

Glossary of terms

Affirming gender - The process of adopting a way of life or body that matches a person's sense of their gender

Bisexual - A person who is sexually and emotionally attracted to people of both sexes

'Coming Out' - The process through which an individual comes to recognise and acknowledge (both to self and others) his or her sexual orientation/gender identity/intersex status

Cis - A person who identifies with their birth assigned sex e.g. ciswoman, cisman

Gender Identity - The gender that a person identifies as, regardless of their biological sex

Difference of Sex Development (DSD) - A term which describes a range of conditions in which a person's genetics, hormones, internal organs or external genitalia are atypical (see also 'intersex')

Female-to-male - Adjective to describe individuals assigned female at birth who are changing or who have changed their body/or gender role from birth-assigned female to a more masculine body or role

Gay - A homosexual person - man or woman (see also lesbian)

Gender dysphoria - Distress or discrepancy between a person's gender identity and that person's sex assigned at birth

Gender diverse - An umbrella term used to describe all those whose gender identity is at odds with their biological sex

Gender fluid - A gender identity where gender varies over time and may be a mix of male, female or other non-binary identity, or combination of identities

Genderqueer - Identity label used by individuals whose gender identity and/or role does not conform to the categories of man or woman, male or female

Homosexuality - Romantic attraction, sexual attraction or sexual behaviour between members of the same sex or gender

Intersex - A general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive condition or sexual anatomy (internal and/or external) that are not typically 'male' or 'female' (see also 'Differences of Sex Development')

Lesbian - A woman whose enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction is to other women

Male-to-female - Adjective to describe individuals assigned male at birth who are changing or who have changed their body and/or gender role to a more feminine body or role

Non-binary - A general term for gender identities that are not exclusively male or female (see also genderqueer)

Pansexual - Not limited in sexual choice with regard to biological sex, gender or gender identity

Queer - An umbrella term for sexual and/or gender identities who do not correspond to established ideas of sexuality and gender, especially heterosexual norms

Sexual Orientation - Sexual attraction towards people of a particular sex (or sexes in the case of bisexuality). This is different to a person's sex or gender identity

Trans or Transgender - A general term for a person whose gender identity is different to their sex at birth or upbringing. Within Aboriginal communities the terms Brotherboy and Sistergirl are sometimes used to describe transgender females and males

Transition - A term used when a person begins living as the gender with which they identify rather than the gender they were assigned at birth, which often includes changing one's first name as well as dressing and grooming differently

Helpful websites and contacts

NT AIDS and Hepatitis Council

The key non-government organisation working in the area of blood borne viruses, as well as service information, education, advocacy and support for the LGBTQI+ community in the NT.

www.ntahc.org.au

Gender Help for Parents Australia

A website and social media links created by Australian parents for information and support on issues around their children's gender identity.

www.genderhelpforparents.com.au

Minus18

An Australian youth driven network of information, support, events and connections for LGBTQI+ youth.

www.minus18.org.au

Parents of Gender Diverse Children

An Australian organisation created by parents to provide information, peer support and connections to those parenting trans and gender diverse children, with information links to the NT.

www.pgdc.org.au

QLife

An Australian online counselling and referral service for LGBTI people of all ages. Telephone: 1800 184 527

www.qlife.org.au

ReachOut Australia

An online mental health organisation providing information, support, safe discussion forums and tools for young people and their parents.

www.au.reachout.com

Transcend Support

An Australian support network and information hub for parents and families of transgender children.

www.transcendsupport.com.au

Ygender

A peer led support and advocacy organisation for trans and gender diverse young people (based in Melbourne).

www.ygender.org.au

www.health.nt.gov.au

[f NTGovHealth](#) [@nt_health_](#) [iNNTHealth](#)

For brochure supply, contact
RDHEndocrine.DoH@nt.gov.au

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

HEALTH AND WELLBEING



This guide is also for parents and families seeking information about children's gender identity issues.

Health and Wellbeing Services for Trans and Gender Diverse Children and Adolescents

If you or a family member are questioning or wanting to change your gender - you are not alone. Questioning who you are is normal and there is no 'right' or 'wrong' way to express gender.

There are experienced professionals who can talk with you and your family about these feelings. You may have felt this way for a long time or just started to think about this. Health professionals can help to understand feelings and explain what choices or pathways might be possible. Some services are free for young people through our education and health systems, but there are also costs for some specialised services and treatments.

