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QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE FOR LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION

Use this tool as a reference at any point during the clinical encounter. It can also be supplemental material for training office staff, residents, fellows and other clinicians.

Your commitment to inclusive language supports equity in health care for LGBTQ+ individuals as well as *belonging* for all members of the ACC community as detailed in the 2022 ACC Health Policy Statement on Building Respect, Civility, and Inclusion in the Cardiovascular Workplace.

Elin Beck, MD; Stephen Cook, MD, FACC; Jill "Jae" Patton, MSN, CRNP, AACC

THESE CONVERSATIONS MATTER BECAUSE...



▶ There are **20 million** LGBTQ+ people in U.S. – nearly **8%** of the population



▶ In a U.S. study, **18%** of LGBTQ+ adults – and **22%** of transgender adults – avoided seeking health care due to anticipated discrimination



▶ **16%** of LGBTQ adults reported LGBTQ+ during clinical encounters



▶ 2018 Southern Trans Health Focus Group Project: **24%** had to teach their provider about transgender people, **15%** were asked unnecessary or invasive questions about transgender status

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LGBTQ+ TERMINOLOGY



Always defer to your LGBTQ+ patients or colleagues and the terms they use to describe themselves. For a comprehensive listing of definitions, access ACC's "LGBTQIA+ Terminology to Build Your Vocabulary".

Tips for Communicating with Patients and Colleagues

Introductions	<p>"Hi, I'm Dr Beck and I use the pronouns she/her. "</p> <p>"How would you like me to refer to you?"</p> <p>"What pronouns do you use? "</p>
Chief Complaint	<p><i>Avoid getting distracted by a patient's identity and find out what's most important to them first.</i></p> <p>"What brings you here today?"</p> <p>"What brought you into the hospital?"</p>
Social History	<p><i>Open up space for patients to discuss all kinds of families.</i></p> <p>"Who are the most important people in your life?"</p> <p>"Who do you consider to be your family?"</p> <p>"Who do you live with or who lives with you?"</p> <p>"Who are the people in your life who support you/ care for you?"</p>
Sexual History	<p><i>Discuss only if necessary to your care of the patient.</i></p> <p>"Are you sexually active?"</p> <p>"What is/are the gender(s) of your partner(s)?"</p>
Dos and Don'ts	<p>Do...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say - "Lee is a transgender man." Say - "Lee's pronouns are they/them." <p>Don't ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say - "Lee is a transgender" or "Lee is a woman who identifies as a man." Say - "Lee's preferred pronouns are they/them." Use EMR dot phrases using the wrong gender or deadname. List a patient's identity in a problem list or as a medical diagnosis.

A IS FOR ALLY

Are colleagues struggling with inclusive language? You can set the tone by calling them in, not out.

THEY SAY -

"I really can't use they/them pronouns - it's too hard. I'm a grammar nerd!"

WE CAN SAY -

"I've been working on that, too, I find it gets easier with practice. It's so important to transgender patients' care - it's worth the effort."

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Steps for LGBTQ+ Inclusive Interactions and Environments: Anticipate and Welcome LGBTQ+ Patients

Inclusive forms	<p><i>"What is the name you use?"</i> <i>"What sex were you assigned at birth?"</i> <i>"What is your current gender identity?"</i> <i>"What pronouns do you use?"</i></p>
Train clinician and office staff to use inclusive language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"How may I help you today?"</i> - omit sir or ma'am • Don't assume gender identity or sexual orientation • Review name/ pronoun before speaking with the patient • Use patient's chosen name and pronouns - politely ask patient in private if not sure
Signal support up front	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include LGBTQ+ positive resources • Wear pronoun buttons or rainbow lapel pins • Provide gender neutral bathrooms
Inclusive/affirming physical exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember that sexual abuse and trauma are common • Trust and rapport may take longer to develop • Avoid satisfying your curiosity • Use principles of trauma-informed care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Power lies with the patient - Seek permission for all parts of the exam - Avoid surprise touches

MISTAKES HAPPEN

Don't - Make excuses or drag out the apology

Do - Recognize, correct, apologize and move on

KEEP IT GENDER NEUTRAL

Groups of People

You all, y'all, everyone, folks

Married Partner

Spouse, partner

Unmarried Partner

Partner, significant other

Gender Neutral Pronouns:

They/them, zie/zir, and sie/hirs

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READY FOR MORE?

Resources to support your inclusive care of LGBTQ+ patients:

- **FOR PHYSICIANS:**
 - **GLMA:** Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality (GLMA.org)
- **FOR PATIENTS:**
 - **OutCare Health** (outhealthcare.org)
- check out the Out Talk series and Cultural Competency trainings
 - **The National LGBTQ Health Education Center** (lgbthealtheducation.org)
 - **PFLAG:** Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (pflag.org)

Learn more at ACC.org/Respect

Learn more at ACC.org/Respect and explore ACC.org/Diversity for additional information on webinars, terminology, and other DE&I efforts

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