Striving for Comprehensive Queer & Trans Care: A Guide for Clinicians

Presented by: Hiva Nematollahi RSW, BSW
She/her

Land Acknowledgement

2

A little about myself
+
Disclaimer

Agenda

Length: approx. 45 minutes

1	Why is this important? SDoH, Statistics
2	Reviewing terms: definitions and the importance of language
3	How to navigate making mistakes
4	Ensuring client safety
5	Debrief: questions & resources

Social Determinants of Health (SDoH)

"The economic and social conditions that shape the health of individuals, communities, and jurisdictions as a whole. Social determinants of health are the primary determinants of whether individuals stay healthy or become ill (a narrow definition of health). Social determinants of health also determine the extent to which a person possesses the physical, social, and personal resources to identify and achieve personal aspirations, satisfy needs, and cope with the environment (a broader definition of health). Social determinants of health are about the quantity and quality of a variety of resources that a society makes available to its members" (Raphael, 2016)

Three significant determinants of positive mental health and wellbeing are:

1	Social Inclusion
2	Freedom from discrimination and violence
3	Access to economic resources

Statistics

Source: Mapping the Void: Two-Spirit and LGBTQ+ Experiences in Hamilton

In a survey of over 900 people:

- 93 per cent of trans people in Hamilton feel unsafe

- More than 50 per cent of LGBTQ+ people here have faced harassment, violence or hate crimes.

- 46 per cent said they had considered harming themselves because of issues related to their sexuality or gender expression.

- 75 per cent said they have wanted support for mental health in the last 12 months, and 40 per cent said they couldn't seek support because of financial barriers.

Statistics

Source: CMHA

LGBTQ people face:

- Higher rates of depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive and phobic disorders, suicidality, self-harm, and substance use among LGBT people
- Double the risk for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) than heterosexual people

LGBTQ youth and trans people face:

- LGBTQ youth face approximately 14 times the risk of suicide and substance abuse than heterosexual peers
- 77% of trans respondents in an Ontario-based survey had seriously considered suicide and 45% had attempted suicide
  - Trans youth and those who had experienced physical or sexual assault were found to be at greatest risk

Statistics

Source: Stats Can

Overall, sexual-minority Canadians were more likely than heterosexual Canadians to:

- Report that they consider their mental health to be poor or fair (32% versus 11%).
- They were also more likely to have seriously contemplated suicide in their lifetimes (40% versus 15%)
- To have been diagnosed with a mood or anxiety disorder (41% versus 16%).

Transgender Canadians were also more likely to:

- Report their mental health as poor or fair than their cisgender counterparts, and also more likely to have seriously contemplated suicide in their lifetimes.
- More likely than cisgender Canadians to have been diagnosed with a mood or anxiety disorder.

Statistics

Source: CMHA

- LGBTQ people experience stigma and discrimination across their life spans, and are targets of sexual and physical assault, harassment and hate crimes

- Hates crimes motivated by sexual orientation more than doubled in Canada from 2007 to 2008, and were the most violent of all hate crimes

- An Ontario-based study of trans people found that 20 per cent had experienced physical or sexual assault due to their identity, and that 34 per cent were subjected to verbal threats or harassment

- Trans people in both Canada and the US report high levels of violence, harassment, and discrimination when seeking stable housing, employment, health or social services

Definitions: Part 1

Non-Binary/ gender-queer:	Non-binary or genderqueer is an umbrella term for gender identities that are outside the gender binary.
Gender Nonconforming (GNC):	An umbrella descriptor for those who do not adhere to gender norms, rules, behaviours, expectations.
Queer	Umbrella term for those not heterosexual (and sometimes not cisgender) + also has political meaning for many.
Transgender	Transgender is an umbrella term for persons whose gender identity, gender expression or behavior does not conform to that typically associated with the sex to which they were assigned at birth.
Cisgender	Denoting or relating to a person whose gender identity corresponds with the sex registered for them at birth; not transgender.

Definitions: Part 2

Two-Spirit (2S)	2S is an English-language umbrella term used by some people to describe an Indigenous person's gender, sexual, spiritual, and/or cultural identity.
Questioning	A period where a person explores their own sexual identity, orientation, and/or gender.
Deadname	To call (a trans or non-binary person) by their birth name when they have changed their name as a part of their gender transition.
Misgender	Refer to (someone, especially a transgender person) using a word, especially a pronoun or form of address, that does not reflect their gender identity.

