



# Trans & Gender Diverse Inclusive Youth Service Provision

This guide has been developed to complement Rainbow Network's SSAITGD-Inclusive Youth Service Provision Guide Sheet, and includes additional considerations in best supporting trans and gender diverse young people

## What is trans and gender diverse?



**The terms trans and gender diverse describe individuals and communities who sit outside gender binaries or whose gender identity is different from the sex they were assigned at birth. They might:**

- » identify as male or female, men or women, or as both or neither;
- » seek hormone treatment and/or gender affirmation surgery;
- » change their name (socially and/or legally) and/or gender marker on documentation; or
- » do some or none of these things.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Do all people know from a very early age that they are trans or gender diverse?

No. Some people will know about their gender diversity from a very young age, whilst other people may realise this later in life. It is important to remember this when working with young people, and actively listen and affirm the identities that they are living with.

### What identity terms do trans and gender diverse people commonly use?

There are a range of terms that gender diverse people may use to describe themselves. Some of these may be familiar to you, while others may not. The language that people use for themselves might also change over time, and they may use multiple terms. It is important to respect the language people use to describe themselves, and ask how they would like you to refer to them. For some young people, the language they use will change often. It is important to establish how often you might need to check in about this, and make sure the language you are using accurately reflects the young person's current experience.

### What do you mean when you talk about non-binary identity?

A gender binary reflects the assumption that people identify as strictly either male or female. Transgender and gender diverse people identify in a number of ways. Some people identify very strongly as male or female, others as neither, both, or something else entirely. Gender identity, like sexuality, should not be considered to fall on a spectrum. Rather, gender identity can be viewed as an infinite galaxy of terms and ways of being. Services and spaces will not be accessible to trans and gender diverse communities unless this variety of identities is considered.

# Trans & Gender Diverse Inclusive Youth Service Provision

There are a number of organisations that can support you to make your service more accessible and inclusive of trans and gender diverse communities. Please contact **Rainbow Network** and the **Zoe Belle Gender Centre (ZBGC)** for further information.

## Additional Considerations

1

### Policy

In 2013, amendments to the federal Sex Discrimination Act made it illegal to discriminate on the basis of transgender status (among other increased protections). This means that transgender and gender diverse people cannot be excluded or unfairly treated on the basis of their gender identity, and that with the exception of cardinal documents (passports, license and birth certificate), individuals do not need to provide 'proof' of their gender identity (for example, a letter from their Doctor).

To support trans and gender diverse communities, agency policies should include this population in their anti-discrimination, privacy, and other policies.

2

### Referrals

Your service should familiarise itself with support services relevant to trans and gender diverse communities. It is important to ensure that trans and gender diverse clients are being referred to services that will affirm and respect their gender identity. Part of this process might include speaking to agencies before referrals are completed, maintaining a database of referral pathways for trans and gender diverse clients, and ensuring clients are familiar with feedback and complaint avenues if necessary. It is also important to recognise trans and gender diverse clients might have multiple support needs, so investigate referral pathways in your region that will be trans and gender diverse inclusive, regardless of whether the client is seeking additional support related specifically to their gender identity.

3

### Privacy & Confidentiality

As with all initial interactions, confidentiality should be contracted with the client. If disclosure of the client's gender identity is necessary by way of subpoena, mandatory report, or court order, it is important the service provider has adequately managed the client's expectations of privacy and confidentiality by informing them of instances when their gender identity may be shared with other professionals.

Clarify with the client with whom it is ok to share their information, e.g. family members and other services. Unless required by law, it is always the client's decision whether or not to disclose, and to whom they disclose their gender identity.

4

### Gendered Spaces

Your organisation should always consider the accessibility of gendered spaces for trans and gender diverse people. Gendered spaces include, but are not limited to: gendered toilets and bathrooms; groups or programs that are run for "men" or "women"; and dorms or bedrooms for "men" or "women" in housing, respite and refuge settings.

It may be appropriate to discuss with trans and gender diverse clients how these spaces can be best navigated for them.

5

### Documentation

Services should be mindful that some people's gender identity and expression will not match what is recorded on their documentation and records. Some people will also have different names and pronouns for different life situations, e.g. they might identify in a certain way when presenting at your service, but this might not be how they identify at home. Plans and consideration should be made to respect the individual's identity when, for example, family members are present, or material is posted to the person's place of residence. Management plans that respect these diverse situations should always be prepared under the guidance of the person involved. Upon initial contact and intake with your service, remember to record all clients' legal names, preferred names, and pronouns. Consistent use of all clients' preferred names and pronouns should be maintained. In doing so, you may need to consider how your intake forms reflect and respect diverse gender identities.