Building Trans* Awareness and Responsiveness

OHSU Transgender Health Program
Session Objectives

• Learn trans* related terminology
• Better understand gender identity/expression
• Become familiar with common risk and protective factors for the trans* community
• Consider trans* issues across the lifespan
• Better understand gender transition
• Learn how to be a trans* ally
• Learn about the OHSU Transgender Health Program and other resources.
Why Now?

Jazz Jennings

Kye Allums

Men's Health

Raffi Freedman Gurspan

Laverne Cox

Aydin Dowling

Caitlyn Jenner
The health care environment

State Medicaid policy explicitly covers health care related to gender transition for transgender people (11 states + D.C.)

State Medicaid has no explicit policy regarding transgender health coverage and care (23 states)

State Medicaid policy explicitly excludes transgender health coverage and care (16 states)

Source: Transgender Law Center
The 2015 legislative environment

Anti-LGBT legislation

THE BILLS LARGELY FALL INTO FOUR CATEGORIES:
- Religious Refusals
- Anti-Transgender
- Promoting “Conversion Therapy”
- Nullifying Local Civil Rights Protections

100 Bills in 29 state legislatures

Source: Human Rights Campaign
Understanding Gender Identity
The “Trans*” term is an umbrella term for a variety of self described identities.

Terms are often open to interpretation and evolve over time.

A person’s self identification is always the best terminology.
No two people are the same in their experiences. Expect Diversity.

Not all people who identify as trans* pursue gender transition.
**Gender**

Refers to the attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that a given culture associates with a person’s biological sex.

Behavior that is compatible with cultural expectations is referred to as **GENDER NORMATIVE**.

Behavior that is not compatible with cultural expectations is referred to as **GENDER NON CONFORMING**.

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**Sex**

Refers to a person’s biological status, typically categorized as:

- **male**
- **female**
- **intersex** - *atypical combinations of features that usually distinguish male from female*

There are a number of indicators of biological sex, including:

- sex chromosomes
- gonads
- internal reproductive organs
- external genitalia

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Reference: the American Psychological Association
Gender and Sex

are not synonymous terms.

Gender is not determined by one’s assigned sex at birth.

It is determined by a person's sense, belief, and ultimate expression of self.
For many, the acronym LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning) reflects a community of individuals who, in some way, are attracted to members of the same sex. This refers to sexual orientation.

Many people fail to realize that the “T” in the acronym does not relate to sexual attraction at all; rather, it refers to a person’s sense of gender (referred to as gender identity).
The “Trans*” term is an umbrella term to encompass a variety of self described identities.

Reference: www.thegenderbook.com
Gender Identity

Gender is...
- a spectrum
- a range of expression
- how you relate to yourself

Gender is not...
- just male or female
- defined by body parts
- sexual orientation
- determined by chromosomes

Reference: www.arewehuman.me
Trans* terminology

- **Trans***: An umbrella term for individuals whose lived sex, gender identity and/or expression differ from cultural norms or societal expectations based on their sex assigned at birth.

- **Transgender**: An umbrella term for individuals whose gender identity and/or gender expression does not align with the gender they were assigned at birth.

- **Cisgender**: A person whose gender identity aligns with the gender they were assigned at birth (Contrast to transgender).

- **M2F or MTF**: Male to female; trans* people assigned male at birth who identify as female.

- **F2M or FTM**: Female to male; trans* people assigned female at birth who identify as male.

References: GLAAD, Bridge 13 Community Education Project, UCSF Center of Excellence for Transgender Health
Trans* terminology

• **Gender Identity**: How an individual experiences and conceptualizes their gender, regardless of one’s assigned sex. This is what a person feels or knows about their gender on the inside.

• **Genderqueer**: People who do not necessarily identify as either man or woman, but rather something outside of the binary gender system.

• **Gender non-conforming/gender diverse**: An individual whose gender expression differs from or does not conform to societal expectations of their gender.

