barriers and binaries in trans healthcare: the validation of non-binary people, International Journal Of Transgenderism

Gender Transition

- There is a difference between gender nonconformity and being transgender. Not all people who appear androgynous or gender expansive identify as transgender or pursue transition-related interventions
- 'Transitioning' (social, legal, medical) is the period during which trans people begin changing their appearance, names and/or bodies to match their internal identity
- There is no single gender journey or end goal

Considerations: social transition and non-binary clients

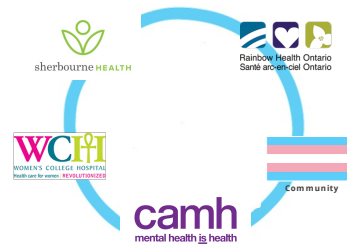
- Reconciling identity in a social landscape that can be intolerant and confused by gender nonconformity
- Living outside the gender binary is hard; less understood, less visible, less seen
- Social pressure to conform/ discomfort with traditional gender labeling processes more than binary trans people who tended to describe more ease of identifying applicable gender norms.
- Having a gender identity that it is not easily identifiable can be distressful and confusing and it may lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation. (Dismissiveness, invalidation, invisibility, and erasure)
- Viewed as a "stepping stone" or "only a phase" identity, as part of the process of negotiating a binary trans identity.
- Discrimination from cisgender and binary trans people

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Transgender Health: Overview and Landscape

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THEx Partnership - Ontario's Trans Health Expansion Partnership



Expansion of Services

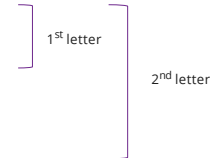
“Ontario is expanding access to referrals for medically necessary sex reassignment surgery (also known as gender confirming surgery). As of March 1, 2016, the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) has changed the funding criteria for sex reassignment surgery by allowing qualified providers throughout the province to assess patients for the surgery.”



<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/srs/>

Who Can Assess and Refer?

- Physicians
- Nurse Practitioners
- Psychologists
- Registered Nurses
- Master Level Social Workers



Funded Procedures

OHIP Funded Procedures	What's not Funded
Top Surgery - Mastectomy	Hormone Therapies
Augmentation Mammoplasty (for some)	Contouring Fees
Gonad: Hysterectomy or Orchiectomy	Travel to/from appointments and surgeries
Vaginoplasty	After care supplies and support
Phalloplasty/Metoidioplasty	Mental health support

World Professional Association of Transgender Health (WPATH)

The World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) is the only global association devoted solely to the healthcare of transgender and gender nonconforming people.

Develop and publish Standards of Care for transgender health.

As an international multidisciplinary professional association the mission of WPATH is to promote evidence based care, education, research, advocacy, public policy and respect in transgender health.



Shift in perspective: towards inclusion

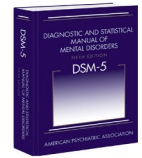
“Being transgender, transsexual or gender non-conforming is a matter of diversity, not pathology.”

World Professional Association for Transgender Health. (WPATH, 2011)
Standards of care: For the health of transsexual, transgender and gender non-conforming people

DSM-5: Assessment and Diagnosis

Gender Dysphoria

- Change from Gender Identity Disorder (DSM-IV)
- Text explicitly states that transgender identity, per se, is *not* a mental disorder
- Focus of treatment is the dysphoria/distress



DSM-5
2013

Gender Dysphoria: DSM-5

A **marked incongruence** between one's experienced/ expressed gender and assigned gender, of **at least 6 months** duration, as manifested by **2 or more** of the following indicators:

1. A marked incongruence between one's experienced/expressed gender and primary and/or secondary sex characteristics
2. A strong desire to be rid of one's primary and/or secondary sex characteristics because of a marked incongruence with one's experienced/expressed gender
3. A strong desire for the primary and/or secondary sex characteristics of the other gender
4. A strong desire to be of the other gender (or alternative gender)
5. A strong desire to be treated as the other gender (or alternative gender)
6. A strong conviction that one has the typical feelings and reactions of the other gender (or alternative gender)

Gender Dysphoria – Comorbid Disorders and Symptoms

Anxiety

- Social Phobia
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- Specific Phobias

Mood Disorders

- Major Depressive Disorder

Suicidality/Self-harm

Substance Use Disorders

Eating Disorders

Body Image Struggles

Trauma

- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Complex PTSD

Personality Impacts

- Emotion dysregulation
- Fear of abandonment
- Unstable sense of self/feeling of emptiness
- Interpersonal difficulties
- Avoidant traits

Neurodiversity/Autism Spectrum Disorder

Creating Inclusive Environments

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Gender-Affirming Care

“Gender-affirming care can be understood as the processes through which a health care system cares for and supports an individual, while recognizing and acknowledging their gender identity and expression”

