

# Transgender Care: Creating Communications and Engagement Guidelines

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# Introduction

Amy Sarah

Sarah

Aleksandra (Alex)

# Agenda

- Learning Objectives
- Why Are We Doing This?
- The Individual Learning Journey
- The Patient Experience
- Setting The Example
- Shifting Your Organization's Culture

# Learning Objectives

**Learning Objective 1** *Share some of the unique healthcare challenges faced by the transgender population.*

**Learning Objective 2** Articulate distinct strategies for communicating with and engaging transgender individuals.

**Learning Objective 3** Identify opportunities to enhance healthcare operations to reduce health disparities in the transgender population.

# Why Are We Doing This?

- Health Equality Index
- Cville Pride Festival - Request for Brochure
- Uncovered Challenges
- What Now?



# Why Are We Doing This?

## UVA Health



# Why Are We Doing This?

- Many organizations are wrestling with issues of diversity and inclusion
- Battling discrimination within healthcare has unique challenges
- Diversity and inclusion efforts should include the LGBTQ population as a whole, but often don't
- The transgender population requires very specific medical services, policies, attention
- Shifting legal, political, and institutional landscape
- Because we care

# Why Are We Doing This?

## Transgender Care at UVA Health



- 2013: Teen Clinic began offering transgender services for ages 14-27, only one in the region
- 2017: UVA hosted its first-ever LGBTQ Health Symposium
- 2017: Transgender Advisory Committee formed, led by the Patient Experience Office
- 2017: Code of Conduct for Providers Who Hold Clinical Privileges revised to explicitly address sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression
- 2018: Adult Transgender Clinic opened

# Why Are We Doing This?

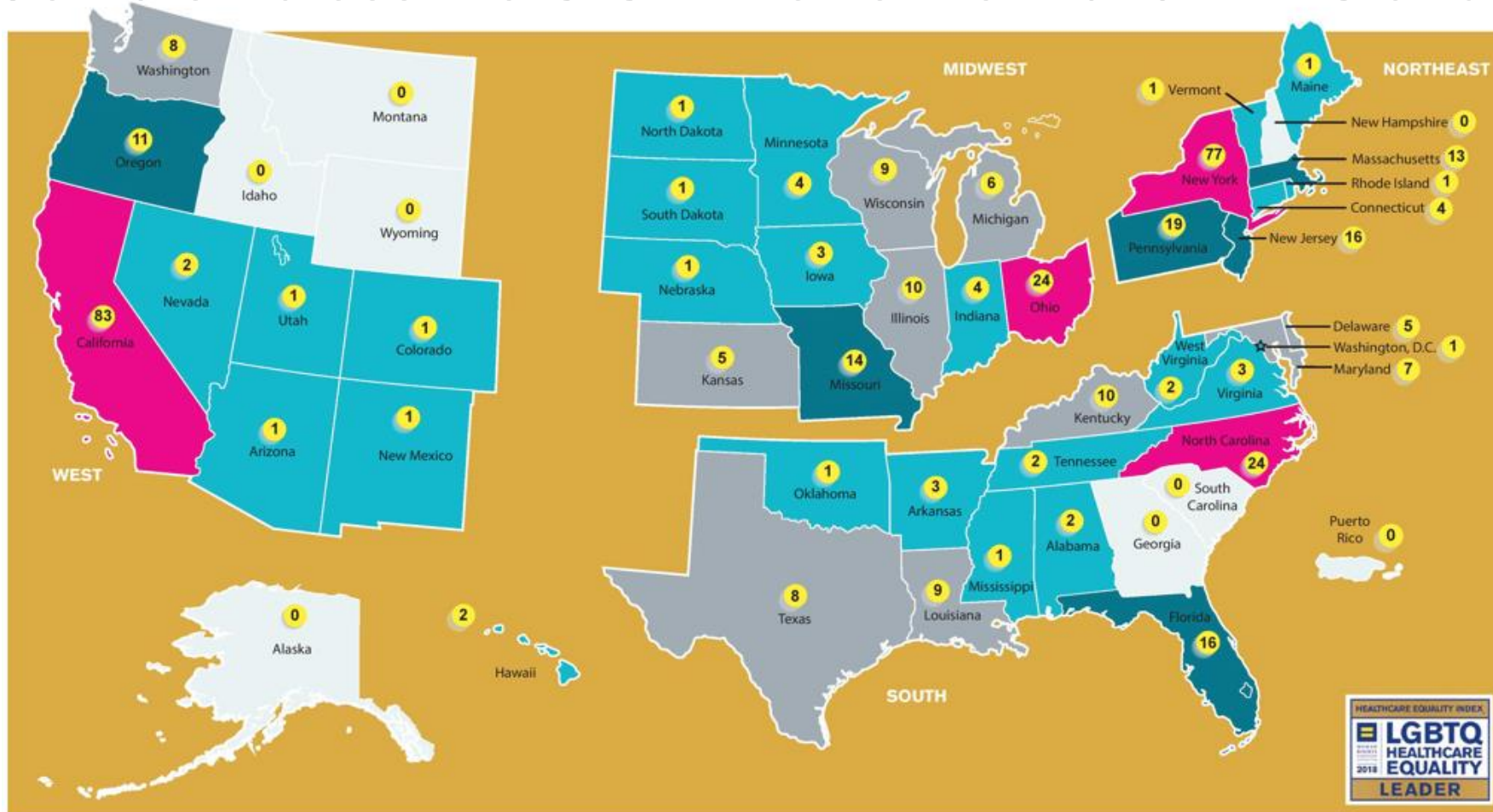
## Healthcare Equality Index

Healthcare Equality Index (HEI) is the national LGBTQ benchmarking tool that evaluates healthcare facilities' policies and practices related to the equity and inclusion of their LGBTQ patients, visitors and employees. The HEI evaluates more than 1,600 healthcare facilities nationwide.

[www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org)

# Why Are We Doing This?

Centers Across the U.S. Who've Met 2018 HEI Standards



# Why Are We Doing This? A Communications Request

## Request for Brochure

*Brochure language informed web edits & creation of new content for HEI rating*

### Our Locations

**UVA Teen and Young Adult Health Center**  
For patients ages 12-26  
Call 434.982.0090 and select option 1.

**UVA Adult Transgender Health Clinic**  
For patients age 18 and older  
Call 434.924.5000.

**UVA Student Health Center**  
For UVA students  
Call 434.924.5362 and select general medicine, counseling or gynecology.  
If you ever need additional services outside of these locations, we can refer you to trusted trans-affirming providers.

### Helpful Information

**MyChart®**  
MyChart is an online resource patients can use to view health information, communicate with providers and pay bills. Sign up at [mychartuva.com](https://mychartuva.com). Parents of minor children and caregivers designated by adult patients can use MyChart Proxy® to view health information. Ask your care provider for more information.

