

LGBTQ+ Carer Service Toolkit

A guide for **Local services** working with **LGBTQ+ Carers**



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Introduction

All questions are welcome

If you have questions or wish to explore any themes from the toolkit please email info@wandsworthcarers.org.uk





Introduction

The aim of this guide is to provide health and social care staff with an increased understanding of unpaid Carers' issues and rights, and in particular the issues that LGBTQ+ Carers face. The toolkit will help services to identify and explore ways of supporting LGBTQ+ Carers and the barriers they face accessing support, models of good practice, including a commitment to being LGBTQ+ inclusive



Introduction

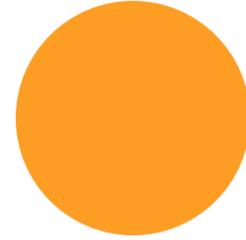
Stonewall estimates that **5-7%** of the population in England and Wales is LGB (lesbian, gay, bisexual) meaning that there are around **3.7 million** LGB people in England and Wales.

LGBT Foundation have said that at the moment there is no official figure on the number of trans people in the UK. The government figures have tentatively suggested an estimate of **200,000-500,000** trans people living in the UK.

Based on these figures Carers UK estimates there to be at least **390,000 LGBTQ+ carers in the UK**; including those whose identities haven't been accounted for in the above figures.

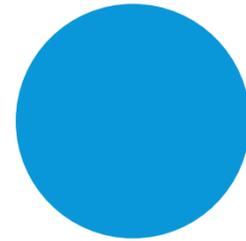


Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Trans status



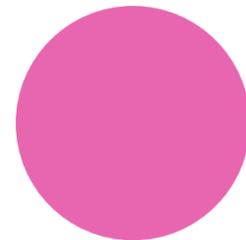
Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation refers to an individual's physical or romantic attraction to another person of the opposite sex or gender, the same sex or gender, or to both sexes or more than one gender. This includes Heterosexual, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Pansexual or Asexual



Gender Identity

Gender Identity describes a person's internal sense of their identity. For example, someone might identify as a woman or girl, non-binary, a man or boy, gender fluid, or something different.



Trans Status

Being trans is usually defined as someone who does not identify with the gender they were assigned/given at birth.

Some trans people may choose to access gender reassignment treatment. Some people may access some or no gender reassignment options.

LGBTQ+ Terminology

The next page describes some commonly used terms that someone from the LGBTQ+ community may use to describe their identity. There are other identities and people may also use their own identity (self-identify).

If you are unsure what someone means when they describe their identity, it is ok to find a good time to ask them if they would mind telling you what their identity means to them. This can help us all to be mindful and respectful of who someone is.





LGBTQ+ Terminology

L

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Q

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A

P

Lesbian

Gay

Bisexual

Transgender

Queer

Questioning

Intersex

Ally

Asexual

Pansexual

A woman who is primarily attracted to women

A Gay man is a man who is primarily attracted to men. The term gay can be used to describe anyone regardless of gender identity, for example gay woman.

An individual who is attracted to their own, the opposite gender and other genders

A person whose gender differs from their assigned sex at birth

An umbrella term to be more inclusive of the many identities that make up the LGBTQ+ Community

The process of exploring and discovering one's own sexual orientation, gender identity/or gender expression

An individual whose sexual anatomy or chromosomes do not fit with the traditional markers of 'female' or 'male'

Typically a non-queer person who supports and advocates for the LGBTQ+ community

An individual who generally does not feel sexual desire or attraction to any group of people

A person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, spiritual attraction regardless of someone's gender identity expressions



Gender Identity

The next two pages describes some ways that people may identify their gender.

There are other identities and some people may also use their own way of identifying their gender (self-identifying).

If you are unsure what someone means when they describe their gender, it is ok to find a good time to ask if they would mind telling you what their identity means to them. This can help us all to be mindful and respectful of who someone is.





Trans

An umbrella term to refer to anyone whose gender identity doesn't completely match the gender they were given at birth, including trans women, trans men, and non-binary people.

Trans Woman

Somebody whose gender identity is woman and who was assigned male at birth.

A woman who is trans.

Trans Man

Somebody whose gender identity is man and who was assigned female at birth.

A man who is trans.



Non - Binary

Someone whose gender identity does not fit into the traditionally used labels 'man' or 'woman'. The non-binary community is a very diverse community. For example, some non-binary people may identify with some aspects of being a man and some aspects of being a woman, others may identify as neither a man or a woman and some may see their gender as being fluid and changing from one period of time to another.