• **Two-Spirit**: Term coined by Native American and Canadian First Nations communities to describe and honor individuals who manifest a dynamic balance of both masculine and feminine.
Trans* terminology

• **TRANSSEXUAL**: An older term to represent a person whose gender identity and/or gender expression does not align with their sex at birth and who may desire physical transition, which may include, but is not limited to hormones or gender confirmation surgeries. To some this term can be offensive.

• **TRANSVESTITE**: An older term used for people who enjoy dressing as the opposite gender but do not identify with that gender. More commonly used terms now include: Drag King, Drag Queen, Cross Dresser. To some, this term can be offensive.

References: GLAAD, Bridge 13 Community Education Project, UCSF Center of Excellence for Transgender Health
The Gender Spectrum

Reference: Sam Killermann
www.itspronouncedmetrosexual.com
Limitations of the Gender Binary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The</th>
<th>Binary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male ♂</td>
<td>Female ♀</td>
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<tr>
<td>Man</td>
<td>Woman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>Feminine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attracted to Women</td>
<td>Attracted to Men</td>
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</tbody>
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I am: Select Sex:
- Female
- Male
Beyond the gender binary
Scenario

You are in the lobby waiting for an elevator and you are approached by someone whose gender isn’t obvious to you. They ask you where the closest restroom is. What do you do?

ANSWER  Offer multiple options: inform them of the closest single use gender neutral restroom as well as the gendered multi use restrooms. If you don’t know where they are, if possible, direct them to someone who might know.
Gender Transition
WPATH Standards

Promotes standards of care for trans* individuals that reflect best available science and expert professional consensus.

Allows for flexible clinical guidelines and offers professional discretion and exception to standards of care for anatomical, psychological or social reasons.

Recognizes and values of harm reduction strategies.

www.wpath.org
Gender transition

- Transition is the process of changing one's external appearance and expression to better represent one's internal gender identity.
- One can have a SOCIAL TRANSITION, PHYSICAL TRANSITION or a MEDICAL TRANSITION or a combination.
- An individual who has transitioned may not identify as transgender, but rather as their affirmed gender only.
Social Transition

• Gender Pronouns
• Name Change
• Restrooms
• Disclosure
Physical Transition

- Clothing
- Hair
- Make up
- Binding, breast forms
- packing, tucking
Medical Transition - Hormones

- Pubertal Suppression
- Testosterone
- Anti Androgens
- Estrogen
Medical Transition - Surgery

Sexual Reassignment Surgery (SRS) is commonly used in medical vernacular but is more appropriately referred to as:

- genital reconstruction surgery
- bottom surgery / top surgery
- gender affirmation surgery
Clinical Services at OHSU

Pubertal suppression
Hormone therapy
Laser hair removal
Chest surgery (FTM and MTF)
Facial feminization surgery
Oophorectomy/hysterectomy
Orchiectomy
Vaginoplasty
Metoidioplasty (spring 2016)
Phalloplasty (summer/fall 2016)
Risk and Resilience
Positive Transgender visibility is increasing but risks remain high.

- Housing
- Education
- Employment
- Barriers to health care
- Poverty
- Violence
Risk Factors

- 28% of transgender people have postponed necessary medical care when sick or injured

- 33% have delayed or not sought preventative care because of experiences of health care discrimination

- 52% believe they’ll be refused care

- 73% believe they’ll be treated “differently”
Risk Factors

What does being treated differently mean?

70% of transgender patients reported at least one of these health experiences, based on transgender status:

• Being blamed for their health condition
• Refusal to touch or excessive precautions
• Harsh language
• Physical roughness

**Numbers were much higher for racial/ethnic minorities and low-income transgender people**

Source: When Health Care Isn’t Caring
Health Barriers

OPINIONS ABOUT TRANSGENDER HEALTH BARRIERS

82% NO  YES 18%
THE PROVIDER WILL USE THE CORRECT GENDER PRONOUNS

85% NO  YES 15%
FORMS AND PAPERWORK REFLECT MY GENDER IDENTITY

79% NO  YES 21%
THERE ARE ASSESSABLE BATHROOMS AT MY FACILITY

63% NO  YES 37%
THERE IS ACCESS TO A PROVIDER KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT TRANSGENDER HEALTH

SOURCES: UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA MPH CANDIDATE E.SHOR
Protective Factors

