

Indian Health Service

CHR Series

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April 29, 2021



Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity (SOGI): Introduction & Fundamentals



Presenters:

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Alessandra Angelino, MD, MPH

Objectives

- Explore Two Spirit and LGBTQ+ terminology and impact within the healthcare setting
- Identify Two Spirit and LGBTQ+ health disparities
- Identify and decrease Two Spirit and LGBTQ+ barriers to care





Health equity through community affirmation

- **1/3 Native trans** people have **postponed** medical care, because they were afraid of **discrimination**.
- **2/3 Native trans** people who accessed care in 2014 report **experiencing discrimination**.
- Trans youth who have socially transitioned have levels of anxiety and depression **comparable to their cisgender peers**.
- Use of preferred name and pronouns associated with a **65% decrease** in suicide attempts.



Health equity through community affirmation

If asked, 90% of Two Spirit and LGBTQ individuals would disclose their sexual orientation and gender identity to providers.



Key Terms

Sexual Orientation

- Refers to the way one describes their emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction.

Gender

- Refers to a person's internal sense of being male, female, both, neither, or something else and the role(s) we play in society.

Two Spirit

- Refers to an indigenous person who expresses their gender identity, spiritual identity, or social role in a traditional, non-Western way.



What is gender?

Gender refers to a person's internal sense of identity (could be man, woman, both, neither, or another identity) and their social role.

It's like being at the eye doctor when they flip the lenses back and forth. —Is this better? Or this? Comparison and trying different lenses clarifies which works best.



Definitions

Cis: A person whose gender identity corresponds with their sex assigned at birth

Trans: A person whose gender identity does not match their sex assigned at birth

Nonbinary: A person whose gender identity does not evenly correspond with the male/female binary

Two Spirit*



What is Two Spirit?

Refers to an Indigenous person who expresses their gender identity, spiritual identity, or social role in a traditional, non-Western way.



LGBT HEALTH DISPARITIES

Group	Disparity
LGBT general	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highest rates of increased tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use¹
LGBT Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 to 3 times more likely to attempt suicide¹• More likely to be homeless¹
Lesbian Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less likely to get preventive services for cancer¹

¹Healthy People 2020 <https://www.healthypeople.gov/>

TRANSGENDER DISPARITIES

Category	Issue	Transgender	US
Economic	Live in Poverty	29%	14%
	Unemployed	15% (23% AI)	5%
HIV rates	Overall	1.4% (4.6% AI)	0.3%
	In Transgender Women	3.4%	
School	Left School Due to Mistreatment	17% (39% AI)	
Work	Experienced Discrimination or Took Steps to Avoid Discrimination	80%	
Distress	Current Severe Psychological Distress	39%	5%

James, S. E., Herman, J. L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi, M. (2016). The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey. Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality. Retrieved from <http://www.transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS%20Full%20Report%20-%20FINAL%201.6.17.pdf>



*she
her
hers*



*they
them
theirs*



*he
him
his*

Use of correct name and pronouns associated with a **56% decrease** in suicide attempts.



FOR PROVIDERS



"My family supports me.
My healthcare provider
should, too."

**See me.
Stand with me.**

Lesbian • Gay • Bisexual
Transgender • Queer • Two Spirit

9 in 10 patients

would disclose their sexual orientation and gender
identity to healthcare providers if asked.*

**We're ready to talk about identity.
Ask us.**



This campaign is supported with funds from the Indian Health Service and the
Secretary's Minority AIDS Initiative Fund.

*<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28437523>;
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28235242>

Ask how clients prefer to be
identified—every client, every time.

Affirm the good things in your
clients' lives by asking about their
communities and successes.

Acknowledge the diverse
Native concepts of gender and
sexual orientation.

Advocate for clients who are
Two Spirit or LGBTQ.

Visibility

WE WELCOME

ALL RACES AND ETHNICITIES
ALL RELIGIONS
ALL COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN
ALL GENDER IDENTITIES
ALL SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS
ALL ABILITIES AND DISABILITIES
ALL SPOKEN LANGUAGES
ALL AGES
EVERYONE.

