

DISCRIMINATION AND DENIAL OF CARE: THE UNMET NEED FOR TRANSGENDER HEALTH IN SOUTH LOS ANGELES



**TRANSGENDER
HEALTH
PROGRAM**

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OBJECTIVES

- Increase knowledge to better serve transgender and gender non-conforming patients
- Explore the impact of social constructs and *cisgender* privilege
- Explore the existing data regarding experiences of harassment and discrimination for transgender clients and patients
- Increase knowledge of St. John's Well Child and Family Center – Transgender Health Program

Please raise your hand...

- If you have never been required to undergo psychological evaluation because of your gender identity
- If your gender identity is not now, nor has it ever been, considered a mental illness
- If you have a better chance of reaching old age without taking your own life because of your gender identity
- If you have the ability to walk through the world and generally blend-in, not being constantly stared or gawked at, whispered about, pointed at, or laughed at because of your gender identity

Please raise your hand...

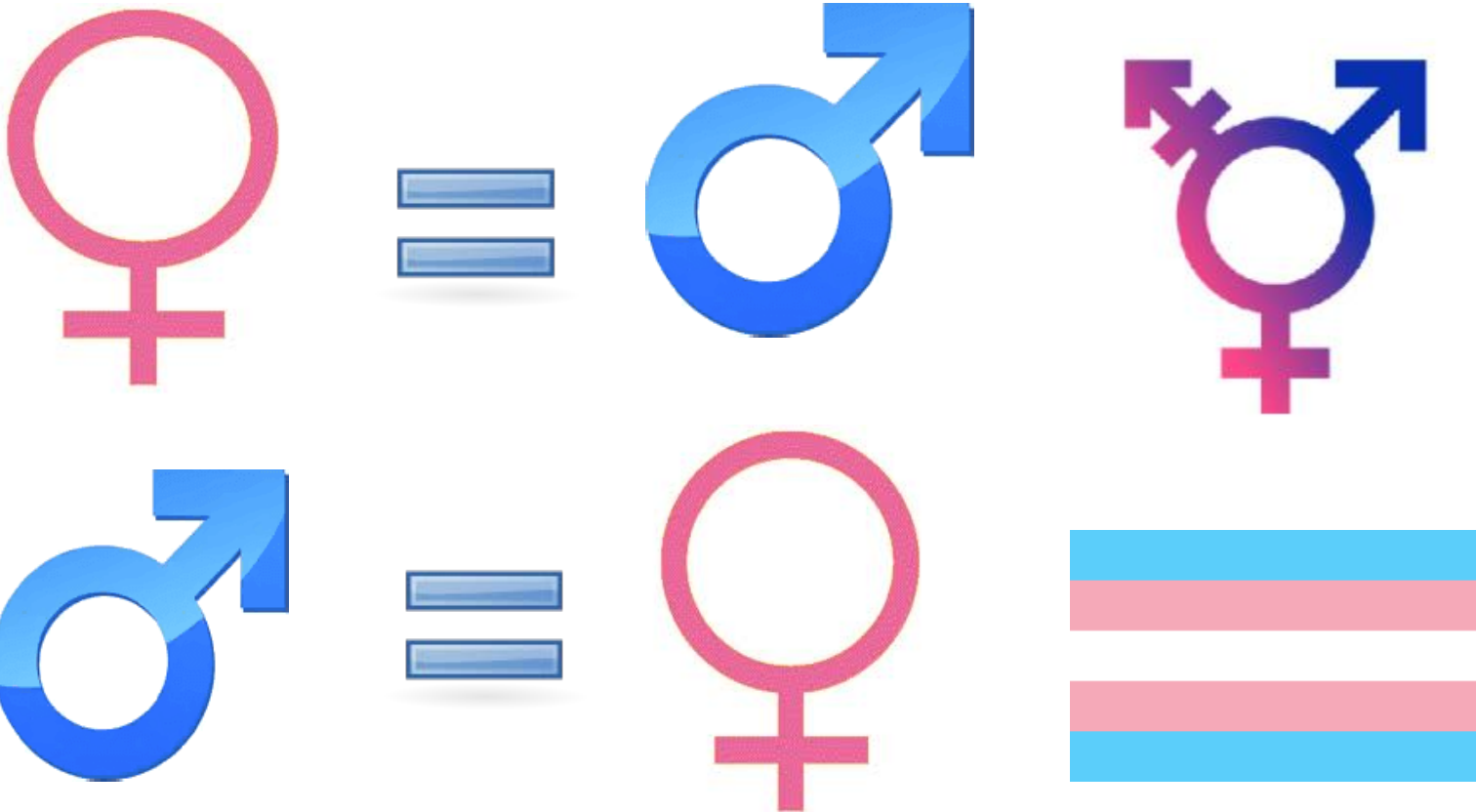
- If you can safely assume that those who love you and are closest to you, will call you by the name you prefer
- If you can safely assume that those who love you and are closest to you, will use the correct pronoun when referring to you
- If it is unlikely that anyone will ask you what your “real name” is and then assume that they have a right to call you by the name
- If you have the ability to not be profiled on the street as a sex worker because of your gender identity
- If you can easily find positive role models and mentors to emulate who share your gender identity

Please raise your hand...

