



# ISSUES IMPACTING TRANSGENDER WOMEN: WHAT PROVIDERS NEED TO KNOW

By Ms. Tori Cooper

- She, her, hers
- pronouns matter

## \*DISCLAIMER\*

- I am AN EXPERT but not the only expert
- Words and language are fluid and regional
- We don't have to agree to be agreeable

# ISSUES IMPACTING TRANSGENDER WOMEN: WHAT PROVIDERS NEED TO KNOW



- Trans is not new - It just may be new to YOU
- The term Transgender(d) was first used in 1970 to describe Raquel Welch's character in Myra Breckinridge
- Lili Elbe was first person to have gender reassignment surgery in 1930

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- Transgender and Trans describe someone whose gender identity is different than assigned at birth (AFAB & AMAB) <sup>5</sup>
  - Transgender woman/Transman are most popular identities
  - May identify as Male/Female (binary)
  - May identify as Both/Neither (nonbinary)
  - Gender nonconforming (GNC) describes someone who does not fit traditional labels and/or whose presentation and may not identify as exclusively male or female
  - GNC may present in different styles of dress on one visit and completely the opposite on the next visit

- Gender Identity - Who I tell you I am
- Gender Expression – Who I show you I am
- Sexual Orientation – Who I am attracted to

- My pronouns are feminine pronouns – She, Her and Hers
- What are your pronouns?
- Why are pronouns important?

When trans\* people are not in care, their physical and mental health is threatened

In terms of HIV, untreated HIV leads to sickness, higher community viral loads and eventually death

Without access to HRT, some trans\* people experience poor self-images, emotional changes and distress (gender dysphoria)

The act of being denied—having your identity challenged in that way, your dignity challenged in that way—that in and of itself is harmful

- **Historical Trauma** refers to the cumulative emotional and psychological wounding of an individual or generation caused by a traumatic experience or event.
- In the last 50 years or so, black Americans thought ole Jim Crow had died. But really, ole man Crow had simply gone to finishing school and emerged as James Crow, MPH or Dr. James Crow. He had polished up his language and was operating in an alleged system of diversity and multiculturalism, soft-selling his system of pariuri sportive exclusivity as "traditions" and "family values."
- There are the Jim Crow practices that disproportionately target Black Americans: mass incarceration, police brutality and the war on drugs.
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- For the last 30 years we labeled people as "Crack Heads" vs. "Victims of Opioid Addiction" in 2018

- Historical trauma is the cumulative phenomenon where those who never directly experienced trauma (enslavement, rape, lynching, murder, war, abject poverty) can still exhibit signs and symptoms of the trauma.
- Historical trauma can be observed in our patients' unresolved grief, expressed as depression & despair and unexplained anger, expressed as aggression & rage.
- Often they internalize oppression by accepting the lie of inferiority, which can then lead to self-loathing.

- Historical Trauma plays itself out in doctors offices – raised cortisol levels, blood pressure, adrenaline, heart rate, sweating, misdirected anger, language
- This shows up in medical charts and sometimes medical diagnoses
- Treatment/mistreatment for symptoms of trauma don't address the real/original issues which lead to even more medical mistrust

- Transgender people face fear and stigma in the doctors' office
- About 30% of trans\* patients report delaying or not seeking care due to discrimination, according to a June (2016) edition of the journal of Medical Care.
- Tanya Walker was coughing up blood, but she says her emergency room doctor kept asking about her genitals. Walker said the doctor who was distracted by her sex organs misdiagnosed her lung ailment as tuberculosis. He gave her antibiotics and sent her home.
- Three months later she discovered she had lung cancer.

• <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-lgbt-medicine-idUSKCN11L0AJ>

- Discrimination against sexual minorities by healthcare providers is a common problem, but is magnified further among transgender people
- In a 2017 [survey](#) conducted by the Center for American Progress (CAP) eight percent of respondents said a doctor or other healthcare provider had refused to see them because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation
- 29% percent of the transgender respondents—more than three times as many—reported this type of refusal

A 2012 article published by the Williams Institute at the UCLA Law Center reads in part,

“ According to the National Transgender Discrimination Survey, transgender people are four times as likely to have a household income under **\$10,000** and twice as likely to be unemployed as the typical person in the U.S. **Ninety percent** of those surveyed reported experiencing harassment, mistreatment, or discrimination on the job. Almost **one in five** reported being homeless at some point in their lives.”

<https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/williams-in-the-news/beyond-stereotypes-poverty-in-the-lgbt-community/>

## Transgender people face a much higher suicide risk.

- **Forty-one percent** of transgender people surveyed in Injustice at Every Turn said they had attempted suicide, compared with 1.6 percent of the general population. Risk increased for those who reported bullying, sexual assault and job loss.
- Analysis this year by the Williams Institute found **78 percent** of transgender respondents who had endured physical or sexual violence at school had attempted suicide

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/01/22/the-state-of-transgender-america-massive-discrimination-little-data/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.d81196502420](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/01/22/the-state-of-transgender-america-massive-discrimination-little-data/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.d81196502420)

- According to the Injustice at Every Turn survey, **25 percent** of transgender recipients reported losing a job because they did not conform to gender norms. A staggering **90 percent** said they faced some form of transgender-based discrimination.
- **Eleven percent** of respondents reported having been evicted due to bias, according to the report, and **19 percent** reported becoming homeless.
- **More than half** reported being harassed at a homeless shelter by residents and staff. Nearly one-third said they were turned away altogether.
- **Nearly a quarter** said they were sexually assaulted

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/01/22/the-state-of-transgender-america-massive-discrimination-little-data/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.aaa424350cb6](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/01/22/the-state-of-transgender-america-massive-discrimination-little-data/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.aaa424350cb6)

- Is your staff culturally diverse?
- How and where is your site marketed and to whom?
- What images are in your waiting area?
- Bathrooms – big issue for some; small issue for others. Just allow people to pee & poop in peace







# Customer Survey

Please rate the following areas so that we may improve our service

**Quality of service**  
Excellent

Good

Average

Poor

Very

**Quality of items sup.**  
Excellent



- **Misgendering – Names and Pronouns Matter**

- Empower clients to disclose by providing safe & affirming care
- Create in-house systems to properly identify your guests every time
- Provide buttons/name tags & other ways for clients to identify their genders
- When someone tells you who they are, believe them
- Standardize forms and train front line staff to address everyone & reduce stigma with disclosure
- Front line staff plays a huge part in the overall experience for trans\* individuals

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