**WE STAND HERE WITH YOU
YOU ARE SAFE HERE**

* Content adapted from the original "We Welcome" sign created by IPRC members Lisa Mangum and Jason Levian



**See me.
Stand with me.**

I'm Native. I'm indigiqueer.

To hear my story, text DOCUMENTARY to 97779

This campaign is supported with funds from the Indian Health Service and the Secretary's Minority AIDS Initiative Fund.
Corn basket titled "Piyaasskomon: Gaize," created by artist Geo Neptune



NPAIHB Toolkit

9 in 10 patients

would disclose their sexual orientation and gender identity to healthcare providers if asked.

Ask

- Ask clients how they prefer to be identified. Ask everyone. Ask every time.
- Develop a relationship to improve trust and offer better care.

Affirm

- Use preferred names and pronouns. All staff. Every visit.
- Ensure access to gender-neutral restrooms.

Acknowledge

- There is no universally correct concept of gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Different cultures define gender and sexual orientation in different ways.
- The word Two Spirit refers to a Native person, who expresses their gender identity or spiritual identity in indigenous, non-Western ways.

Advocate

- Train staff to treat all clients with affirmation and respect.
- Become certified as an LGBTQ+ affirming provider: wpath.org/gqi/certification
- Find and share resources:
 - hs.gov/gbi/health/twospirit
 - fenwayhealth.org
 - howardbrown.org

Allie's Story

Allie is Native and queer. After they had a bad experience with a psychiatrist, they avoided seeking mental health and medical care for ten years. Finally, due to trouble concentrating at work and extreme anxiety, they decided to look for a therapist.

"I needed help, and I recognized that my need for help was greater than my fear of being judged," they say.

"I found a therapist who really got me. I could talk to him about anything. I brought up being queer. He didn't bat an eye. It was no problem. I was thinking about alternative sexualities. He was all for it.

"I thought, Oh. He actually cares about my mental health. It doesn't matter to him—who I'm attracted to, my gender expression. He actually sees what I am doing. He sees me."

"He was very nonjudgmental. I felt safe.

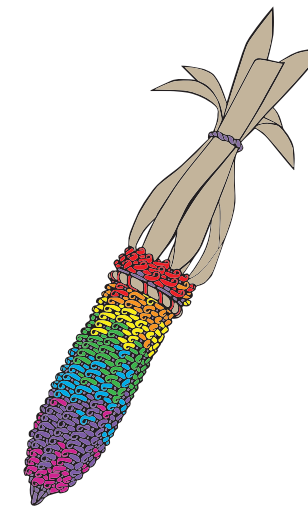
"He changed the way I thought about myself. He changed the way I thought about my mental health. He changed the way I thought about health in general. "I credit him with saving my life."

To hear the rest of Allie's story, text DOCUMENTARY to 97779.



Celebrating Our Magic:

Resources for American Indian/Alaska Native transgender and Two-Spirit youth, their relatives and families, and their healthcare providers



she
her
hers

they
them
theirs

he
him
his

FOR PROVIDERS



"My family supports me. My healthcare provider should, too."

See me.
Stand with me.

Lesbian • Gay • Bisexual
Transgender • Queer • Two Spirit

9 in 10 patients
would disclose their sexual orientation and gender identity to healthcare providers if asked.

We're ready to talk about identity. Ask us.



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FOR ALLIES



"My community celebrates me."
— Allie, Native, queer

"My family celebrates me."
— Jeri, Native, queer

See us.
Stand with us.

Lesbian • Gay • Bisexual
Transgender • Queer • Two Spirit

We told you about our identity, because we trust you. Honor that trust.



See me.
Stand with me.

I'm Native. I'm indigiqueer.

