

Building Your Practice: Providing Optimal Care to LGBTQ+ Communities (Part 1)



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Objectives

1. Identify ways that LGBTQ+ communities experience health disparities and discrimination
2. Demonstrate knowledge of terminology and language associated with LGBTQ+ identities and experiences
3. Describe how providers' implicit bias impacts LGBTQ+ patients

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LGBTQ+ Experiences of Intersectionality

(Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, +)

- There are more than **11 million** LGBTQ+ people in the US, and they hold a wide range of diverse, intersecting identities and experiences, including:
 - Race
 - Ethnicity
 - Ability
 - Socioeconomic status
 - Education
 - Family structure
 - Language
 - Citizenship
 - Mental health history
 - History of trauma and/or violence
- Layered marginalized identities leads to compounded experiences of discrimination and inequity

LGBTQ+ Health Disparities

- Compared to straight/cisgender folks, LGBTQ+ people experience higher rates of:
 - Minority stress
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
 - Substance use
 - Violence
 - Employment discrimination
 - Homelessness
 - Suicide attempts
- Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming (TGNC) folks experience more violence and discrimination than LGB folks, and are 7x more likely to contemplate suicide than the average population.

LGBTQ+ Experiences in Healthcare Settings

- **27%** of transgender patients have been denied care
- **50%** of transgender patients report having to teach their doctor(s) about transgender identities and health
- **70%** of transgender/gender nonconforming patients and **56%** of lesbian, gay, & bisexual patients have experienced at least one of the following:
 - Being denied care
 - Doctors refusing to touch them or using excessive precautions
 - Doctors using harsh or abusive language
 - Being blamed for their health status
 - Doctors being physically rough or abusive

Lambda Legal, *When Healthcare Isn't Caring*. (2010)

Due to this history of discrimination & abuse, LGBTQ+ patients may delay getting treatment or avoid healthcare settings entirely due to fear of being harassed, misunderstood, mocked, or refused care.

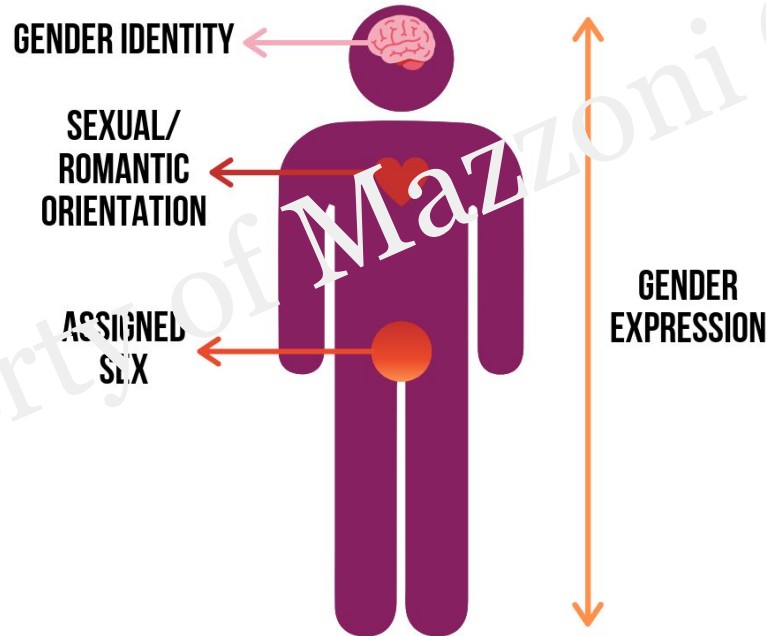
The Provider's Role

The practitioner's role when providing care to the LGBTQ+ community is to remember the following:

- Do no harm
- Treat all patients with dignity, and respect their identities
- Break the cycle of discrimination that creates barriers for LGBTQ+ communities to access healthcare
- Adopt best practices that are inclusive of and welcoming to LGBTQ+ communities
- Provide complete, unbiased, person-centered care that results in risk reduction and expanded access to resources and wellness for LGBTQ+ patients

What do you need to know to advocate?