**MyVue®**  
MyVue allows you to view your radiology images online. Sign up at [uvahealth.com/myvue](https://uvahealth.com/myvue).

**Insurance**  
We accept most major insurance plans, including Medicare and Medicaid. Please pay all copays and fees at the time of your visit.

### Billing Questions

If you have questions about your bill, visit [uvahealth.com/billing](https://uvahealth.com/billing) or call 844.377.0846.

### Financial Assistance

Learn about assistance available through UVA and government programs at [uvahealth.com/financialassistance](https://uvahealth.com/financialassistance).

## UVA Transgender Services



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UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA HEALTH SYSTEM  
UVA HEALTH SYSTEM  
PO Box 800224  
Charlottesville, VA 22908-0224

### Welcome

At UVA, our goal is to provide affirming, comprehensive healthcare for transgender patients of all ages. We are committed to making your healthcare experience as positive as possible, listening to and responding to your needs and removing barriers to your care.

### Our Team

Our multidisciplinary team includes healthcare professionals who specialize in family medicine, endocrinology, psychiatry and behavioral health. Your well-being is our top priority and we are committed to treating you with dignity and respect.



UVA HEALTH SYSTEM

### Services

#### Mental and Physical Wellness

Access healthcare that addresses your whole being in a safe, caring environment. Visit select family medicine and psychiatry specialists for:

- Chronic health conditions, screenings, vaccinations, physicals, minor illness and injury
- Depression, anxiety, stress and other mental health issues

We can help connect you to services outside of the health system, like long-term, trans-affirming therapists.

#### Hormone Therapy

Our endocrinologists provide hormone prescriptions and management for:

- Pubertal suppression therapy (for adolescents)
- Gender-affirming therapy
- Menstrual suppression therapy

#### Comprehensive Care

You can also directly access transgender-specific services in dermatology, gynecology, plastic surgery, urology and speech therapy.

#### Gender-Affirming Surgery

We have plastic surgeons and urologists experienced in providing these procedures:

- Transgender mastectomy
- Chest reconstruction
- Breast implants, breast construction and augmentation
- Facial implants (chin and cheek)
- Facial injectables (facial fillers)
- Testicle removal (orchiectomy)

### Teen and Young Adult Medicine

- Evaluation and treatment for teen mental health issues
- Low-cost physicals and sports physicals
- LGBTQ support groups for ages 10-14 and 14-20
- Reproductive healthcare: birth control (including free emergency birth control), period management, counseling and testing for sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy testing
- Treatment for acne and skin problems

### Transgender Support

- Discussion of possible medical and surgical treatments for gender dysphoria
- Family education and support
- Assistance with name and gender marker changes on legal documents
- Financial advice about uncovered medical treatment
- Letters of recommendation for hormone therapy (UVA Teen and Young Adult Transgender Clinic and UVA Student Health Center)
- Information about gender expression gear
- Surgical referrals

# Why Are We Doing This?

## Uncovered Challenges



Creating a basic brochure became problematic:

- No clear phone number to use
- Unclear ideas about safety – list the clinic location or not?
- No internal stock photography
- No idea about the patient journey – which services to list on brochure?
- Non-inclusive Transgender Advisory Group meant no place to get questions answered authentically
- No clear mechanism for identifying qualified providers or training for qualification

# Why Are We Doing This?



# Why Are We Doing This?

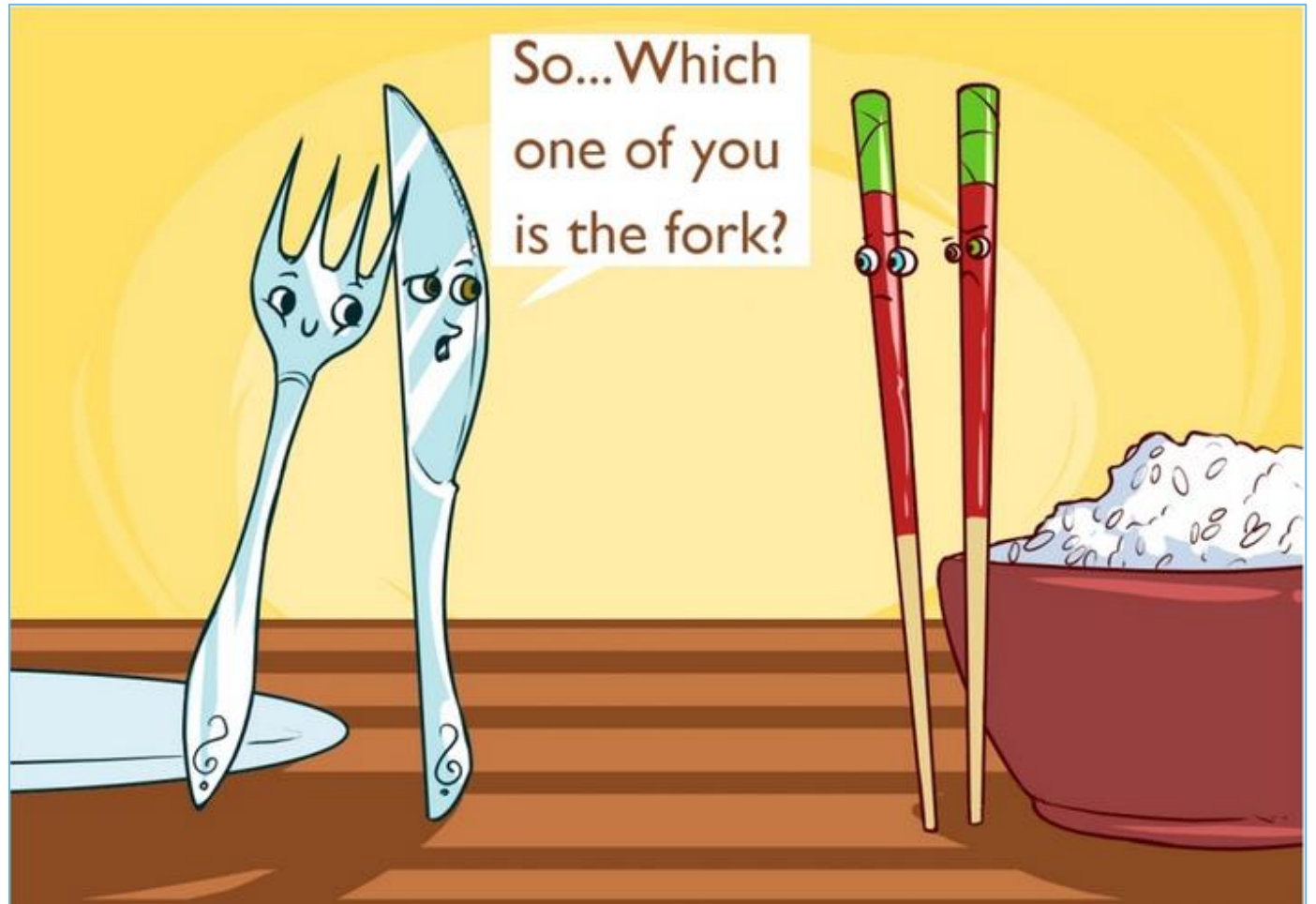
## Next Steps



- Do some research
- Create standards
- Foster relationships with the community and providers
- Listen to our patients