- BC Nurses Union, 2016

Affirming Care Principles

- Respecting people's autonomy and identity, validation, listening
- Inclusive, non-binary view of gender
- Intersectional
- Trauma informed and resilience-based
- Education and Competency Development
- Engaging in self-reflexivity in practice about our own assumptions and biases
- Advocating for (and with) the needs and supports of our clients
- Avoid making assumptions

Inclusive Environments Affirmatively Celebrate Diversity

**Be diverse.
Be inclusive.
Be accepting.
Be a welcoming
Safe Space
For Everyone.**

TRANS INCLUSION MATTERS

POSITIVE SPACE

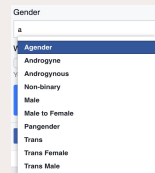
This is a place where human rights are respected and where lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two spirit and queer people, and their friends and allies, are welcomed and supported.

Inclusive Environments Affirmatively Celebrate Diversity

- Express comfort with and interest in working with trans and gender-diverse clients
- Post a bill of rights that demonstrates commitment to non-discriminatory care for trans clients
- Have information on resources for trans and gender-diverse clients
- Display images affirming trans identities (e.g., trans flag)

Inclusive Environments Invite and Capture Diversity

- State your name and your pronouns
- Give clients opportunity to provide their correct name, in addition to their legal name
- Avoid use of gendered salutations and titles (Mrs., Mr., Ms.)
- Ask clients their pronouns, and what pronouns to use in waiting room/ in presence of family members
- Include variety of options for gender on forms



Gender Pronouns and Name

- Everyone gets to decide what their gender is and what pronoun they would like used when referring to them.
- Important not to make assumptions about a person's gender identity or the pronoun they use – just ask
- “What pronouns/name do you use?” or “Can you remind me what pronouns/name you use?”

Pronouns

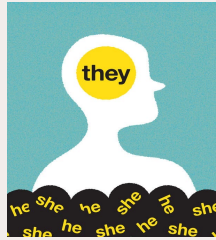
- A person's gender pronouns cannot be assumed from their appearance
- Binary pronouns do not inform us about gender identity
- Can be complex depending on national, cultural, linguistic specificity
- **Should** be incorporated into everyday practice, but also optional (i.e. in “go-arounds” where it can be a disclosure or a feeling of misgendering)



Non-binary Identities and Pronouns

Pronoun use is an important issue for non-binary people

- Not all non-binary people use they/them or alternative pronouns
- Some non-binary people choose to use pronouns other than she/her and he/his.



Make Standard Communication Inclusive

**BOYS/GUYS/
GIRLS/LADIES:
Y'ALL, FOLKS,
PEOPLE,
GUESTS**

**GIRL/BOY/
MAN/WOMAN:
PERSON,
HUMAN**

**LADIES AND
GENTLEMEN:
HONORED
GUESTS,
DISTINGUISHED
GUESTS**

**GIRLFRIEND/
BOYFRIEND:
PARTNER, DATE,
DATEFRIEND,
DATEMATE,
BABEFRIEND, BABE,
HEART, PERSON,
SIGNIFICANT OTHER**

Gender Affirming Environment: Washrooms

- Gendered washrooms are a significant stressor for trans and gender expansive people
- Safety issues for more visibly trans people
- Non-binary person is forced to make a decision between two choices, neither of which may feel right for them



Gender Affirming Environment: Washrooms



Cultural Humility and Self-Reflection

- Be mindful that some diagnostic labels have been used to undermine the legitimacy of transgender people's identities and impose barriers to accessing transition resources
- Learn from your client and their unique context – Do not expect them to educate you beyond what is appropriate
- Is gender relevant to the discussion?
- Recognize that individuals may be afraid to disclose their gender identity or trauma history for various reasons
- Consider intersectionalities
- Be mindful of the historical and contemporary traumas that trans people have been subjected to in health care – and the trepidation in seeking care

Resources

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Resources

- Education and Training
- Trans Health Mentorship Call
- Primary Care Guidelines for Trans Care
- Provincial Navigator
- Affirming Service Provider Directory



Resources

- Creating Authentic Spaces: A Gender Identity and Gender Expression Toolkit
- Community Programming (i.e. ID Clinics, Support groups, legal services, housing services, etc.)



Resources

- Primary care and programming for trans communities
- ARC - respite stay for surgical recovery
- Groups and drop-ins (i.e. Gender Journeys)



Resources

- International Standards of Care Publication
- Research, resources, and publications
- Annual conference



ECHO Ontario Mental Health: Trans and Gender Diverse Healthcare



Resources



Families in TRANSition (FIT) is a 10-week, closed group for parents/caregivers of trans and gender-questioning youth (age 13 - 21) who have recently learned of their child's gender identity.

Thank You

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