To hear my story, text DOCUMENTARY to 97779

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Indian Leadership for Indian Health

Corn basket titled "Piyassakomom: Gaize," created by artist Gao Neptune



SUICIDE IN AI/AN TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS

- 12 times the rate of lifetime suicide attempt
- 16 times the rate of suicide attempt in the past year

James, S. E., Herman, J. L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi, M. (2016). The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey. Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality. Retrieved from <http://www.transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS%20Full%20Report%20-%20FINAL%201.6.17.pdf>

PRESSING NEED FOR DATA

Understanding the scope of the issues and intervening is impeded by

- a **lack of uniform data collection**
- **social rejection and marginalization**
- **insensitivity to gender identify**
- **other social/economic factors**



Reese Lived Experience



ADDITIONAL BARRIERS FOR TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS

Family rejection

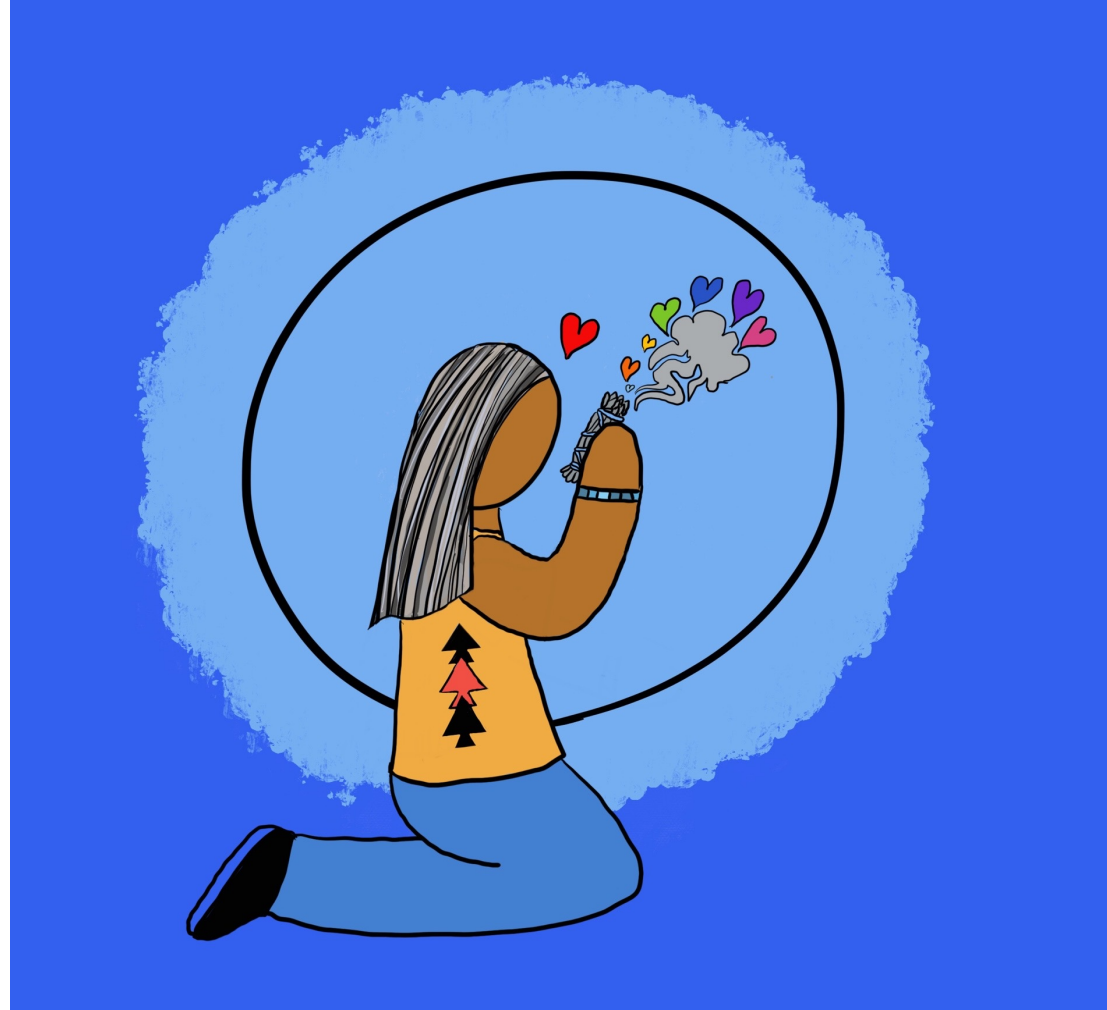
- 40% families neutral or not supportive
- 10% experienced violence from family member because transgender