# The Individual Learning Journey

Personally *and* Professionally

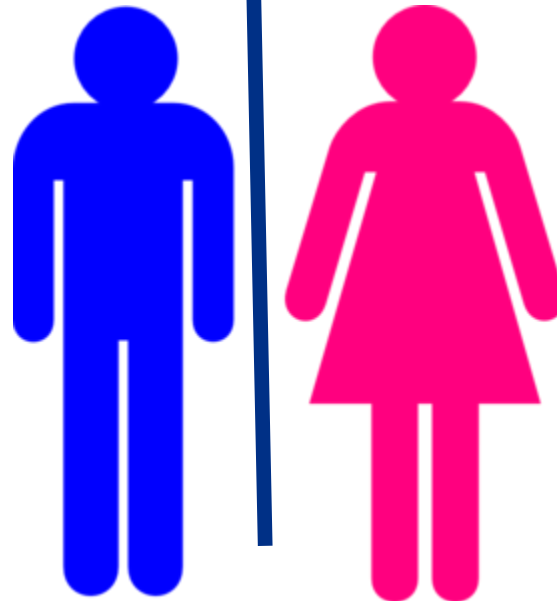


# Learning Process: Gender



MALE/MASCULINE

FEMALE/FEMININE

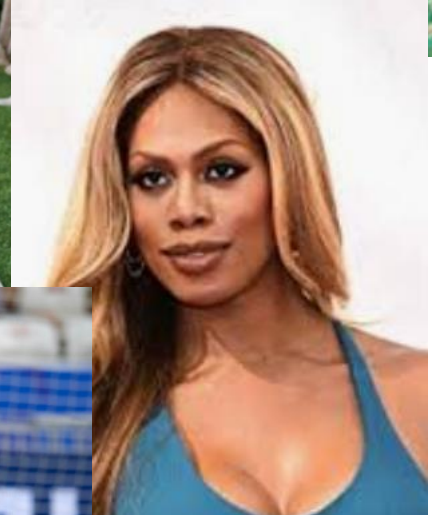


# Learning Process: Gender

## MASCULINE



## FEMININE



# Learning Process: Definitions



Lesbian

Gay

Bisexual

Transgender

Questioning

Queer

Cisgender

Gender non-conforming (GNC)

Asexual (ace)

Pansexual

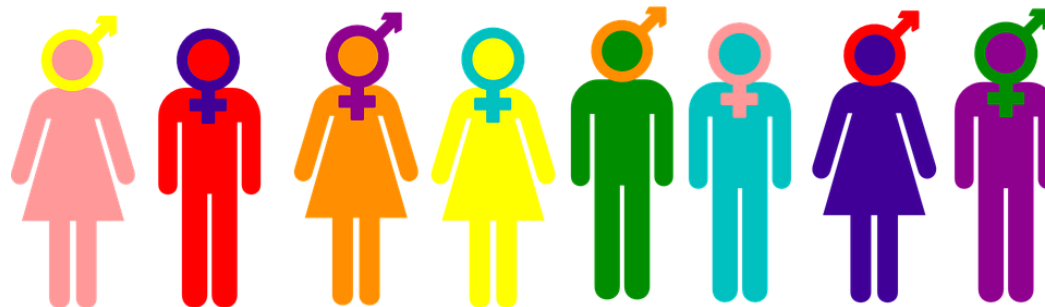
Non-binary

# Learning Process: Gender Identity



- Refers to one's sense of self as male, female, gender-fluid, gender-variant, transgender...
- Awareness between ages of 18 months and 3 years
- Gender variance is not a disorder.
- Gender diversity is a normal part of human expression

The binary system is flawed because it does not take into account the diversity of gender identities and gender expressions among all people.

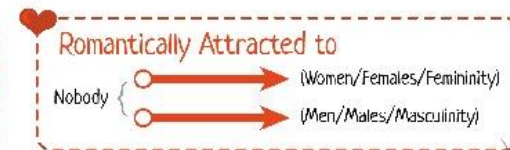
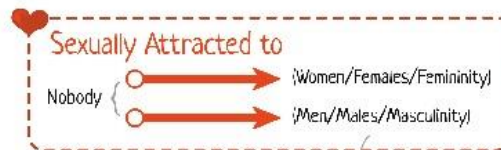
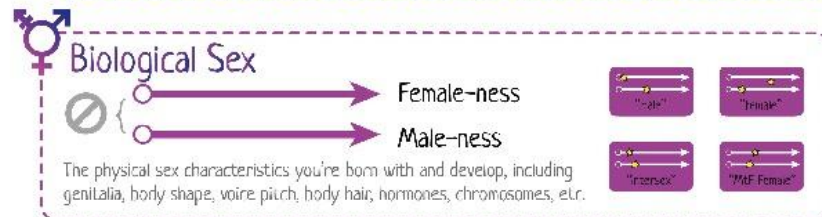
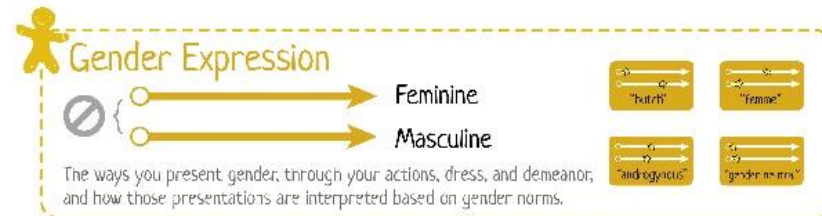
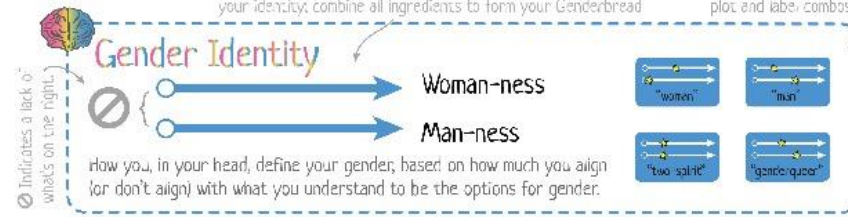
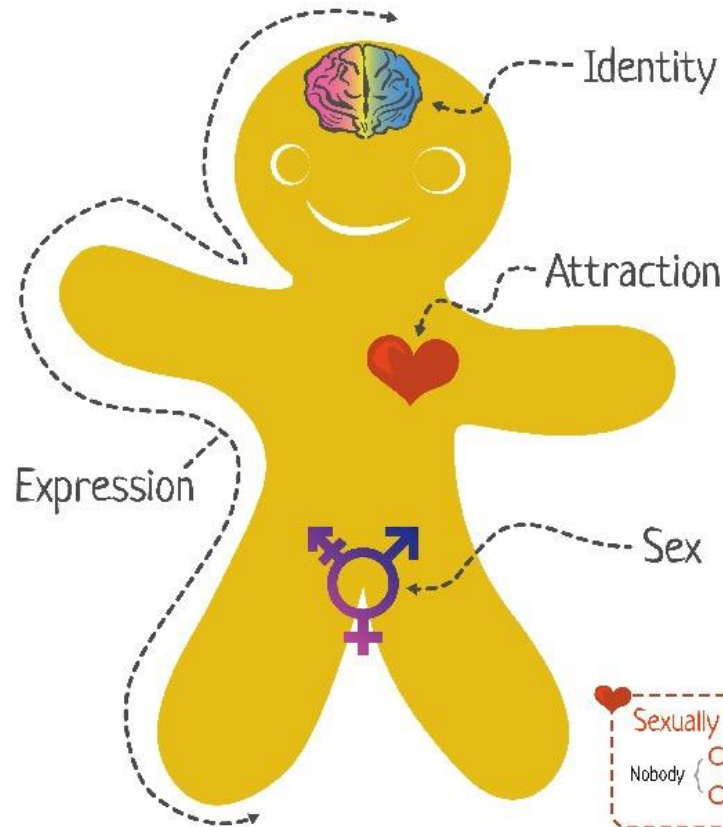