What are pronouns?

"A pronoun is a word that you use to refer to someone or something when you do not need to use a noun, often because the person or thing has been mentioned earlier. Examples are 'it', 'she', 'something', and 'myself'." Someone can change their pronouns over time or day to day. –Collin's Dictionary

Things of note:
- Some people go by multiple sets of pronouns or by certain sets of pronouns among only certain audiences
  - Just as some may have different names in certain spaces. If in doubt, ask.
- Someone's pronouns do not dictate their gender identity
  - E.g., "she/her" pronouns does not automatically mean "woman"
- Do not force someone to share their pronouns
  - Place emphasis on sharing "if you're comfortable"

What people may use when asked about their pronouns: Part 1

"All/any pronouns"	Someone who is comfortable with any pronouns; may want you to choose one set and stick to it or <u>use a bunch interchangeably</u>
"No pronouns"	Refers to someone who does not wish to be referred to by a pronoun. A noun should be used instead (their name)
They/Them pronouns	They/them is often used as a gender-neutral pronoun for those who feel most comfortable being referred to in this way. It is also used when referring to an individual whose gender is unknown
It/Its pronouns	The pronoun "it" is traditionally used for objects, not people. It/Its pronouns have historically been used to refer to trans people in a derogatory way. Many people are now reclaiming this term and find it gender-affirming.

What people may use when asked about their pronouns: Part 2

Neo pronouns	Neo pronouns are a category of new (neo) pronouns that are used in place of "she," "he," "it," or "they" when referring to a person Neo pronouns provide options to reflect one's gender identity more accurately than conventional pronouns Examples include: xe/xem/xyr, ze/hir/hirs, and ey/em/eir
Using various pronouns interchangeably	She/they; He/they; They/she; They/him; She/he/they Some people who use pronouns interchangeably (specifically they/them and something else) may place "They" in the beginning to state that is what is preferred. This may look like "They/she" pronouns rather than "She/they"

When you make a mistake

<u>You noticed you misgendered someone:</u>
- Misgendered someone out loud: correct yourself and continue on
- Misgendered someone in your head: important to make note of this and correct yourself internally as well. If you've been struggling to learn someone's pronouns we want to practice

<u>Someone pointed out you misgendered them or someone else:</u>
- When making a mistake, refrain from apologizing or over-apologizing. This puts the onus on Trans and Non-Binary individuals to comfort you and often say "it's okay." Instead, you can provide a brief apology, say thank you and continue using the correct pronouns.

<u>Things NOT to say when you've misgendered someone:</u>
- "I am so sorry I promise I support trans people I really didn't mean to I-"
- "How was I supposed to know?"
- "But you look like a-"
- "I'm sorry, I'm just so new to this. I don't think I'll ever get it down."

Tips for practicing correct pronoun use:

Digital practice: https://www.minus18.org.au/pronouns-app
- Minus 18 is an online network driven by LGBTQ+ youth and have created a website where you can practice with many pronouns and neo pronouns

Verbal practice
- Practice talking about someone with the correct pronouns aloud. Say the sentences you might say over and over until they feel natural

Written practice:
- Practicing writing out a character with someone's pronoun set and their name to both get some writing in for the day as well as reminding your brain what pronouns it needs to start associating with someone

Treat appropriate gendering like learning a new language:
- You can't learn a new language by osmosis or by sleeping on a dictionary in that language. You have to practice and make an effort. If you can learn new words and new languages, then you can learn how to treat trans people properly

Discussing legal sex

(AFAB)	Assigned Female at Birth
(AMAB)	Assigned Male at Birth
(AIAB)	Assigned Intersex/Indeterminate at Birth

17

- It can be invalidating of one's gender identity to be referred to as "nonbinary male/female"

- Instead: [Name] is non-binary and assigned [Female/Male/Intersex] at birth

How pronouns are conjugated

Subject Form	Object Form	Possessive Form	Reflexive
She	Her	Her	Herself
He	Him	His	Himself
They	Them	Theirs	Themselves
It	It	Its	Itself
Ze	Zir	Zir	Zirself
Ey	Em	Eir	Eirself
Xe	Xem	Xyr	Xyrself

Language matters: "preferred" vs "chosen" and "identifies as"

- When referring to someone's name and pronouns as 'preferred' there is an implication that the alternative option (being deadnamed and misgendered) is a feasible option