Violence

- 47% had been sexually assaulted in their lifetime
- 57% not comfortable seeking assistance from police

Health Care

- 23% postponed medical care due to discrimination, 33% due to cost
- 33% had negative experience with provider in past year
- 25% denied coverage for hormonal medications and 55% for surgical transition



Approach a person's health holistically with inclusion of traditional Indigenous medicine.

Art by Lorenzo Yazzie



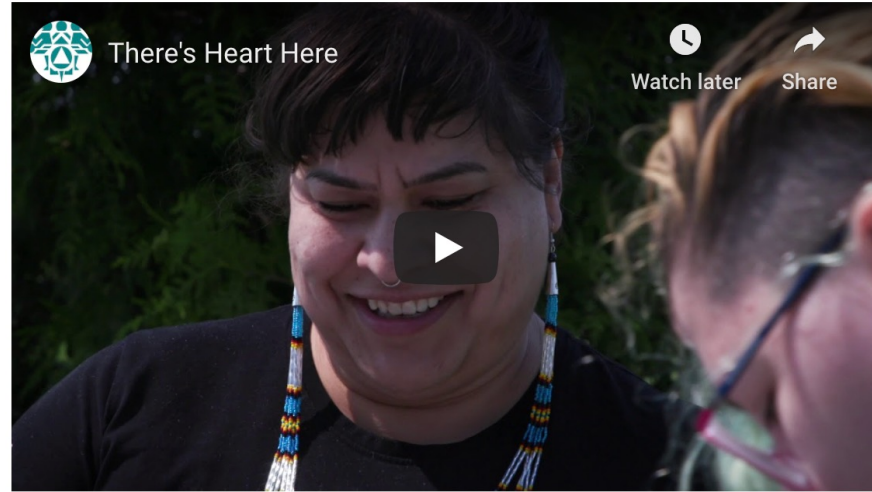
Case Study

An 18-year-old individual comes into the clinic. The patient fills out the intake form, indicating that their current gender identity is “female” and their sex assigned at birth is left blank. Their name is Terrence Walker, and they use “they” pronouns.

- How would you address Terrence Walker if you needed to call them to the front desk?
- What steps can you take to ensure Terrence feels welcome in the clinic?



TWO SPIRIT AND LGBTQ HEALTH



Roller derby champion. Activist. Cyclist. Follow three indigenous members of the Two Spirit and LGBTQ community as they journey toward self-acceptance, supportive healthcare, and communities that celebrate them.



Connect with us!

For Email Newsletters you can trust.

I'M A PROVIDER.

I'M AN ALLY.

I'M LGBTQ. I'M TWO SPIRIT.

- Two Spirit and LGBTQ
- Provider
- Ally
- Films
- Journal
- Print Materials
- Contact Us



www.npaihb.org/2SLGBTQ

Resources

- Celebrating Our Magic Toolkit:
<http://www.npaihb.org/download/Toolkit-Final.pdf>
- There's Heart Here Documentary:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zX0tI8_hA
- UCSF Training Modules:
<http://transhealth.ucsf.edu/video/story.html>



Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Health

- › [Two-Spirit](#)
- › [Health Resources](#)
- › [Friends and Family of LGBTQ](#)
- › [LGBTQ Two-Spirit Workgroup](#)
- › [Trainings, Webinars, and Presentations](#)
- › [Cultural Competence](#)
- › [Provider Resources](#)
- › [Media Campaigns](#)
- › [Contact Us](#)