# Learning Process: The Genderbread Person

## The Genderbread Person v3.3

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Like *Inception*, Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for gender understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more. In fact, that's the idea.

by its pronounced **METROsexual**.com

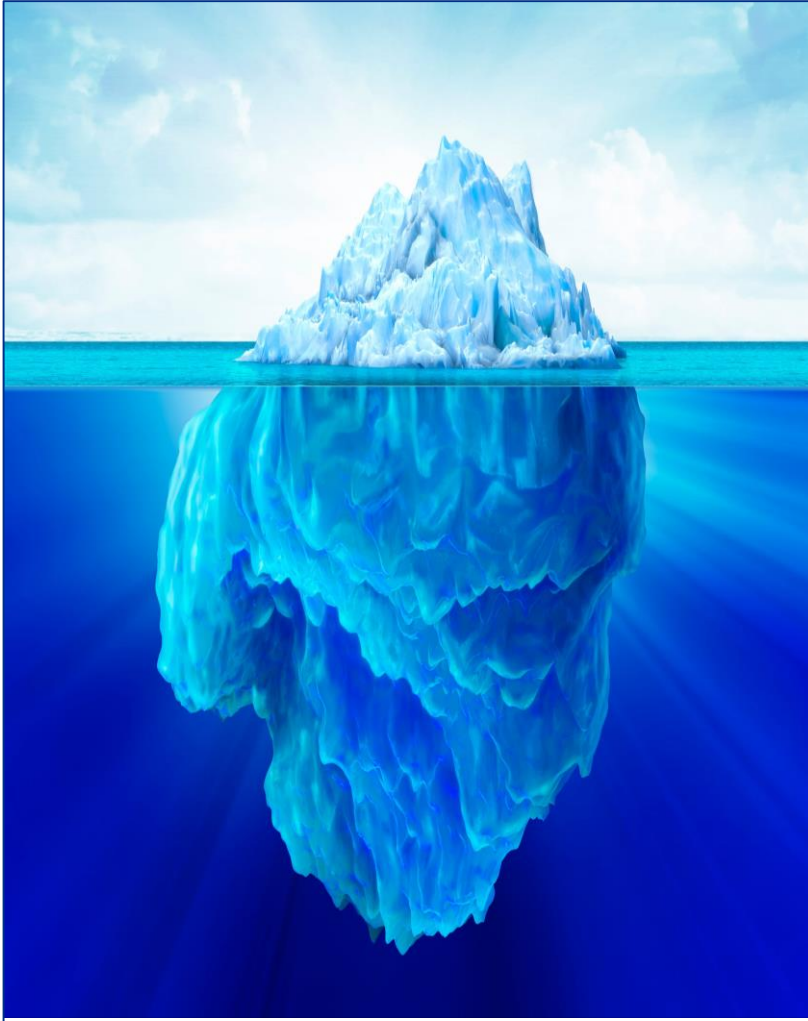


For a bigger bite, read more at <http://bit.ly/genderbread>

In each grouping, circle all that apply to you and plot a point, depicting the aspects of gender toward which you experience attraction.

<https://www.genderbread.org/>

# Learning Process: Visibility of Identity



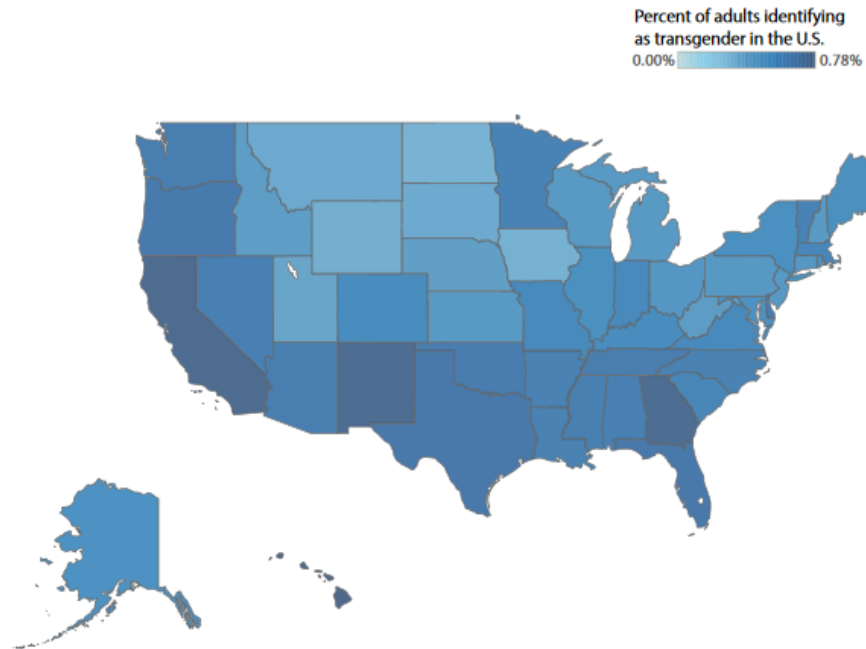
What identities of  
yours can people  
see?