- It is disempowering and often dysphoric for clients to hear incorrect names and pronouns

- Avoid saying [name] "identifies as" [gender]

- When a trans person reveals their true, authentic gender identity, it's not a question of "identifying as" a woman, man or as nonbinary — they simply are
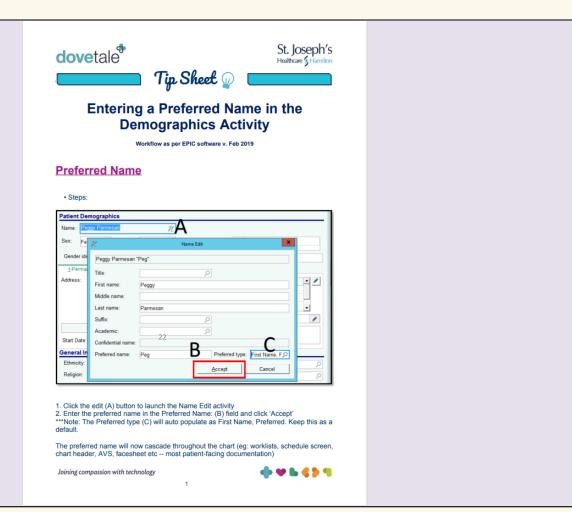
Ensuring Safety

- When learning one's name, pronouns, sexual orientation, etc. it is important to ask whether they are comfortable with that information being documented (changing their gender marker and adding pronouns in Dovetale) or being used around the client's friends and family (i.e., calling an emergency contact or leaving a message and addressing them by their chosen name).

- Some individuals may feel safe 'coming out' to you and that doesn't mean it is safe for them to do so in all areas of their life. It is important to ask these questions to avoid 'outing' or harming these clients.

Affirming gender through medical records

To add pronouns:

1)	Open the client chart
2)	Press under their name on left hand side where the legal sex, age, and DOB are
3)	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity SmartForm will appear
4)	Choose the applicable gender identity and pronouns

To add a "preferred name": see next slide ➜

St. Joseph's
Healthcare ⚡ Hamilton

Tip Sheet 💡

Entering a Preferred Name in the Demographics Activity

Workflow as per EPIC software v. Feb 2019

Preferred Name

• Steps:

1. Click the edit (A) button to launch the Name Edit activity
2. Enter the preferred name in the Preferred Name: (B) field and click 'Accept'
***Note: The Preferred type (C) will auto populate as First Name, Preferred. Keep this as a default.

The preferred name will now cascade throughout the chart (eg: worklists, schedule screen, chart header, AVS, facesheet etc -- most patient-facing documentation)

Joining compassion with technology

Resources for Queer & Trans Clients

LGBTQIA+ Resources PDF (Hamilton specific): https://drive.google.com/file/d/1j-15CEqgrzB5T4sAGEOcnD8pS69CNg0e/view?usp=sharing

Quick Access

- Alphabet Soup: St. Joseph's LGBTQ2s+ Peer Support Group for community members age 18+ with lived experiences of mental health and/or addiction challenges. Thursdays 11am-12pm. Register by calling: 905-522-1155 ext. 39559. Offered virtually through Zoom

- St. Joes Youth Wellness Centre: SAGE (Support Around Gender Experience). Peer support group for youth who identify as trans, nonbinary, genderfluid, or who are questioning their gender identity and want to connect with community. Email Ben at bbailey@stjoes.ca

- speqtrum— supported by the YWCA is a youth-founded and youth-focused skill-sharing and community building program for 2S & LGBTQIA+ young people in Hamilton, ON.

- https://www.rainbowhealthontario.ca/

Resources for Clinicians

Practical tips for inclusive health records:
https://rainbowhealth.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Practical-Tips-To-Make-Your-Electronic-Health-Record-More-Inclusive-for-2SLGBTQ-people.pdf

LGBT2SQ Health Connect: Rainbow Health Ontario's Learning platform with courses:
https://learn.rainbowhealthontario.ca/

Harvard Medical School's Sexual and Gender Minority Health Teaching Module Series:
https://www.lgbtqiahealtheducation.org/collection/hms-sgm-health-teaching-module-series/

Mapping the Void: Two-Spirit and LGBTQ+ Experiences in Hamilton:
https://labourstudies.socsci.mcmaster.ca/documents/mappingthevoid.pdf

Questions?

+

Debrief

Contact me: hnematol@stjosham.on.ca