


LGBTQ2SIA+ glossary

Using appropriate and culturally sensitive terminology is an important part of providing an inclusive and respectful environment for your patients. Refer to this glossary for a list of commonly used terms to familiarize yourself with when caring for LGBTQ+ patients.

Designed by Daniel Quasar, the Progress Pride flag includes black and brown chevron stripes to represent LGBTQ2S+ communities of color, and pink, light blue, and white stripes to include colors from the transgender flag. A more recent iteration designed by Valentino Vecchiotti of Intersex Equality Rights UK adds a yellow chevron and purple circle for intersex inclusion.

Glossary

Agender: someone who does not identify as having a particular gender

Asexual: someone who experiences little to no sexual attraction to others

Bisexual: someone who is attracted to both men and women; may include attraction to multiple genders

Chosen name/name used: the name one goes by and has chosen for themselves

Cisgender: someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth

Gay: a sexual orientation that most commonly describes men who are emotionally and physically attracted to men; however, it can also be used to describe women who are attracted to women

Gender: a set of socially constructed characteristics, roles, behaviors, and attributes that are associated with cultural norms and expectations

Transition: the process of making social, legal, and/or medical changes to affirm one's gender identity

Heteronormativity: an assumption that everyone is heterosexual and that heterosexuality is normal and preferred

Heterosexual (straight): a sexual orientation that describes women who are attracted to men and men who are attracted to women

Homophobia: discrimination towards and hatred or fear of LGBTQ2SIA+ people

Intersex: people who are born with a variety of situations and conditions affecting the person's chromosomes, reproductive organs, genitals, and/or other sex characteristics that do not fit the typical medical definitions and/or expectations of male or female

Lesbian: a sexual orientation that describes women who are emotionally and physically attracted to women

Minority stress: chronic stress experienced by stigmatized minority groups

Non-binary: a person whose gender identity falls outside of the gender binary structure of girl/woman or boy/man

Pansexual: an individual who is attracted to people of all gender identities

Pronouns: words used to refer to someone that doesn't include their name (e.g., she/her/hers, he/him/his, they/them/theirs)

Queer: all-encompassing term used to describe LGBTQ2SIA+ people; has been used as a slur but has been reclaimed by some people and communities

Sexual orientation: how an individual characterizes their romantic, emotional, and sexual attraction to other people

Transgender (trans): an individual whose gender identity doesn't align with the sex assigned at birth; may be used as an umbrella term to describe anyone whose gender identity falls outside of the gender binary structure (i.e., gender fluid or non-binary)

Two-spirit: a culture-specific term from the Anishinaabemowin term *niizh manidoowag*, used by Native American, American Indian, and Indigenous people to describe an individual who embodies both a masculine and a feminine spirit; it is also used to distinguish the wide variety of Indigenous concepts of gender and sexuality as separate from the systems imposed on Indigenous communities through colonization



Preferred terms to use

Outlined below are some outdated terms and the preferred terms to use instead.

Outdated term	Preferred term
Biological female/male	Assigned female/male at birth
Hormone replacement therapy	Gender-affirming hormone therapy
Gender nonconforming	Gender non-binary
Hermaphrodite	Intersex
Homosexual	Gay or lesbian
Preferred name	Chosen name or name used
Preferred pronouns	Pronouns
Gender reconstruction surgery	Gender-affirming surgery
Sex change	Sex reassignment surgery
Sexual preference	Sexual orientation
Transgendered	Transgender

The terms outlined in this handout have evolved over time and may continue to change. To the best of our knowledge, these are accurate; however, there may be other terms not listed here.

For more information about using neutral language in your practice, refer to Heal All Consulting's [Neutralizing Clinical Language guide](#).

References

1. Consortium. (n.d.). Intersex-inclusive flag. <https://www.consortium.lgbt/intersex-inclusive-flag/>
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This handout was developed by Fullscript's Integrative Medical Advisory team and reviewed by Dr. Cyndi Gilbert, ND, a naturopathic doctor, author, and educator with a clinical focus in mental health, trauma, and LGBTQ2SIA+ health.

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