- If you can reasonably assume that your ability to acquire a job, rent an apartment, live in university dorms, or secure a loan will not be denied on the basis of your gender identity
- If you have never considered binding your chest or tucking your penis in attempt to have your body more accurately reflect your gender identity
- If you can't imagine spending months and thousands of dollars in therapy so they can tell you something you already knew
- If you end up in the emergency room, you do not have to worry that your gender identity will keep you from receiving appropriate treatment, or that all of your medical issues will be seen as a result of your gender identity

TRANSGENDER

Umbrella term that can be used to describe people whose gender identity is different from their assigned sex at birth



GENDER IDENTITY

the range of characteristics pertaining to, and differentiating between, masculinity and femininity...

- A person's *internal, deeply-felt sense* of being male, female, both or neither
- Everyone has a gender identity
- Is solely about ones sense of self, is not related to attraction to others
- Is an innate experience, i.e., not a choice

GENDER EXPRESSION

- The *projection* of male, female, something else, neither...the way we *express* our gender and what everyone around us can see...individual's characteristics & behavior...
 - ✓ Appearance
 - ✓ Dress
 - ✓ Mannerisms
 - ✓ Speech Patterns
 - ✓ Social Interactions



CISGENDER

Having a gender identity that is the same as the one assigned to you at birth



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN *SEX* AND *GENDER*?

- **Sex** is assigned at birth, refers to one's biological status as either male or female, and is associated primarily with physical attributes such as chromosomes, hormone prevalence, and external and internal anatomy
- **Gender** refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for boys/men or girls/women. These influences the ways that people act, interact, and feel about themselves

TRANSITION

Psychological Transition	Adjusting to changes in thinking, emotions, behavior, and relationships resulting from mental shift of accepting one's gender identity
Social Transition	Coming out to people in your life as transgender, letting people know that you identify as male/female/other, letting people know that you have a new name, etc.
Legal Transition	Changing the name and gender on identity documents such as your Birth Certificate, DMV ID, Passport, Social Security Card, etc.
Medical Transition	Accessing transition related health treatments such as hormone therapy, surgery, etc.

SPECIFICALLY IN HEALTH...

- Key Findings – Health Care (2015)
 - ✓ 55% denied transition-related surgeries
 - ✓ 40% attempted suicide in their lifetime
 - ✓ 39% experienced psychological distress
 - ✓ 33% negative experience in healthcare
 - ✓ 33% couldn't afford healthcare
 - ✓ 23% postponed medical care when sick or injured for fear of being mistreated
 - ✓ 1.4% living with HIV – 5x national average

The 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey, National Center For Transgender Equality, www.ustranssurvey.org

Current State of Trans Health

- Public more aware than ever of the transgender population, now is a time for public health and health care professionals to understand and address their issues
- Training programs on transgender health are necessary to improve medical care and health outcomes
- Violence against transgender persons is disproportionately higher, and the greater likelihood of negative health outcomes is directly related to stress from fear of violence or trauma associated with being a victim of violence
- Respect for the transgender population includes policies that allow for changes of identity documents including birth certificates and driving licenses
- Using the preferred pronoun of an individual, regardless of what pronoun the speaker *thinks* should apply, may seem unimportant but doing shows the respect & dignity due to out and proud transgender people

Program Approach

- Patient-centered & Informed Consent
- Harm reduction model of care
- Low barrier/no barrier model of care
- Acceptance, respect and preservation of dignity
- Community forums, advocacy activities, and Transgender Health Advisory Board
- Freely share their experience, health concerns and health-related behaviors
- Free or low-cost regardless of their ability to pay
- Transgender and gender non-conforming staff



**TRANSGENDER
HEALTH
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- Hormone Replace Therapy
 - Comprehensive Primary Healthcare
 - Behavioral Health Services
 - Dental Services
 - Medical Surgery Referrals
 - Trans* Empower Program: case management services
 - Homeless Services & Referrals
 - HIV/STI Testing, Counseling & Treatment
 - Substance Use Services
 - Assistance with legal name/gender change
 - Health Insurance Enrollment
 - Transgender Health Program Advisory Board



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