---

What identities  
of yours **can't**  
people see?

# Learning Process: Demographics

Percentage of adults who identify as transgender



0.6%

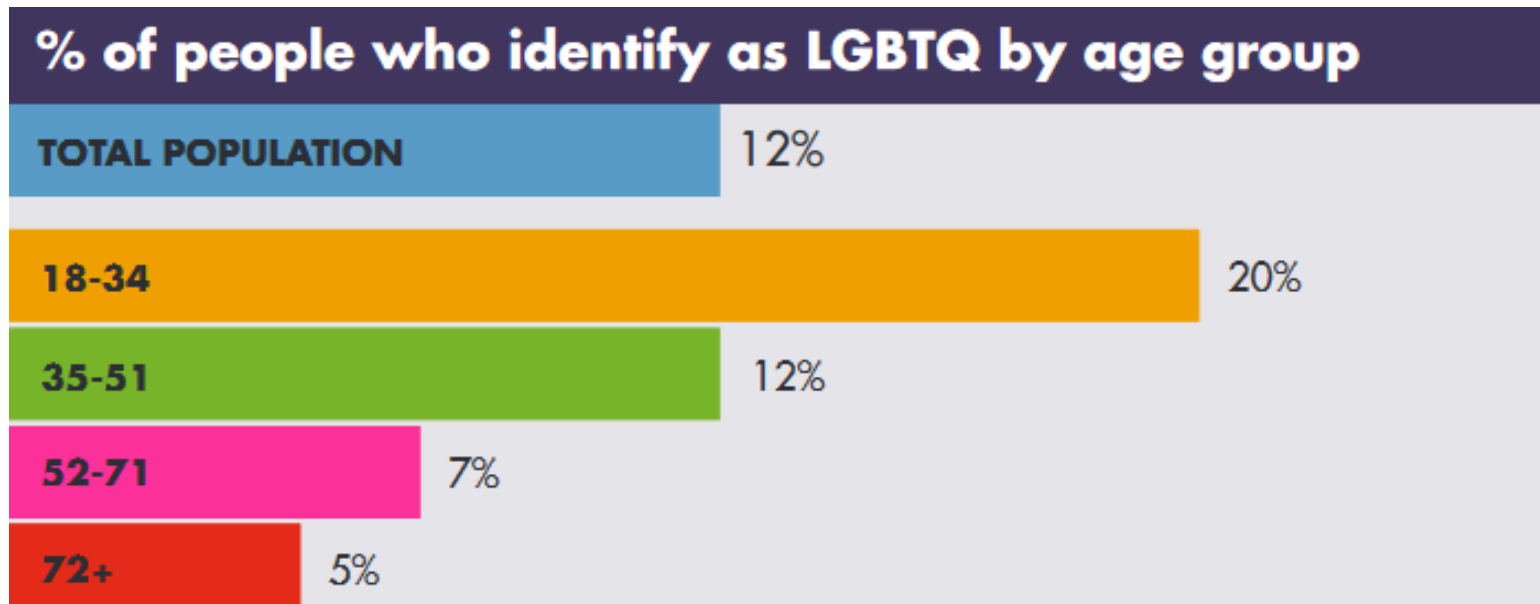
1.4 million  
transgender adults  
in the U.S.

Total adults in the  
U.S. as of 327.2  
million

Flores, A., Herman, J., Gates, GJ, and Taylor, N.T. June, 2016. How many adults identify as transgender in the United States? Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law.

# Learning Process: Demographics

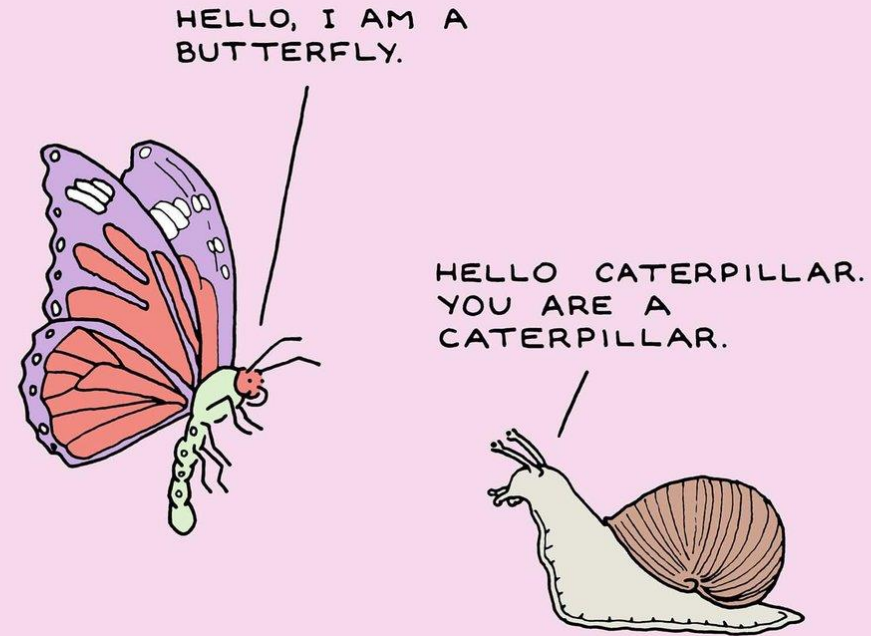
12% of population identifies as LGBTQ



20%  
of 18-34 year olds  
identify as LGBTQ

# The Patient Experience Barriers

## ADVENTURES IN ANTHROPOMORPHISM



TRANSPHOBIA

@DRAWINGSofDOGS

# The Patient Experience: Star Exercise



# The Patient Experience: Expectation of Rejection

**25%+**  
**trans people**  
**were refused**  
**medical care outright**

2010 statistic cited in the 2017 nationally representative survey of LGBT people commissioned by Center for American Progress at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/news/2017/05/02/429529/widespread-discrimination-continues-shape-lgbt-peoples-lives-subtle-significant-ways/>

# The Patient Experience: Suicide Rate



**40%**  
**have attempted suicide in their  
lifetime, nearly 9x the rate  
of the US population**

*However, astonishingly this statistic is decreased to 7% when transgender persons receive social support (Bauer, Scheim, Pyne, Travers, & Hammond, 2015).*

# The Patient Experience: Consequences of Discrimination

- In the healthcare setting, trans people:
  - Avoid seeking healthcare
  - Stay closeted with providers
  - Don't advocate for themselves/feel vulnerable
  - Distrust providers' knowledge about their healthcare issues



# The Patient Experience: UVA Health

A security guard called me **SIR** as I was walking towards the lobby.

Someone from the clinic called and left a voicemail about my wrist surgery, but then forgot to hang up, so I heard her making **jokes about me being trans** to someone else.