4 Elements of Gender & Sexual Identity:

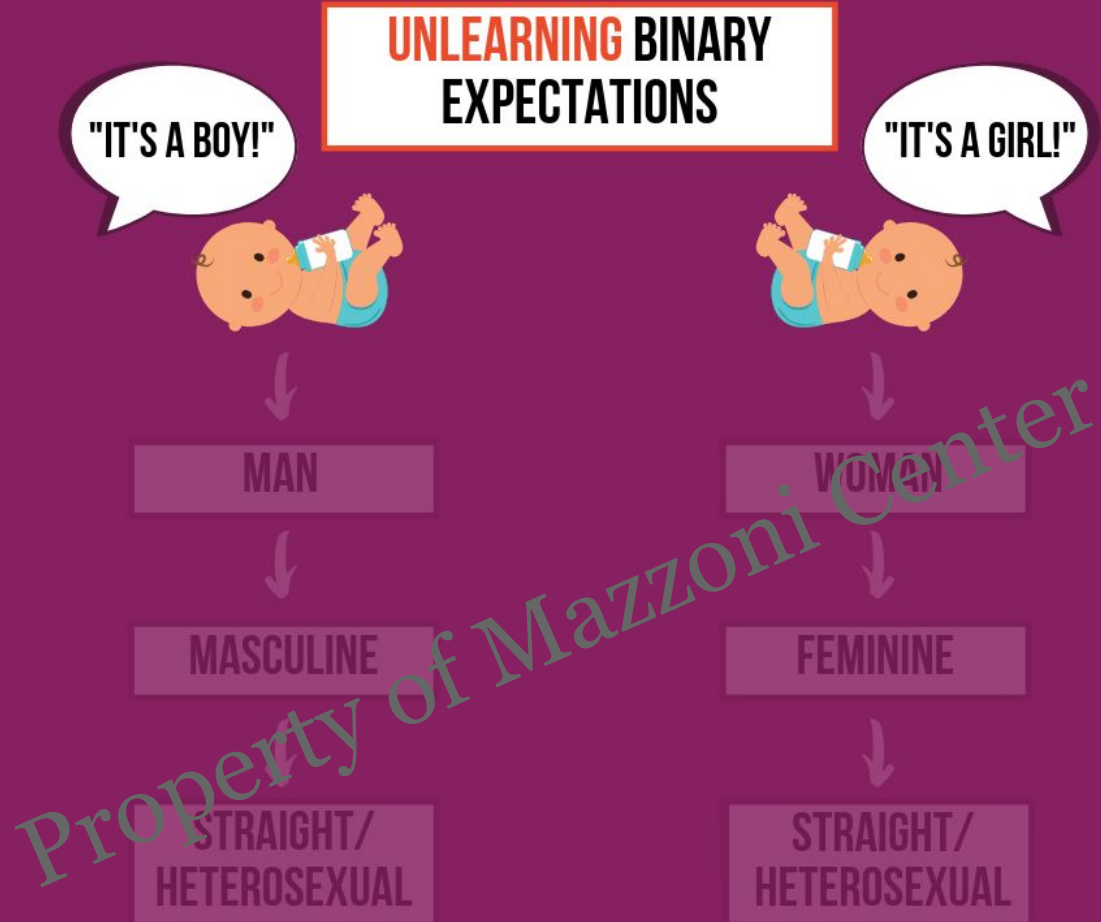


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Assigned Sex

1. External Genitalia*
2. Internal Reproductive Organs
3. Hormones
4. Chromosomes

Ex: Intersex, Female, Male



Gender Identity

A person's deep-rooted internal understanding of their identity on a gendered spectrum of man, woman, neither, both, and/or other gender(s), *regardless of the sex assigned to them.*

Ex: nonbinary, genderqueer, agender, genderfluid, two spirit

UNLEARNING BINARY EXPECTATIONS

"IT'S A BOY!"



MAN

MASCULINE

**STRAIGHT/
HETEROSEXUAL**

"IT'S A GIRL!"



