

Working with LGBTIQ+ people

Lesbian - women who are attracted to other women.

Gay - men who are attracted to other men.

Bisexual - men or women who are attracted to both BINARY genders.

Transgender - men or women who do not identify as the gender assigned at birth.

Intersex - a medical condition where a person is born with aspects of both genders.

Queer / Questioning - Queer (a blanket term used by LGBTIQ+ people who do not comfortably sit within one identity or whom wish not to be labeled - *note this is a reclaimed word and should NOT be used outside of community without instruction*). Questioning (mainly used for young people who are not yet within relationships or those who have not yet had a relationships with a person they are attracted to).

Asexual / Agender - Asexual (those who do not have a desire for a sexual relationship or who are not attracted to anyone sexually). Agender (also referred to as non-binary, people who do not identify with either a male or female gender or who do not agreed with an idea of binary gender).

+ pansexual (people who are attracted to all genders and identities without discrimination, including transgendered people), polyamorous (people who are attracted and form relationships with multiple people at any time).

TIPS:

- **if you are unsure or don't feel comfortable, ASK RESPECTFULLY or refer to someone as being "within the LGBTIQ+ community."**
- **Other countries may use different acronyms. Many do not include the I, Q, A or +. Australia currently includes all of these communities.**
- **When a person is transitioning between sexes (eg M to F) they may identify as "transitioning". This is categorised under the transgender definition most of the time.**

Gender vs. Sexuality

cis-gendered - identifies with the gender they were assigned at birth

Gender is our understanding of who we are to ourselves.

Sexuality is who we love and how we relate to others.

TIPS:

- **In EVERY ASPECT, the gender and sexual identity of every person is theirs to decide and MUST be respected. This is very important around names and pro-nouns. Regardless of legal status, identity is the decision of the person.**
- **Only question an LGBTIQ+ person about their gender or sexuality when all clients are questioned. Avoid constantly referring to the gender and sexual identity of LGBTIQ+ people. For example: would you say "This is my cis-gendered female, hetero-normative client?"**
- **Mis-gendering someone on purpose is a form of queerphobia and one of the most common "micro-aggressions" queer people face. If you misgender someone by accident, apologise and correct yourself. If you hear another person misgender someone and the person spoken about is not present, correct the person.**

THINGS YOU SHOULD DO!

- Ask a person's preferred pro-nouns and name and use them - regardless of any paperwork that challenges this.
- Always use a persons chosen pro-nouns and note this in all your file notes and reports
- Treat all 'next of kin' and 'emergency contacts' as equal, despite biological link
- Link your client with specialty services where possible
- Notice and NOTE any information that might indicate family or domestic violence with the client's close family, including micro-agressions (misgendering, refusing to accept gender / sexual identity)
- Encourage clients to engage with their local queer community for support
- Display support for the queer community in waiting rooms and marketing material
- Link in with queer organisations in your local area
- Participate in mardi gras festival and get involved
- Access training from queer organisations
- Develop a LGBTIQ+ policy or information sheet for staff
- Include representation (ideally more than one) of the queer community on your board and steering committees, etc.
- Join "safe space" programs

THINGS YOU SHOULD NOT DO!

- Mis-gender someone on purpose
- Use reclaimed words without permission - e.g "queer, dyke, twink, homo"
- Treat biological family different to chosen family
- Encourage stereotypes
- Ask general questions about the queer community to your client (they are not there to educate you about the wider community)
- Start a program or treatment for LGBTIQ+ people without a member of the community evaluating it.
- Provide any information to biological family without consent