- Transgender Visibility and celebration
- Inclusive Language
- Family Support
- Social Support
- Early Intervention
- Community resources
- Educated health care providers
- Access to health care and insurance inclusion
The Mental Health Professional
Duties of mental health professionals include:

**Assessment**

**Supportive psychotherapy**

**Family therapy or support for family members**

**Treat co-occurring mental health concerns**

**Refer for medical interventions**

**Educate and advocate on behalf of clients**
Developmental Considerations

Child/Adolescent

• Gender identity and expression is generally established long before onset of puberty

• Early intervention is key (counseling, family support, pubertal suppression)

• Social and school support needs.

Adolescent/Adult

• Gender identity, gender expression, and how they intersect with sexuality

• Fertility, family planning, and parenting

• Implications for school/housing/employment
Gender Dysphoria in Adolescents and Adults (302.85)

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:

- A marked incongruence between one’s experienced/expressed gender and primary and/or secondary sex characteristics (or in young adolescents, the anticipated secondary sex characteristics).
- 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 (or in young adolescents, a desire to prevent the development of the anticipated secondary sex characteristics).
- A strong desire for the primary and/or secondary sex characteristics of the other gender.
- A strong desire to be the other gender (or some alternative gender different from the assigned gender).
- A strong desire to be treated as the other gender (or some alternative gender different from one’s assigned gender).
- 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).

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

- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder with obsession about body part/gender identity
  - Delusions about gender identity
- Gender confusion, i.e. young gay male who is not accepting of his homosexuality and sees gender reassignment as the resolution
  - Aversion toward sexuality/sexual body parts
  - Transvestic Fetishism (cross-dressing for erotic purposes, but no gender dysphoria)
- ASD, i.e. Is this part of rigid worldview or is it parallel to ASD?
- Severe personality disorder with lack of consolidated identity

Credit:
Valerie Tobin, RN, MS, PMHNP, PMHCNS-BC
Challenges with Expanding Access to Surgery

- Co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders
- History of trauma, societal discrimination, negative experiences in medical and mental health care settings may interfere with engagement in care
- Unstable living situations and lack of social support
- Lack of resources in health care and mental health care settings

Credit:
Dan Karasic, MD
Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, UCSF
LBGT Health Education Center
What Psychiatrists and Other Mental Health Practitioners Can Contribute

- Providing care to stabilize co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders with transition and across the lifespan.
- Principles of cultural humility and patient centered care.
- Emphasis on psychosocial functioning and support.

Credit:
Dan Karasic, MD
Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, UCSF
LGBT Health Education Center
Assessment for Gender Affirming Surgery

- Basic eligibility
- Decision making (planning, managing expectations, providing informed consent)
- Gender identity and dysphoria
- Sexual and relationship history
- Medical history
- Mental health history
- Substance use - current/past
- Stability, supports, and aftercare
- Recommendation and Plan

Credit:
Dan Karasic, MD
Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, UCSF
LBGT Health Education Center
What about Regret?

- 2012 Trans Mental Health Study - England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland
- 1054 adult participants
- Looks at how transitioning impacts mental health and well being
- Regret not associated with medical interventions
- 5% reported regret due to:
  - Lack of appropriate support
  - Losing family and loved ones
  - Employment, cultural, and environmental issues
  - Still not feeling accepted in affirmed gender

Credit: McNeil, Bailey, Ellis, Morton, & Regan
Equality Network 2012
Environment of Inclusion
Create Safe Space

- Inclusive intake forms
- Restroom signage
- Educated employees
- Inclusive language
- Respectful care
Gender Diversity

Gender Identity Form

- Gender Identity: M, F, FTM, MTF, TG, QG
- Sex Assigned at Birth: Male, Female, Intersex

Transition Summary
- Organ Inventory: Penis, Testes, Prostate, Breasts, Vagina, Cervix, Uterus, Ovaries