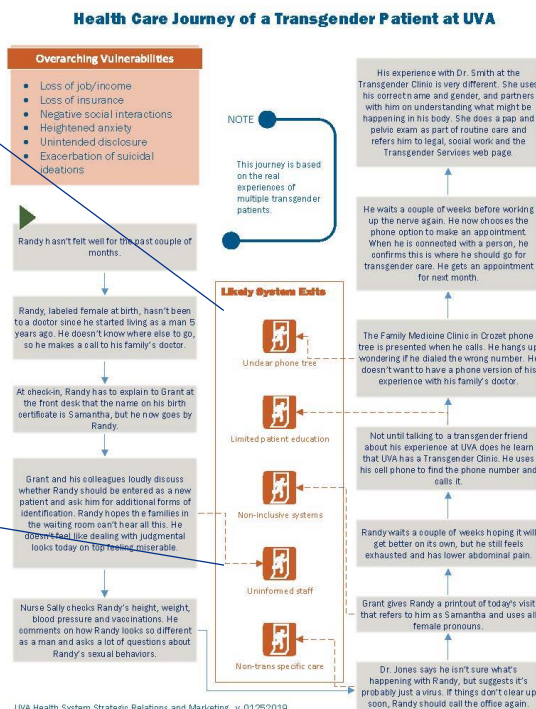
In the clinic waiting room, a child wandered over to me. When the mom grabbed her child and chided her for coming near to me, **I wondered if it was because I was trans or not.** I tried to smile at the mom, but she wouldn't meet my eye. Was I being too sensitive?

I was in the ER and they didn't have enough beds, so they put me on this gurney in the hallway, and this nurse came over and started grabbing my shirt and trying to lift it up, and I screamed **STOP STOP** and she wouldn't.

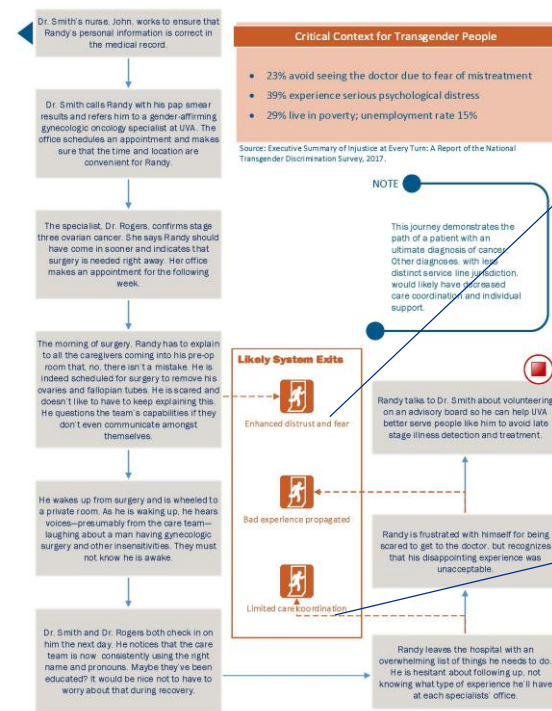
# The Patient Experience: Journey

The Family Medicine and Specialty Care Crozet clinic phone tree is presented when Randy calls. He hangs up wondering if he dialed the wrong number.

The nurse gives Randy a printout of today's visit that refers to him as Samantha and uses all female pronouns.



UVA Health System Strategic Relations and Marketing v.01252019



UVA Health System Strategic Relations and Marketing v.01252019

Before surgery, Randy has to explain to all the caregivers coming into his pre-op room that, no, there isn't a mistake. He is scheduled for surgery to remove his ovaries and fallopian tubes.

Randy leaves the hospital with an overwhelming list of things he needs to do. He is hesitant about following up.





# The Patient Experience: Consulting SHSMD Colleagues

- Sept 2018 posted/inquiry on the SHSMD discussion board
- Connected with colleagues at Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals, Southwest Health and Mass General
- Posted our internal “Guidance to Support Communications and Engagement Related to Transgender Care” document in the SHSMD library, 37 downloads as of 7/22/19

## Public Relations & Communications

[Settings](#)[Group Home](#)[Discussion](#) 1.9K[Library](#) 92[Members](#) 3.3K[← Back to discussions](#)

### Optimizing Transgender Services

- ▼  **Lisa Schrader** 09-27-2018 09:53  
[Have any of you figured out how to provide good clinical care and thoughtful interactions with trans...](#)
-  **Anne Thomure** 09-27-2018 10:25  
[Yes, please share resources. We just discussed this issue at a recent meeting. Thank you! ...](#)
- ▼  **Jaime Collins** 09-28-2018 12:53  
[Lisa, Thank you! ... for not only working to improve transgender health care but also engaging...](#)
-  **Lisa Schrader** 10-01-2018 09:35  
[Anne and others. I want to take a few days to pull together what we've been looking at in a more t...](#)

# Setting the Example

## Best Practices for Leaders

**UVA**Today

### **ALRIDGE AND NIMAX HONORED AS LEADERS, COMMUNITY-BUILDERS IN EQUITY EFFORTS**



*Curry School professor Derrick Alridge, left, and Assistant Vice President for Compliance Gary Nimax are the winners of the 2018 John T. Casteen III Diversity-Equity-Inclusion Leadership Awards. (Photos by Dan Addison, University Communications)*

# Setting the Example: Use Inclusive Language

## Don't say:

- “She is *a transgender*” or “She’s *transgendered*”
- Cross-dresser, drag queen, transsexual or tranny
- Deadname: The previous name reflecting prior gender
- “Sex change”

## Do say:

- “Phyllis is a transgender woman.”
- “He’s a trans man.”
- Surgery - “Gender confirmation” or “gender affirmation” or “sex reassignment”

# Setting the Example: Ask...Don't Guess/Anticipate Gender

- Ask open-ended questions
  - “Are you in a relationship?” vs. “Do you have a husband?” or
  - “What is their name?” vs. “What’s her name?”
- Avoid gendered language
  - “Your patient is here” vs. “He is here”
  - Don’t use “sir” and “ma’am”
- Continue to ask people for the pronouns they use
  - “What pronouns do you **use**?”
  - “How would you like to be referred to in this record/system?”