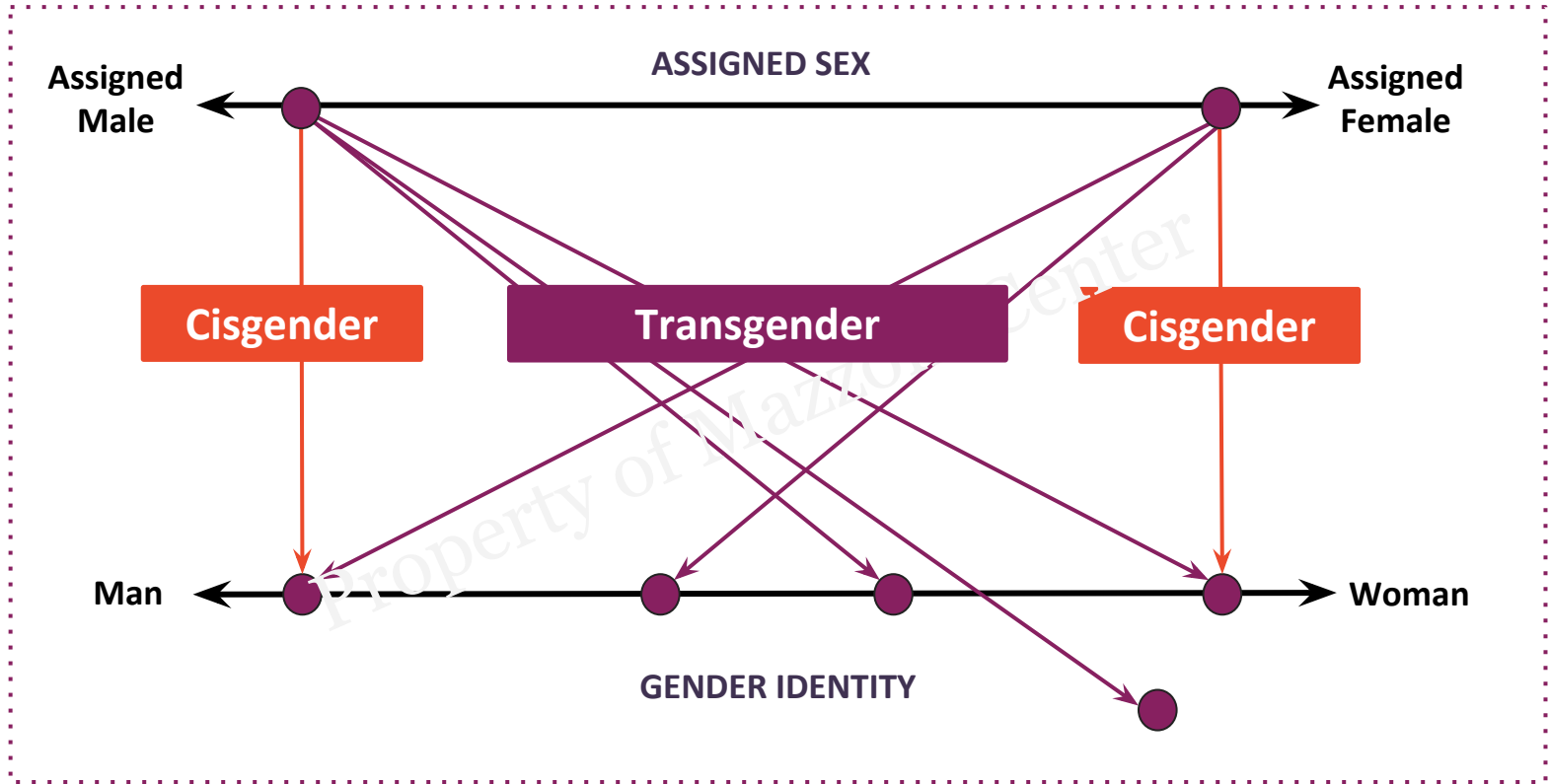
WOMAN

FEMININE

**STRAIGHT/
HETEROSEXUAL**

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Mapping Gender Identities



Transitioning

...varies from person to person!

A person's gender identity is valid regardless of whether they have pursued any transition options.

A person may choose to engage in social, legal, and/or medical transitions that affirm their gender identity. Some examples are:

Social

- Expression, names, pronouns, coming out, etc.

Legal

- Changing gender marker and/or name on IDs

Medical

- Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)
- Surgery to alter primary and/or secondary sex characteristics

Pronouns

...are as important as someone's name!

she/her
he/him/his
they/them/their
...and more!

Correct pronoun usage is **critical** to providing LGBTQ+ inclusive care.