Treatments and Procedures:
- Cross-sex hormone therapy, current user
- Cross-sex hormone therapy, past user
- Vaginoplasty, penile inversion
- Vaginoplasty, colon graft
- Phaloplasty, free flap
- Metaplasia
- Scrotoplasty
- Urethoplasty
- Scalp advancement
- Forehead reconstruction
- Reduction thyrocervicoplasty
- Labial Valli feminization surgery
- Soft tissue filler injections
- Bilateral total reduction mammoplasty
- Voice surgery
- Other unrelated surgical procedure

Future Plans:

- [Blank]

[Logo: Oregon Health & Science University]
Respecting Names and Pronouns

Always use a person's affirmed name and pronoun...always.

• Even if they are pre-transition
• Even if you feel silly or uncomfortable
• Even if they use gender neutral pronouns that are hard to remember
• Even if they aren't close enough to hear you, or are not in your presence.

If you are unsure of a person's gender or pronoun use...

• Listen for cues in introduction or in the conversation.
• Ask politely and privately "What pronouns do you use?“
• Use neutral pronouns until you know what they use.
• Avoid referring to pronoun “preference” as this suggests it is optional.
Misgendering Mishaps

If you make a mistake with someone’s name or pronoun:

• don't dwell
• own it
• correct it
• learn from it
• and
• move on!
Asking Questions

Which of these questions are ok to ask?

- "What did you look like before?"
- "What was your real / other / girl name?"
- "Are you going to have all the surgeries?"
- "How do you have sex / pee / etc.?"

Answer: None!
What can you do?

- Become aware and knowledgeable
- Educate others
- Advocate for change
- Hold others accountable
- Be aware of your biases, beliefs, behaviors
- Be genuine
- Be an ALLY!
Instead of saying that all gender is this or all gender is that, let's recognize that the word gender has scores of meaning built into it. It's an amalgamation of bodies, identities, and life experiences, subconscious urges, sensations, and behaviors, some of which develop organically, and others which are shaped by language and culture. Instead of saying that gender is any one single thing, let's start describing it as a holistic experience.”

Kate Bornstein
Gender Outlaws: The Next Generation
Questions?
OHSU’s Transgender Health Program

• Education and training for the OHSU community regarding issues of relevance to the transgender community to support an inclusive and affirming environment.

• Clinical consultation, information, and referrals for OHSU providers serving transgender and gender non-conforming patients and their families/visitors.

• Patient navigation and referral for resources (including but not limited to medical, legal, behavioral and other social services).
Coaching and support for transgender employees, their colleagues, and/or supervisors who are navigating gender transition in the workplace.

Policy review and development to support a transgender inclusive environment.

Advocacy within OHSU and the greater community for transgender patients in all realms of their care.
Resources

Advancing Effective Communication, Cultural Competence, and Patient- and Family-Centered Care

for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Community

A Field Guide

• http://www.jointcommission.org/assets/1/18/LGBTFieldGuide.pdf
Community Resources

TransActive Gender Center (Portland)
http://www.transactiveonline.org/index.php

Sexual Minority Youth Resource Center (SMYRC)
http://www.smyrc.org

Portland Q Center
http://pdxqcenter.org

World Professional Association of Transgender Health
http://www.wpath.org/

National Center for Transgender Equality
http://www.transequality.org

UCSF Center of Excellence for Transgender Health
http://www.transhealth.ucsf.edu
Recommended Reading

- The Transgender Child by Stephanie Brill and Rachel Pepper
- Helping Your Transgender Teen: A Guide for Parents by Irwin Krieger
- Trans Bodies, Trans Selves Edited by Laura Erickson-Schroth
- Transgender Explained for those who are not by Joanne Herman
- I AM: Trans People Speak [http://www.transpeoplespeak.org](http://www.transpeoplespeak.org)
Recommended Reading

- Of what am I afraid? JAMA. 2012; 307(4) 371-372

- Transgender and Gender Identity Issues, NASW policy statement

- Transgender-Competent Health Care

- Social Services with Transgender Youth, Edited by Gerald P. Mallon
OHSU’s Transgender Health Program

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