Transitioning is the process of changing gender from the one assigned at birth, to be in line with who you truly feel you are, which includes physical, mental, and social identity. This can include non-binary genders – neither exclusively male nor female. Medical treatment to affirm gender takes time and needs to be planned to suit individuals. You may decide to block puberty (physical changes towards becoming an adult). This also gives individuals time to experience a social transition and learn more about themselves.

The main thing to remember is that looking after health and mental wellbeing is important and there are many people who can help you and your family.

Note for parents and families:

For young people and teenagers exploring self-identity is normal. There is information about gender identity and support available on-line for parents and families, and some contacts are provided in this brochure. Health professionals are well placed to help answer your questions. As your child gets older they will be more comfortable seeing a counsellor or doctor alone and raising concerns. You and your child can decide together when it might be time to see a health professional on their own, for most children this is around early adolescence.

STEP ONE

Seek information and professional support



Talk to your doctor or visit a **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex** and inclusive of all other identities (LGBTQI+) friendly¹ and experienced doctor and let them know you want to talk about gender identity issues with yourself or a family member.

Contact the Northern Territory AIDS and Hepatitis Council or ask your usual doctor for advice about experienced LGBTQI+ friendly doctors.

An LGBTQI+ friendly doctor will be able to provide advice, information, support and referrals to experienced support and specialist services. You can talk with them about hormone treatment, effects, timeframes and what is involved.

Get help from a mental health professional.

Professionals include school counsellors, psychologists and psychiatrists (referral from a doctor is needed). Getting help can reduce the effects of mental health problems during growth and later in life.

STEP TWO

Link up with peer and social support services



Get in touch with support groups.

Social support will connect you with other young people, parents and families experiencing similar issues. Sharing your story can help improve your mental and physical health.

There are several Australian peer and social support groups for transgender and gender diverse children, their parents and families. For information on current social support services in the Territory, contact the Northern Territory AIDS and Hepatitis Council, or see back page for other contacts.

STEP THREE

Talk to health specialists



LGBTQI+ specialist doctor services can provide expert advice on assessment for gender dysphoria² (GD) and treatment options including puberty blockers, hormone treatment, surgical options and mental health referrals.

Experienced mental health professionals are able to make an assessment for GD. This diagnosis can be made by a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist with expertise in child and adolescent development. In Australia a GD diagnosis is needed before hormone treatment for children and young people can be started. Hormone therapy will change your hormones and the way your body looks and feels.

Paediatricians are doctors with special training and skills in the health and development of babies, children and teenagers.

Endocrinologists are specialists who understand how hormones work in the body.

Paediatric endocrinologists are specialists in children's hormonal conditions and management.

All of these doctors may be involved in helping you and your family.

Speech pathology can help change your voice and mannerisms. You do not need a referral to see a speech pathologist but this is an area of specialty and there may not always be an experienced therapist available in the NT.

STEP FOUR

Change your name and/or your gender marker



Changing your name and gender marking can be time consuming, may require medical information and may cost money. Updates to Northern Territory laws may make changing official documents easier for you.

You can also choose to nominate a 'preferred name' on some records and identity documents.

NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS

Changing your name in the Territory is possible if:

- You were born in the Territory
- Have been a resident for more than 12 consecutive months
- Are an Australian citizen or permanent resident

For further details visit: <https://nt.gov.au/law/bdm/legal-change-of-name/legally-change-your-name>

Changing your (or a child's) sex or gender on a Northern Territory birth certificate is possible. There are other requirements which must be met prior to your birth certificate being amended. Sex or gender options are: male, female, non-binary and unspecified. For further details visit:

www.nt.gov.au/law/bdm/register-a-change-of-sex-on-abirth-certificate

To change your name on your driver's licence you need to present at least three documents to prove identity. For further details visit: <https://nt.gov.au/driving/licences/changing-your-name>

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS

The Department of Human Services website has information about changing Medicare, Centrelink and Child Support details as well as any other Australian Government documents and records. For details visit: www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/enablers/updating-your-gender-details-us

Australian Passports can be issued to sex and gender diverse applicants and re-issued to change gender status. For further details visit: www.passports.gov.au/passportsexplained/theapplicationprocess/eligibilityoverview/Pages/changeofsexdoborpob.aspx

¹ Service or business environment considered to be welcoming and safe for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex people (inclusive of everybody) and clients

² The distress a person experiences as a result of not identifying with the gender they were assigned at birth