


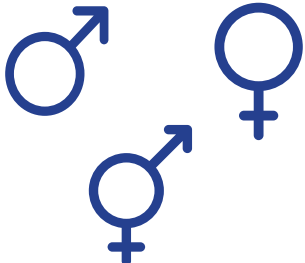


Quick Guide:

Qualities of a Gender-Affirming Pharmacy

KNOWLEDGE OF KEY LGBTQ TERMS



Understanding and reflecting the language patients use to refer to themselves is essential to being a gender-affirming pharmacy. This section covers the key terms that pharmacists and pharmacy staff should be familiar with in order to best serve transgender and gender diverse patients.

GENDER IDENTITY	SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH	GENDER EXPRESSION	SEXUAL ORIENTATION
Your internal sense of being a man, woman, both, or another gender.	Classification at birth based on external anatomy.	The way you demonstrate your gender to others.	Who you love and/or are attracted to in reference to your own identity.
			

SEX

Sex refers to a set of characteristics associated with reproduction and biology that generally assign individuals into categories of “male” and “female.” Since sex can incorporate a spectrum of genotypic and phenotypic diversity but is often used as a discrete category, the term **sex assigned at birth** is preferred terminology (not “biological sex” or “natal sex”).

AFAB (Assigned Female at Birth) refers to someone whose sex was assigned as female when born, typically based on their external genitalia. While many transgender and non-binary people are comfortable identifying as AFAB, some prefer not to use this term to describe their experience or the experiences of others.

AMAB (Assigned Male at Birth) refers to someone whose sex was assigned as male when born, typically based on their external genitalia. While many transgender and non-binary people are comfortable identifying as AMAB, some prefer not to use this term to describe their experience or the experiences of others.

Intersex is an umbrella term used to describe those who are born with natural biological variations that differ from those classically thought to be typical to either men or women. In some cases, these traits are visible at birth, while in others they are not apparent until puberty. Some chromosomal variations of this type may not be physically apparent at all. Intersex individuals are diverse across gender identity and sexual orientation, and may or may not identify as LGBTQ. For more information, visit interactadvocates.org

GENDER IDENTITY

Gender identity refers to one's innermost concept of self as man, woman, a blend of both, neither or another gender – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. An individual's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation; transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual or another orientation.

Cisgender is a term used to describe people whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned to them at birth.

Non-binary is a term used to describe a person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. A non-binary person may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or completely outside these categories. While many non-binary people also identify as transgender, not all do.

Gender diverse is a term used to describe people whose gender identity or expression does not conform to socially defined gender norms.

GENDER EXPRESSION

Gender expression refers to how we present our gender to the world, and it may or may not be related to our gender identity. For example, women — whether transgender, cisgender or non-binary — may wear traditionally masculine clothing, altering their gender expression. Every individual expresses their gender differently, through behavior, clothing, haircuts, voice, and many other ways. Though gender expression is a deeply personal way of showing who we are, transgender and non-binary people often face significant barriers to expressing themselves authentically.

In order to have their gender expression align with their gender identity, many transgender and non-binary people will **transition**. Transitioning is a process that some transgender and non-binary people go through when they decide to live as their true gender, rather than the one assigned to them at birth. Transitioning can take place at different speeds, with different intensities and in different ways.

GENDER DYSPHORIA AND GENDER INCONGRUENCE

Gender dysphoria is a billable diagnostic code in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5), published in 2013. **Gender incongruence** is a billable diagnostic code in the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-11). These codes replaced the “Gender Identity Disorder” code that was used in earlier versions of both the DSM and ICD, which many felt contributed to stigmatization of transgender and gender diverse people.

Gender dysphoria and incongruence are not the same as not conforming to societal expectations of gender expression. Not all transgender or non-binary people will experience gender dysphoria or incongruence; however, these are the billing codes that are most frequently used for gender-related treatments. Treatments for gender dysphoria or incongruence are individualized and patient-specific; some patients may not wish to pursue a social or physical transition for a variety of reasons. Patients who seek to transition but are denied access to gender-affirming care, however, have a higher risk of mental health impacts and health disparities.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Sexual orientation refers to an individual's inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people. Sexual orientation is independent of gender identity.

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Gender dysphoria (DSM-5)²

A. A marked incongruence between one's experienced/expressed gender and assigned gender, of at least 6 months' duration, as manifested by at least two of the following:

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 some alternative gender different from one's assigned gender).
5. A strong desire to be treated as the other/alternative gender (or some alternative gender different from one's assigned gender).
6. A strong conviction that one has the typical feelings and reactions of the other gender (or some alternative gender different from one's assigned gender).

B. The condition is associated with clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.

Gender incongruence (ICD-11)³

A. A marked and persistent incongruence between the gender felt or experienced and the gender assigned to birth. This incongruity is manifested in at least two of the following criteria:

1. Strong dislike or disagreement with primary or secondary sexual characteristics due to incongruence with the experienced gender.
2. Strong desire to get rid of some of those sexual characteristics due to the incongruence with the experienced gender.
3. Strong desire to have the primary or secondary sexual characteristics of the experienced gender.
4. Strong desire to be treated and accepted as a person of the felt gender.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

This quick guide is excerpted from *Providing Inclusive Care and Services for the Transgender and Gender Diverse Community: A Pharmacy Resource Guide* published by the Human Rights Campaign and the American Pharmacists Association. For the full guide and other quick guides focused on the six qualities of a gender-affirming pharmacy, visit thehrcfoundation.org/TransPharmacyGuide.



1 Knowledge of key LGBTQ terms



4 Visible symbols of support



2 Inclusive communication



5 Staff training



3 Gender-related data management



6 Knowledgeable and patient-centered care

²Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), Fifth edition. American Psychiatric Association. 2013.

³M. Fernández Rodríguez et al. "Gender Incongruence is No Longer a Mental Disorder," *Journal of Mental Health and Clinical Psychology*, September 18, 2018.