- **Ask** patients how they want to be addressed
- Use correct pronouns **consistently**
- Make a habit of using **gender neutral** pronouns (they/them)
- **Apologize** when you make a mistake, and do better next time

*Note: Singular gender-neutral pronouns
are grammatically correct*

Gender Expression

How a person externally communicates their identity through clothing, mannerisms, hairstyle, grooming, interests, etc.

Ex: Androgynous, masculine of center/feminine of center

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Sexual/ Romantic Orientation

A person's physical, romantic, sexual, emotional, spiritual, and/or other forms of attraction to others.

**UNLEARNING BINARY
EXPECTATIONS**

"IT'S A BOY!"



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WOMAN

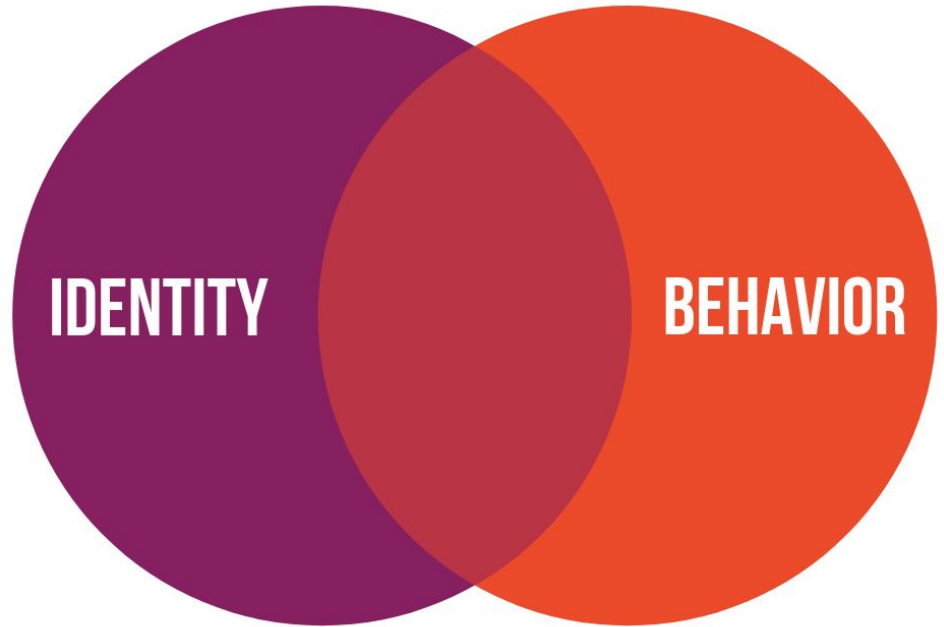
FEMININE

**STRAIGHT/
HETEROSEXUAL**

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Identity ≠ Behavior

- Sexual orientation cannot predict sexual/romantic behavior, and vice versa
- Patients may not identify as LGBT+, but may engage in same-sex or same-gender sexual behaviors
- When collecting information about a patient's sexual history, ask specific questions with gender-neutral language (or language the patient uses)



Avoiding Assumptions

- that all of your patients are cisgender/ heterosexual
- how a patient wants to describe their body, identity, and/or partner(s)
- whether a patient experiences dysphoria
- which bathroom someone uses
- someone's sexual behaviors based on their disclosed identities
- whether your patient wants visitors