In this way, 'non-binary' is an umbrella term for many different gender identities including genderqueer, genderfluid, agender and many more. If you are unsure what someone's gender identity means to them, it is ok to find a good time to ask them.



Questioning

Someone who is in the process of questioning and exploring their gender identity. Their gender identity may change from one period of time to another and they may move between identities as they find out what is right for them.

We can all support someone who is questioning their gender identity by being open and affirming as they explore who they are.

Self-identifying

Someone who describes their gender identity in a way that is unique to them or is less well known than other gender identities. If you are unsure what someone means when they describe their identity, it is ok to find a good time to ask them what their identity means to them.

Cisgender

Someone whose gender identity matches the gender they were given at birth.

Often we use shortened versions: 'cis' and 'trans' when referring to someone who is cisgender or someone who is transgender.

Not all members of the LGBTQ+ community who do not identify as transgender use the label cisgender when describing themselves.

What are pronouns?

We use pronouns when refer to someone without using their name. For example:

'**She** is speaking on the phone.' or '**They** are waiting for the bus.'

We often decide which pronouns to use for someone based on our own idea of their gender identity. For example, this might be based on what we think of their appearance or their name.

Many people associate their pronouns with their gender identity. By respecting someone's pronouns e.g. they/them, she/her, he/him, she/they, we can affirm and respect their gender identity.

If you are unsure what pronouns someone uses it's always best to ask. While you are unsure, you can refer to them using neutral pronouns and terms such as 'they', 'the client', 'this customer', 'their partner'.

Some people may use pronouns that you have not come across before e.g. zee/hir (pronounced zee/heer). Practising over time makes using all pronouns easier and more familiar. If you accidentally use the wrong pronouns, apologise, correct yourself and move on.



More than LGBTQ+

As well as being a community with a diversity of different gender identities and sexual orientations, there are many other factors that make up who each person is such as our immigration status, our religion, our household income, whether we have a disability and our ethnicity.

The way that these factors can be present and connect to each other in so many different ways in one person makes the LGBTQ+ community even more diverse.

To celebrate and support this diversity, it is important to aim to be inclusive of all LGBTQ+ people and to find out how other identities that someone holds might affect their needs as an LGBTQ+ person.



We can all support more LGBTQ+ people by asking each person what they need to feel safe and welcome and how support can be made more accessible to them.

For example, one person may need written resources provided in a larger print, another person may need access to a private space where they can pray and a third person may find online support more affordable than paying for transport to attend a meeting.



Who are Carers?



A **Carer** is someone, who without payment, provides help and support to a partner, child, relative, friend or neighbour, who could not manage without their help. This could be due to age, physical or mental illness, addiction or disability. The term **Carer** should not be confused with a care-worker, or care assistant, who received payment for looking after someone.



Who are Young Carers?

A child or young person under the age of 18, whose life is in some way restricted because of the need to take **responsibility** for the care of someone who is frail, ill has a disability, mental health condition or is affected by addiction.

Young Carers may care for an adult, such as a parent, or a child such as a sibling.

Young Carers are children first and should be free to develop emotionally and physically and to take full advantage of opportunities for educational achievement and life success.



Carers



Carers and young Carers might provide:

- **Personal care**, such as bathing, washing, dressing, toileting and administering medicines
- **Physical care** such as help with getting out of bed, walking and shopping
- **Administrative support** such as help with finances and filling in forms and
- **Emotional support** such as listening, prompting, encouraging and confidence raising



LGBTQ+ health inequalities

People from LGBTQ+ communities face:

- Higher rates of homelessness.
- Higher rates of domestic abuse and sexual violence.
- Lower rates of physical activity.
- Higher rates of smoking.
- Substantially higher instances of mental health issues.
- Higher drug/alcohol dependency.



LGBTQ+ Young adult Carers

Carers Trust ran a focus group of young LGBTQ+ Carers they found:

- LGBTQ+ young adult carers are being **negatively impacted in most areas of their lives because of their caring role, gender identity or sexual orientation**
- **83%** had experienced bullying in school
- **88%** reported to have, or to have had, **mental health problems.**
- **80%** rated their own health as just **'OK'** or **'Poor'**



LGBTQ+ Carers experiences

A study by Carers UK found that **1 in 10 people** who identified LGBTQ+ are also a Carer for up to 19 hours per week

When Gaddum and LGBT Foundation put together a short survey, **68% Of LGBTQ+ Carers** they spoke to felt that support services needed to take steps to become more LGBTQ+ friendly

A 2011 Stonewall survey found that **three in five** older LGB people were not confident that social care and support services, like paid carers or housing services, would be able to understand and meet their needs.



