



FACT SHEET

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity



Key terms

- **Sexual orientation:** The desire for intimate emotional and/or sexual relationships with people of the same gender/sex, another gender/sex, or multiple genders/sexes.
- **LGBTQI:** A common abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersexed community.
- **Gender identity:** A person's internal sense of self and how they fit into the world, from the perspective of gender.
- **Gender expression:** The outward manner in which an individual expresses or displays their gender. This may include choices in clothing and hairstyle, or speech and mannerisms. Gender identity and gender expression may differ; for example a woman (transgender or non-transgender) may have an androgynous appearance, or a man (transgender or non-transgender) may have a feminine form of self-expression.
- **Sex:** Historically has referred to the sex assigned at birth, based on assessment of external genitalia, as well as chromosomes and gonads. In everyday language is often used interchangeably with gender, however there are differences, which become important in the context of transgender people.
- **Transition:** This term is primarily used to refer to the process a gender variant person undergoes when changing their bodily appearance either to be more congruent with the gender/sex they feel themselves to be and/or to be in harmony with their preferred gender expression.
- **Transgender:** A person whose gender identity differs from the sex that was assigned at birth. May be abbreviated to trans. A transgender man is someone with a male gender identity and a female birth assigned sex; a transgender woman is someone with a female gender identity and a male birth assigned sex. A non-transgender person may be referred to as cisgender (cis=same side in Latin).
- **Transsexual:** A more clinical term which had historically been used to describe those transgender people who sought medical intervention (hormones, surgery) for gender affirmation. Term is less commonly used in present day, however some individuals and communities maintain a strong and affirmative connection to this term.
- **Cisgender:** describes someone who feels comfortable with the gender identity and gender expression expectations assigned to them based on their physical sex.
- **Intersex:** Someone whose sex a doctor has a difficult time categorizing as either male or female. A person whose combination of chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal sex organs, gonads, and/or genitals differs from one of the two expected patterns.
- **Gender non-conforming:** A person whose gender identity differs from that which was assigned at birth, but may be more complex, fluid, multifaceted, or otherwise less clearly defined than a transgender person. Genderqueer is another term used by some with this range of identities.
- **Gender non-binary:** transgender or gender nonconforming person who identifies as neither male nor female.
- **Trans-masculine/trans-feminine:** Terms to describe gender nonconforming or nonbinary persons, based on the directionality of their gender identity. A trans-masculine person has a masculine spectrum gender identity, with the sex of female listed on their original birth certificate. A trans-feminine person has a feminine spectrum gender identity, the sex of male listed on their original birth certificate. In portions of these Guidelines, in the interest of brevity and clarity, transgender men/women are inclusive of gender non-conforming or nonbinary persons on the respective spectræ.
- **Heteronormative bias:** The assumption, in individuals or in institutions, that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality and bisexuality.



U.S. demographics for LGBTQ

Breakdown by US: According to Gallup, national average for LGBT is 3.5%, but estimates of the percent of adults who identified as LGB or LGBT varied across surveys from between 2.2% and 4.0%, implying that between 5.2 million and 9.5 million individuals aged 18 and older are LGBT. Despite this variation in prevalence estimates, the analyzed surveys show many demographic similarities among respondents who choose to identify as LGB or LGBT. LGBT identity was more common among younger populations. LGBT populations generally shared the racial and ethnic characteristics of non-LGBT individuals. Adults were more likely to identify as LGBT in the Northeast and West than in the South and Midwest.

Breakdown by military: According to 2010 estimates from The Williams Institute in UCLA, and estimated 48,500 lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals (LGB) are serving on active duty or the ready reserve, with an additional 22,000 in standby and retired reserve forces. In total, 70,781 LGB members represent 3.4% of the military. While women comprise about 14% of active duty personnel, they comprise more than 43% LGB service members.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender health disparities

LGBTQ individuals face health disparities linked to societal stigma, discrimination, and denial for civil and human rights. This discrimination has been associated with high rates of psychiatric disorders, substance abuse, suicide, victimization, sexually transmitted infections, HIV, and more. In particular, heteronormative bias (assuming patients are heterosexual or straight) in healthcare can create barriers around providing appropriate care, testing, and screening for LGBTQ patients, which perpetuates the health disparity.

For Health Care Providers

- Acknowledge and overcome heteronormative bias
- When taking sexual history, ask “Do you have sex with men, women, or both?” Do not assume the patient is straight.
- Provide appropriate safer sex guidance and testing based on their anatomy, sexual orientation and gender identity.
- If your patient has multiple partners, identifies as polyamorous or ethically non-monogamous, ask what safer sex precautions they use for partners and provide testing in accordance with sexual practices. Patients with multiple partners may require more frequent testing, especially given introduction of new partners.

References:

- (1) Planned Parenthood sexual orientation and gender identity; https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/sexual-orientation_gender
- (2) Healthy People 2020, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Health; <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-health>
- (3) UCSF Center of Excellence for Transgender Health; <http://www.transhealth.ucsf.edu/trans?page=guidelines-terminology>
- (4) UCLA LGBT Campus Resource Center; <http://www.lgbt.ucla.edu/Resources/LGBTQ-Terminology>
- (5) Gallup; <http://www.gallup.com/poll/160517/lgbt-percentage-highest-lowest-north-dakota.aspx>
- (6) The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law; US demographics across surveys <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/research/census-lgbt-demographics-studies/lgbt-demogs-sep-2014/>
- (7) The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law; military demographics <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Gates-GLBmilitaryUpdate-May-20101.pdf>