

## What are all the letters?

The letters refer to people with diverse sexualities, genders and sexes:

- › Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Asexual – diverse sexualities.
- › Transgender – diverse genders.
- › Intersex – diversity in sex characteristics.
- › Queer (a reclaimed term which acknowledges diversity in gender and sexuality) and Questioning.
- › 2-spirit – a term used by Indigenous Peoples for diversity in genders, sexes, and sexualities.
- › Sistagirl – a culturally specific term describing an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person who identifies as being a woman and/or having feminine spirit, energies or qualities. Most commonly used to describe Aboriginal transgender women.
- › Brothaboy – a culturally specific term describing an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person who identifies as being a man or having masculine spirit, energies and/or qualities. Most commonly used to describe Aboriginal transgender men.



### Why is being inclusive of LGBTQ2IA+ community members important

Indigenous LGBTQ2IA+ people experience high rates of exclusion and discrimination, leading to high rates of anxiety, depression and suicide. Providing a service where people feel a sense of safety and feel respected in their interactions will have a significant impact on their lives.

## For more information

### The Welcome Here Project

[www.welcomehere.org.au/about](http://www.welcomehere.org.au/about)

### A Language Guide: Trans and Gender Diverse Inclusion

[www.acon.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/External\\_Language-Guide-17396\\_print\\_V12A.pdf](http://www.acon.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/External_Language-Guide-17396_print_V12A.pdf)

### TransHub: 'Trans Mob'

[www.transhub.org.au/trans-mob](http://www.transhub.org.au/trans-mob)

This resource was produced by the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council in collaboration with the Forum for Indigenous Research Excellence and the Department of Indigenous Studies at Macquarie University.

### Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council

[www.ahmrc.org.au](http://www.ahmrc.org.au)

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# LGBTQ2IA+ Inclusion Guide



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This is a guide for enabling efficient and meaningful interactions. To facilitate cultures of respect and reciprocity between medical professionals and Indigenous LGBTQ2IA+ community members. It provides key, simple recommendations to implement that will provide your staff with skills to enable amicable interactions with Indigenous LGBTQ2IA+ clients.

### A Welcoming Environment

- › Identifiable items bring on a sense of familiarity and safety. Examples include a pride flag or a sign with a statement of inclusion

**Example:** *this practice recognises Sistagirls & Brothaboys and welcomes people of diverse genders, sexes and sexualities.*

- › Display an anti-discrimination policy

**Example:** *this practice does not tolerate homophobia, transphobia or discrimination towards any member of our community.*

- › Never make assumptions based on a person's appearance or the sound of someone's voice.
- › Use gender-neutral language unless you know how someone likes to be referred to

**Example:** *this person has an appointment, they are here for their appointment.*

### Inclusive processes

- › Indigenous and LGBTQ2IA+ people both have negative experiences with paper work. Ensure your forms are inclusive and user-friendly.

- Include a question for pronouns

**Example:** *Which pronouns do you use? (she/her, he/him, they/them, more)*

- Open text box for gender

**Example:** *Please specify your gender:*

- Open text box for prefixes, or do away with them completely!
- › Where possible change your bathrooms to gender neutral. Alternatively, change your accessible bathroom to state "gender neutral".
- › When confirming if a patient's name is the same as their Medicare card – ensure it is recorded so that it is only asked once and ask this privately (or better, incorporate this in your forms).

**Example:** *Is your name the same as on your Medicare card? Please provide your Medicare details. Please provide your preferred name for record keeping.*

- › Include notes in your patients' files where your systems of data collection are limited.

### Compassionate and well-trained staff

- › High levels of anxiety, depression and self-harm in Indigenous LGBTQ2IA+ people are caused by the way they are treated and ingrained negative connotations about them. Be careful not to pathologise people based on their gender, sex or sexuality.
- › Think about which questions are important to ask and which questions are not necessary or are unrelated.

**Tip:** *Check in with yourself if you would ask a heterosexual patient the same question.*

- › Gender-neutral language helps to eliminate assumptions about gender and sex. For sexual health screening and when talking about relationships, use gender-neutral terms like 'partner(s)' or 'lover(s)'. When asking questions to determine which tests are necessary, refer to anatomy.
- › Confidentiality is important for people's safety. Explain any situation that might involve the sharing of patient details.
- › It is not safe for all people to be open with their family. Be aware and understanding of different ways someone might act when with family.
- › At the end of the day, LGBTQ2IA+ people simply need a place to access support – treat them based on the symptoms they bring into your service. Remember, you will not necessarily be able to tell that a person has a diverse sex, gender or sexuality.