LGBTQ+ Carers: barriers to accessing support



LGBTQ+ people often experience specific **discrimination and marginalisation** when accessing services.

Services may **lack of awareness** on how to provide high quality support to LGBTQ+ people.

This can **discourage** people from getting support and can further worsen health inequalities.



LGBTQ+ Carers: barriers to accessing support.... continued



Assumptions can be made by professionals about an individual's sexual orientation, gender identity or trans status.

Professionals can misunderstand and make assumptions about the **nature of the relationship** between Carer and Cared for person, for example assuming two women together at an appointment are sisters but who may actually be a couple.

LGBTQ+ Carers may have to **constantly 'come out'** as LGBTQ+ when accessing health and social care services as a way of explaining their relationship with the Cared for person or because they have been misgendered.



How your service can support LGBTQ+ Carers

Your service can welcome and support LGBTQ+ Carers by:

- Understanding the unique barriers that LGBTQ+ carers face
- Using Inclusive language
- Not making assumptions
- Increase visibility around the support you offer to the LGBTQ+ community
- Monitoring and asking the right questions
- Signpost people to specific support



Inclusive Language

Words like 'lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans' are not offensive.

Sexual orientation describes someone's attraction to other people.

Gender identity is the personal sense of one's own gender. Gender identity can correlate with assigned sex at birth or can differ from it.

Best practice is to;

Ask – Ask about someone's sexual orientation, gender identity or trans status when welcoming them into your service.

Respect – Acknowledge and respect their gender identity or sexuality.

Practice – Ensure you note down a person's sexual orientation, gender identity or trans status so they do not need to repeat it to other workers.



The Importance of Pronouns

Pronouns are the words we use to describe ourselves in place of our name such as; he/him, she/her, they/them

Pronouns can make up an important part of somebody's identity

These seemingly small identifying words can help in a person's gender affirmation, to feel respected and to feel valued as a person

If you accidentally misgender a person, apologise, and correct yourself, ensure to use the correct pronouns for future

Best practice is to;

Ask – Ask each person which pronouns they use and make a note

Respect – Respect each persons pronouns, note down the persons pronoun and going forward use their pronoun that is noted down. if you get it wrong, apologise, move on, try to ensure that it is not repeated.



Assumptions

- You won't know how someone identifies just by looking at them.
- You can use Gender neutral language e.g. 'partner' rather than 'husband/wife'
- You should **ask** rather than **assume** about family set up or the relationship between Carer and Cared for person.

Best practice is to;

Ask – Ask each person the relationship they have with the person they are supporting, don't assume what the the relationship is.

Respect – Show respect the persons identity and relationships. if you get it wrong, apologise, move on, try to ensure that it is not repeated.



Lesbian?
Gay?
Bisexual?
Transgender?
Carer?

You are welcome here

 Wandsworth
Carers' Centre

Improve Visibility

- Encourage LGBTQ+ Carers to have their say and inform your services.
- Having a sign or poster up shows that you are welcoming and inclusive to LGBTQ+ Carers
- Work with local LGBTQ+ charities and unpaid Carer organisations to improve links



Monitoring

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. This legislative change has led to greater acceptance. However, there is still a huge lack of evidence about LGBTQ+ people, our needs and experiences. Monitoring sexual orientation, gender identity, trans status and if they are a Carer is a proven way to address that lack of evidence.



Monitoring

Is your organisation asking these questions as part of monitoring?

Sexual Orientation:

How would you define your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual () Gay () Lesbian () Bisexual ()

Pansexual () Asexual () Questioning () Prefer not to say ()

If you identify in a way not given above or if you self-identify (use your own description) please write in

Gender Identity and Trans Status Monitoring (TSM)

Which of the following best describes your gender identity?

Man/male(including trans man) () Woman/female (including trans woman) ()

Non-binary () Gender fluid () Agender () Questioning () Prefer not to say ()

If you identify in a way not given above or if you self-identify (use your own description) please write in

Does your gender identity match the sex you were assigned at birth (or in early childhood)?

Yes () No () Prefer not to say ()

It is fine to have a 'Prefer not to say' option as it is an individual's personal choice to disclose or not - but this option should be available on every monitoring question asked, not as a special case when asking questions on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity or Trans Status Monitoring.



Monitoring... Continued

Is your organisation asking these questions as part of monitoring?