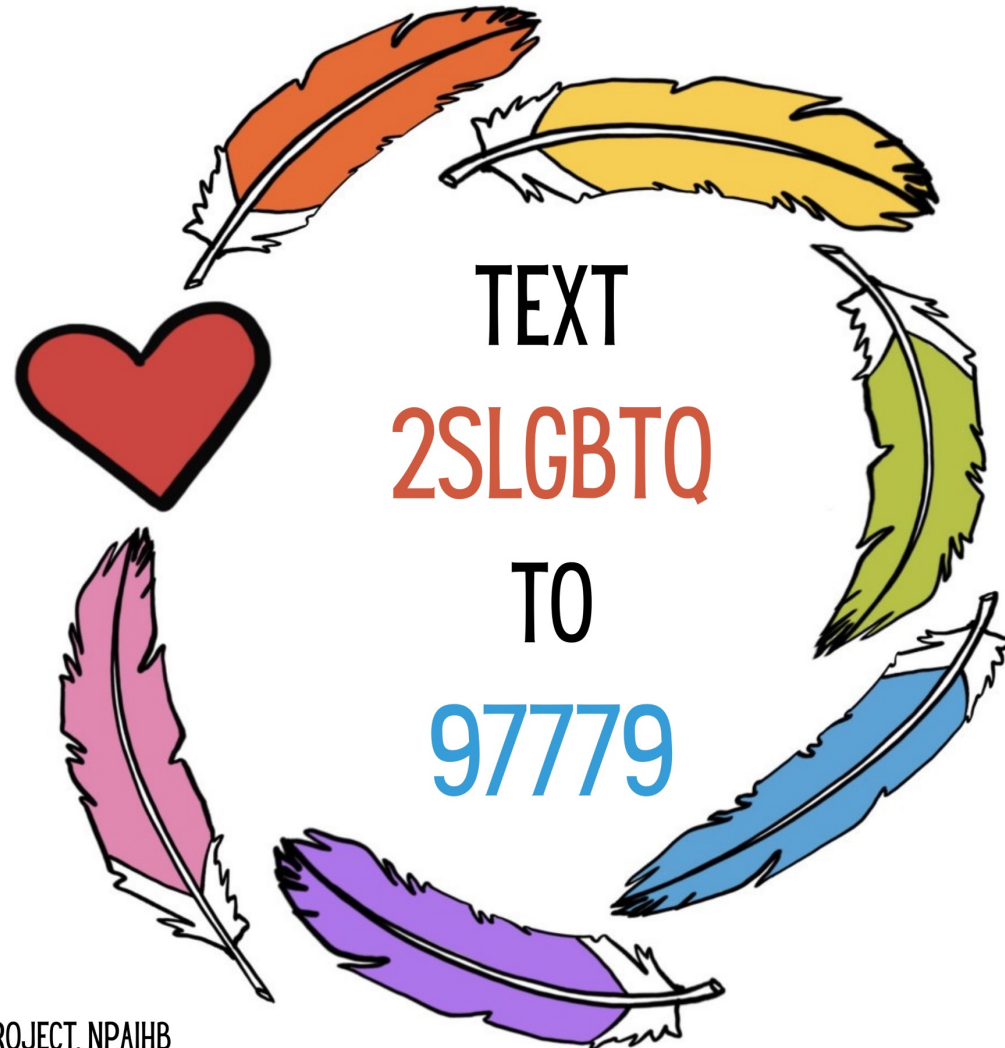
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, (LGBTQ) and Two Spirit Health



The Indian Health Service (IHS) works to ensure that Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning and Two Spirit (LGBTQ-2S) American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) individuals and their families receive equal access to health services in the communities where they live. IHS carries out this work by providing enhanced resources for health issues, developing better information regarding health needs, and working to close the health disparities gap that currently exist for our Native LGBTQ-Two Spirit people.



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT TWO SPIRIT
AND LGBTQ+ HEALTH



Contact Information

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