# Setting the Example: Get Comfortable With Pronouns

- Set the example in email/introductions: “My name is Amy, and I use **her/she** pronouns.”
- Respect the person’s wishes
- Don’t default to “it”

She  
Her  
Hers

They  
Their  
Theirs

Him  
His

# Setting the Example: Calm Your Grammatical Anxiety



- Stop talking about the grammar being wrong:
  - There's **historical precedent** for the plural-singular confusion
  - The **Associated Press** style guide provides grammatical justification and advice on usage

*“The use of plural pronouns to refer back to a singular subject isn’t new: it represents a revival of a practice dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It’s increasingly common in current English and is now widely accepted both in speech and in writing.”*

**Oxford English Dictionaries**

*When they is used in the singular, it takes a plural verb: Taylor said they need a new car. (Again, be sure it's clear from the context that only one person is involved.)*

**Associated Press, 2019**

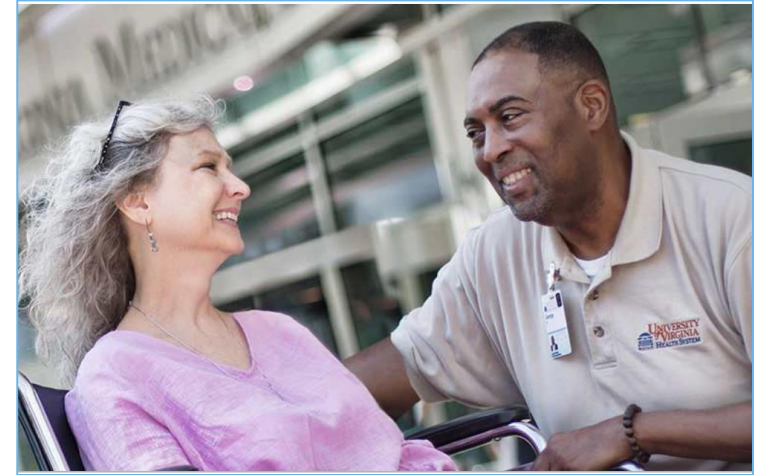
# Setting the Example: Share That You Care

**“I don’t know what to say. So I just didn’t say anything.”**

Ignoring or avoiding someone can make them feel **unsafe**.

Remember:

- Start with compassion
- What you say and don’t say both have an impact
- No one gets it right all the time
- Your efforts to share that you care mean so much



# Setting the Example: Apologize For Impact vs. Intent

- Apologize briefly and correct yourself.
  - “And I was saying to someone that **he’s** a really good, **sorry, she**, that she was a really good painter.”
- Don’t over-apologize, complain, or whine.
  - “Oh gosh I am SO SO sorry, I really am. I know it’s wrong and this must happen all the time.”
  - “Gosh, pronouns are so difficult!”
  - “I didn’t mean it!”



# Setting the Example: Don't Minimize or Discount



You may respond to a person sharing their gender identity in a way intended to express tolerance:

- It's no big deal
- I don't care
- It doesn't matter to me
- It doesn't bother me
- Who cares? Whatever
- Agree to disagree

**But what if...**

It **is** a big deal?

The person needs you to care?

It matters to them?

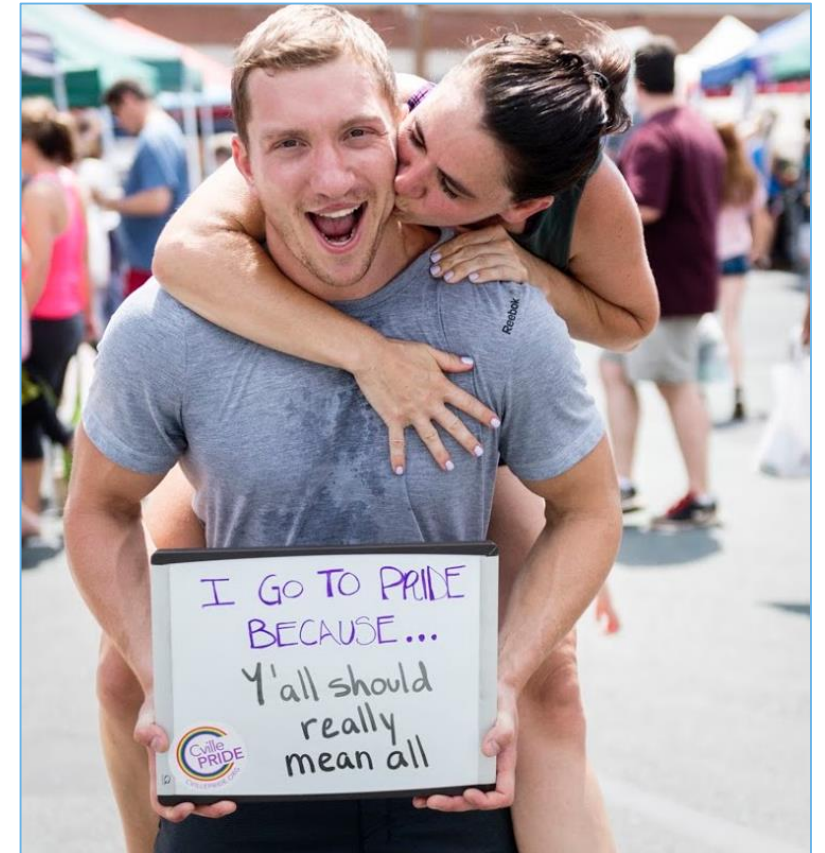
They didn't ask for your approval?

Others **don't** care, or have rejected or abused the person for this very reason?

People experience discrimination everywhere?

# Setting the Example: 6 Aspects of An Awesome Ally

1. Stay humble – no one will ever know everything
2. Listen & let others tell you the terms to use for them
3. Avoid assumptions – practice not boxing people in, let them define themselves
4. Be visible, vocal, and active as an ally
5. Embrace your own truth, giving permission to others to follow your lead
6. Check in



# Changing Your Organization's Culture

## Best Practice Recommendations



# Changing Your Organization's Culture: Engage the Community

Collaborating with the community you seek to include is absolutely critical to creating responsive, authentic programs.

- LGBTQ social groups in medical school/employee groups
- Pride festivals/events, local health department educators (often LGBTQ/trans-specific programs)
- PFLAG – support groups for trans individuals/families
- High school nurses/counselors



# Changing Your Organization's Culture: Engagement Best Practices



For focus groups, surveys,  
and patient advisory councils:

- Meet people where they're comfortable
- Provide opportunities for anonymous input
- Recognize, affirm, and honor participation
- Don't force one person to speak for a whole community
- Don't take negative feedback personally or defensively
- Get clear consent
- Give people a chance to review materials
- Think accessibility (when/where you hold meetings, for example)
- Expect the process to take time

# Changing Your Organization's Culture: Resolve Bathroom Issues

- Make restrooms gender-neutral
- Provide private restroom options



**Fact:** Studies show that making transgender people use a men's-only or women's-only bathroom puts **them** at high risk of being harassed, beaten, or raped.