Carer:

-Are you supporting someone in your life, without payment with any of the following:

- Practical tasks
- Personal care,
- Administration tasks
- Emotional support

The key benefits to monitoring LGBTQ+ Carers in your service are:

- Equality of access to services.
- Improved services, more specific to the needs of people you are supporting.
- Creating a culture of inclusivity and openness within the service.
- Better understanding of the needs of the people you are supporting



Monitoring... Continued

Why aren't all services asking people about sexual orientation, gender identity or trans status?

- Lack of understanding
- Seen as personal question/sensitive issue
- Fear of asking the question
- Not traditional
- No organisational drive
- Embarrassment

The reason it can seem embarrassing to ask someone about their sexual orientation, gender identity or trans status is because of the stigma and discrimination towards LGBTQ+ people, not because being LGBTQ+ is embarrassing.



Signposting

To find LGBT services in your area:

LGBT Foundation: <https://www.consortium.lgbt/member-directory/>

Stonewall: <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/whats-my-area>

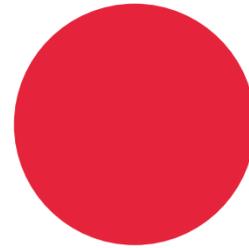
Find support for Unpaid Carers in your area:

Carers Trust: <https://carers.org/>

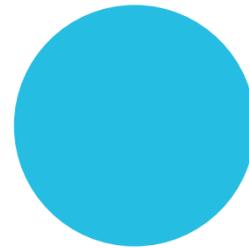
Carers UK: <https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/get-support/local-support>



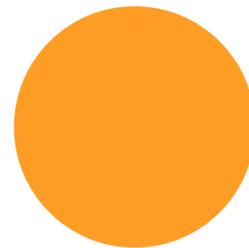
Free Resource Page



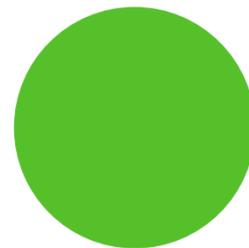
Caring for LGBTQ+ people at the end of life:
<https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/professionals/palliative-care-knowledge-zone/equality-diversity/lgbt-end-life>



LGBTQ & Caring:
<http://www.carersuk.org/files/section/5677/cuk-lgbtq-booklet-wales-final.pdf>



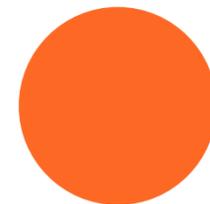
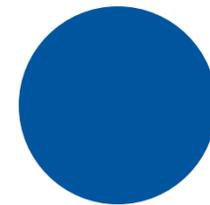
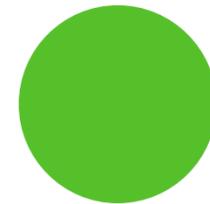
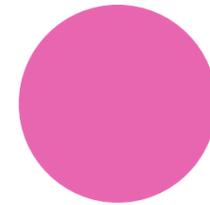
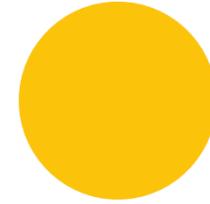
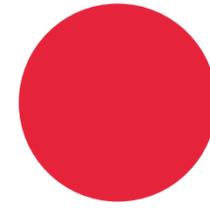
<https://www.lgbtqdementiaadvisorygroup.net/>
<https://www.dementivoices.org.uk/group/lgbtq-group-working-towards-an-identity-and-a-name/>



Young People Caring OUT There: Experiences of LGBT Young Adult Carers in Scotland <http://www.ep-yc.org/wp-content/uploads/participants-database/sc7.pdf>

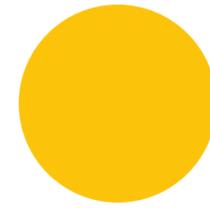


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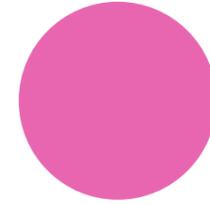




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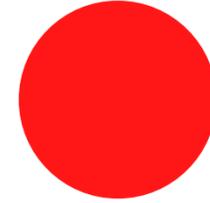


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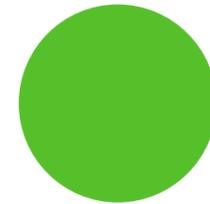


Gaddum

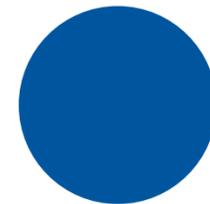
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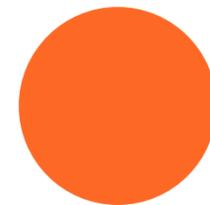
YOUNG Mi MINDS
fighting for young people's mental health



**CARERS
TRUST**



 **carersUK**
making life better for carers



 **Stonewall**

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