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Implicit Bias

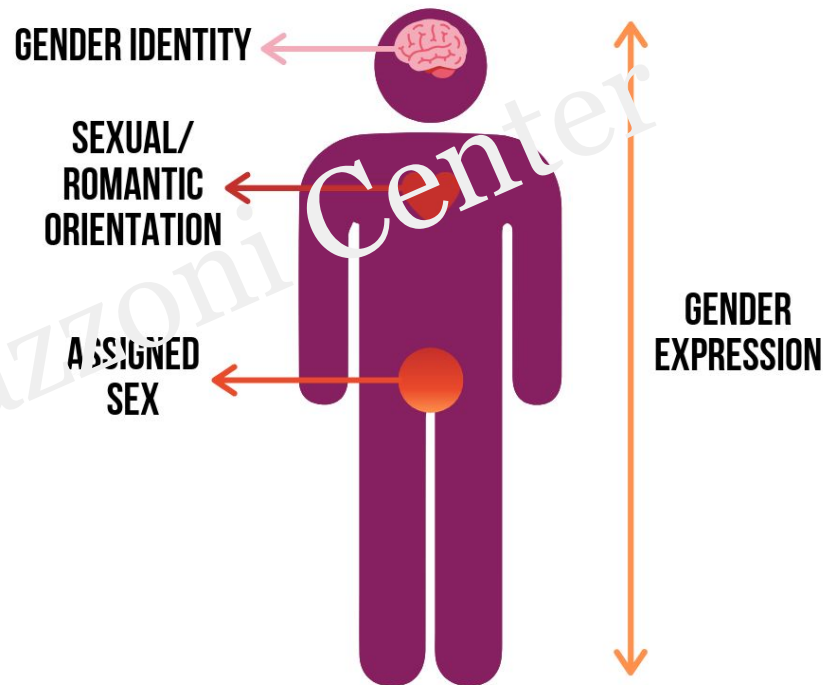
We may not be able to erase our biases, we can actively work to question, combat, and change our implicit biases.

Biases are positive or negative attitudes *we all have* about groups of people, ideas, or institutions.

- Occur outside of our awareness
- Formed from our experiences, identities, personal/family history, cultural norms, etc.
- Affect our behavior, attitudes, and opinions

Key Takeaways

- Everyone has an assigned sex, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual/romantic orientation
- Identities and expressions may shift
- Language changes over time
- Avoid assumptions
- Self-educate
- Mirror language



Knowledge Check



Under the demographic section of an intake form, a person writes in male and pansexual as two of their identities.

Identify the Component:

- *Gender Expression*
- *Gender Identity*
- *Assigned Sex*
- *Sexual Orientation*
- *None of these*

Your patient Monique (she/her) arrived asking for a routine STI & HIV screening. You ask Monique how she's been, and she shares that she's tired because she just got back from a vacation with her husband.

Identify the Component:

- *Gender Expression*
- *Gender Identity*
- *Assigned Sex*
- *Sexual Orientation*
- *None of these*

You're seeing a new family today for their baby's four-month checkup at your family practice. You enter the exam room to meet them, and you see two middle-aged people who appear feminine, one of whom is cradling the baby.

Identify the Component:

- *Gender Expression*
- *Gender Identity*
- *Assigned Sex*
- *Sexual Orientation*
- *None of these*

Inclusive, affirming practices impact everyone.

Where are there areas of growth in your practice?

What challenges do you anticipate encountering?

What policies are already in place to support you?

What can you do to provide optimum care your LGBTQ+ patients?

**Expected
behaviors should
guide practices,
rather than
individual *beliefs*.**

Q & A with Dr. Shanin Gross



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LGBTQ HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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Resources & References



Local LGBTQ+ Resources

- ✓ **Mazzoni Center** (medical, sexual health, behavioral health, legal, education)
- ✓ **Attic Youth Center** (housing, behavioral health, community)
- ✓ **Philly FIGHT** (medical, sexual health housing)
- ✓ **William Way** (community center)
- ✓ **Colours** (Black LGBT community org)
- ✓ **Kraemer, Manes & Associates LLC** (Law firm in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia)

Online LGBTQ+ Resources

- ✓ National LGBT Health Education Center (Fenway Institute)
- ✓ GLMA (Gay & Lesbian Medical Association)
- ✓ WPATH Standards of Care Vol. 7 (World Professional Association for Transgender Health)
- ✓ Center of Excellence for Transgender Health
- ✓ National Center for Trans Equality
- ✓ Do Ask, Do Tell (SO/GI data collection)
- ✓ Lambda Legal

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Resources

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- A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey (2011), <https://www.lambdalegal.org/know-your-rights/article/trans-workplace>
- City of Philadelphia's LGBTQ Protections, <https://beta.phila.gov/2017-12-04-philadelphias-lgbtq-protections/>
- Coming Out in the Workplace as Transgender, <https://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/transgender-visibility-guide>
- How to File a Charge of Employment Discrimination, <https://www.eeoc.gov//employees/howtofile.cfm>
- Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Employment Laws in the U.S., <http://www.hrc.org/state-maps/employment>
- Know Your Rights, <https://transequality.org/know-your-rights/employment-general>