# Changing Your Organization's Culture: Get Trained

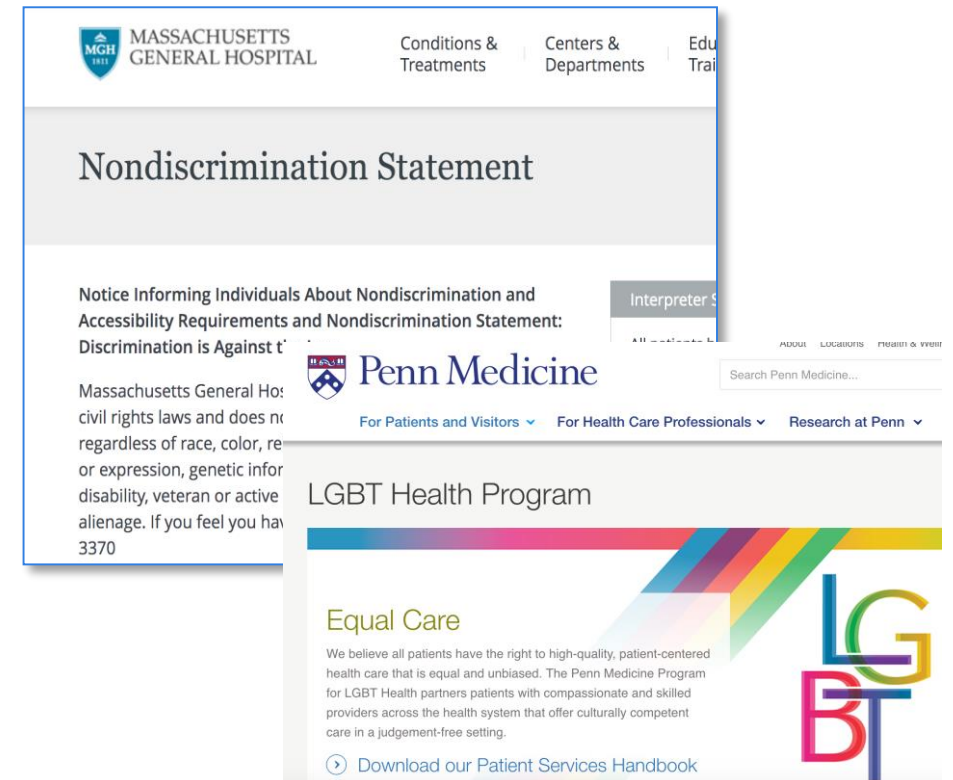
- Make training required
- Train anyone who comes in contact with patients – everyone has unconscious bias
- Have training around LGBTQ healthcare/experience in general, as well as a focus on transgender issues



# Changing Your Organization's Culture: Make Inclusion Explicit

- Policies for visitors: Say same-sex partners are welcome as visitors
- Antidiscrimination policies that say **sexual orientation** and **gender identity**
- Post these policies in visible places – waiting rooms, clinics, online

“Everyone” doesn’t cover it.



# Changing Your Organization's Culture: Make Inclusion the Experience

- Complete your own Patient Journey map
- Institute a policy that all employees must provide care to transgender patients
- Employ an electronic medical record that records name/gender accurately
- Remove sex from wristbands
- Flex rooming policies:
  - Consider rooming transgender patients with same gender
  - Let non-binary patients choose



# Changing Your Organization's Culture: Make Inclusion Visible

A rainbow or other explicit welcome shows that you:

- Aren't ashamed or afraid of negative social reaction
- Understand why the rainbow is important
- Care about serving LGBTQ people



I AM SENSITIVE TO & SUPPORTIVE OF LESBIAN,  
GAY, BI, TRANS\*, QUEER, & QUESTIONING PEOPLE

# Changing Your Organization's Culture: UVA Health Current State

- Some departments have received Safe Space training
- Preferred name added in EPIC on June 25
- Adult Transgender Clinic now open 2 days a month
- Limited outreach: TIES (Transgender Information and Empowerment Summit), local LGTBQ clubs, Cville Pride Festival
- Statewide involvement: attended The Fierce Urgency of Now: LGBTQ+ Health Equity Symposium, sponsored by VA Dept. of Health
- Participation in Pronouns Day on Oct. 16
- Continue to create connections between the Transgender Advisory Committee, clinicians, patients and community
- Work in progress



Treat others the way  
*they* want to be treated.

# Questions?

**Please be sure to complete the session evaluation on the mobile app!**

# Speaker Biography

## Amy Sarah Marshall

Online Content Strategist at University of Virginia Health

[asm4c@virginia.edu](mailto:asm4c@virginia.edu)

In her role as online content strategist with UVA Health, Amy Sarah applies 15 years of analytical and creative experience to writing, editing, and optimizing a wide variety of patient-focused online content. She is also founding president of the Charlottesville Pride Community Network, an LGBTQ community nonprofit that provides visibility, events, and education throughout central Virginia. In both roles, Amy employs her experience serving marginalized populations to shape communications that help people access the care and services they need.

# Speaker Biography

## Sarah Ridgeway

Marketing and PR Specialist at University of Virginia Health

[shr3xe@virginia.edu](mailto:shr3xe@virginia.edu)

New to the healthcare industry, Sarah uses her 10 years in retail marketing to provide a unique perspective on traditional healthcare campaigns. As a marketing and PR specialist covering neurosciences and behavioral health for the University of Virginia Health, she is driven to creatively utilize all communication channels, even when targeting hard-to-reach audiences, and excels at transforming effective print campaigns to the digital space. She is also deeply committed to patient experience and understands the value behind a loyal, engaged customer and patient.

# Speaker Biography

## Aleksandra Golota

Marketing and PR Specialist at University of Virginia Health

[ag3cr@virginia.edu](mailto:ag3cr@virginia.edu)

Aleksandra (Alex) Golota is a marketing and PR specialist at the University of Virginia Health. Alex works with surgical subspecialties, pharmacy, and medical subspecialties which includes the UVA Adult Transgender Health Clinic. Alex believes that transgender care is health care. Alex knows that it is not just marketing that drives the success of an organization, but it is also how well it connects with and understands the communities that it serves. Alex holds a BA in communications from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

# Bibliography/References

- [www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org)
- <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/dsm>
- <https://pflag.org/glossary>
- <https://www.genderbread.org/>
- <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/How-Many-Adults-Identify-as-Transgender-in-the-United-States.pdf>
- [https://www.glaad.org/files/aa/2017\\_GLAAD\\_Accelerating\\_Acceptance.pdf](https://www.glaad.org/files/aa/2017_GLAAD_Accelerating_Acceptance.pdf)
- <https://transequality.org/issues/employment>
- <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/news/2017/05/02/429529/widespread-discrimination-continues-shape-lgbt-peoples-lives-subtle-significant-ways>
- <http://www.thetaskforce.org/injustice-every-turn-report-national-transgender-discrimination-survey-executive-summary/>
- <https://my.shsmd.org/viewdocument/re-optimizing-transgender-services-1?CommunityKey=c43fafea-3a28-4f5d-ac16-fa92c6ac6941&tab=librarydocuments>