



INCLUSIVE VOCABULARY – GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUALITY

Treating patients from diverse backgrounds calls for thoughtful consideration and precise language can help patients and their families feel more comfortable when receiving care. Diversity includes:

- Ability.
- Ethnicity.
- Race.
- Religion.
- Sexuality and gender identity.
- Socioeconomic status.

Providing a safe and welcoming environment to all our patients and their families helps us provide better, patient-centered care for everyone.

These guidelines were written by the American Psychological Association and Maysa Akbar, Ph.D., chief diversity officer of the American Psychological Association, the Associated Press, the American Medical Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Asexual – Describes people who don't experience sexual attraction but may feel other types of attraction. Not the same as celibacy.

Bisexual – Describes people attracted to more than one gender. Some people prefer *pansexual*, which describes people attracted to others regardless of their gender.

Cisgender – Refers to people who are not transgender. Refers to gender and is not the same as heterosexuality, which refers to sexual orientation.

Conversion therapy – Scientifically discredited practice of using therapy to “convert” LGBTQ people to heterosexuality or traditional gender expectations.

Deadname – A previous name, often of a transgender person from before a gender transition.

Gay, lesbian – Used to describe people attracted to the same sex, though lesbian is the more common term for women. Gay or lesbian is preferred over homosexual.

Gender – Refers to social and cultural definitions of male and female. Gender binary (male/female) is widely used, but erases identities of people who fall outside it.

Gender confirmation or sex reassignment – Treatments, surgeries and other medical procedures used by transgender people to match their sex to their gender identity. Gender confirmation or sex reassignment is not necessary for people to transition their gender. Do not use the outdated terms “sex change” or “gender reassignment.”

Gender fluid – Refers to people whose gender identity is not fixed, but may change with space, time or context. Typically, they do not identify as male or female.

Heterosexual – In males, sexual orientation that describes attraction to females and vice versa. *Straight* also can be used. Transgender people can be of any orientation, including heterosexual.

Homophobia, homophobic – Fear or hatred of gays, lesbians and bisexuals.

Homosexual (adj.), homosexuality (n.) – Refers to the sexual orientations of gays and/or lesbians. *Gay and lesbian* are preferred.

Identity – Term used to describe a someone's gender or gender expression.

Intersex – Term used to describe people born with genitalia, chromosomes or reproductive organs that don't fit typical definitions for males or females.

LGBT, LGBTQ – References lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender or lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning and/or queer.

Name changes – In general, use the name someone prefers.

Nonbinary – People whose gender identity is not strictly male or female. Not the same as transgender.

Out – Refers to public knowledge of a someone's homosexuality, bisexuality or gender transition.

Outing – Usually used when someone's sexual or gender identity is revealed against their will or knowledge.

Pansexual – Refers to someone who is attracted to people of any gender. Can also use *bisexual*.

Pronouns – Pronouns someone refers to themselves as. He/him/his, she/her/hers, they/them/theirs. They/them/theirs pronouns are used for people who do not identify as one gender.

Same-sex marriage – Preferred over gay marriage and is no different from other marriages.

Sexual orientation – An inherent emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people. A person's sexual orientation is independent of their gender identity.

Transgender – Refers to people whose gender identity (male or female) does not match the sex they were identified as having at birth. Being transgender does not require sex reassignment or gender confirmation procedures.

Transition – The process transgender people go through to match their gender identity. This may include sex reassignment or gender confirmation procedures.