



Transgender Mental Health: Co-Conspiratorship

Provider Tip Sheet

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Questions & Responses:

Q1 *What is co-conspiratorship, and how is it different than allyship?*

A1 Allyship is generally defined as being supportive to one another or being supportive to a person or group. Co-conspiratorship is a newer term that takes allyship a few steps further, emphasizing action such as weaponizing your privileges to take on risks that people without those privileges cannot in order to enact change.

Q2 *Why do healthcare disparities exist for the transgender community? How has the healthcare system affected transgender people?*

A2 Transgender people experience a lot of discrimination and have fought to have their humanity recognized. Transgender people deserve equal rights and access to health like everyone else. The healthcare system and mental health system have a long history of pathologizing transgender people by making them feel they have an illness or disease. Although we are presently moving away from that, the foundations are still present in our systems.

Q3 *How do you see issues of racial justice and health inequities intersecting with people who identify as transgender?*

A3 Race and gender are social constructions that evolved together. “Gender” and “race” don’t exist in isolation from one another: they were co-developed as categories and remain co-evolving. Transgender people experience inequity. Transgender people of color (POC) especially experience compounding systems of oppression. When we are able to focus on Queer and Transgender POC, we are able to improve the system for everyone and raise the bar for all communities.

Q4 *Why is important for parents and others to be “co-conspirators” for transgender youth?*

A4 The world can feel like a scary place for transgender people, especially transgender youth. Parents can teach a transgender young person what it means to be loved and to be respected. This is a great way to prepare the young person for the rest of his/her/their life.

Q5 *What are some recommendations for working through internalized transphobia in therapy or counseling with transgender clients?*

A5

Positive questions about self-love and identity are great to ask clients, such as “What do you like about being transgender? What do you love about being transgender?” It is important to have transgender people connect with other transgender people; this can help transgender people find community and see what transgender success looks like.

Q6

What is social transition and what effect does social transition have on a transgender person?

A6

Social transitions can include trying different names and pronouns. There is also a component of navigating public spaces differently. Social transition includes the process of coming out, which is the process of self-disclosure of gender or sexual identity.

Q7

What types of medical transition can a transgender person choose?

A7

There are three types of medical transitions transgender people can undergo:

1. Hormones (partially reversible)
 - a. Hormone blockers (ex. injections, pills, etc.)
2. Fertility options
 - a. Cryopreservation (not typically covered by medical insurance)
 - b. This includes IVF, sperm, and egg preservation.
3. Surgery (irreversible)
 - a. Top
 - b. Bottom

Therapy isn't a requirement for someone choosing surgery, but it can be helpful for the transition.

Q8

What are some best practices in regard to gender categories on client intake forms or applications?

A8

When it comes to filling out paperwork such as applications or forms, it may be best to leave some questions blank if the person's preferred gender is not on the form. If you are working with youth, it is a good practice to sit with the youth and help guide them in filling out forms.

Additional Resources:

From the Presenter

- [Transgender Mental Health - Resources and Education Handout](#)
- [Gender Minority Stress and Resilience Measure \(GMSR\)](#)
- [2015 United States Transgender Survey](#)
- [UCSF Gender Affirming Health Program](#)
- [Sample demographic form for clients to indicate gender identity.](#)

Books & Videos

- *A Clinician's Guide to Gender-Affirming Care: Working with Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Clients* by SC Chang, AA Singh, LM Dickey, and M Krishnan
- *My Gender Workbook* by K Bornstein (for adolescents exploring gender)
- *The Gender Identity Workbook* by AM Triska (for adolescents exploring gender)
- [Voices of Transgender Adolescents](#)
- [LGBTIQ People Talk About Their Experiences Accessing Healthcare](#)

- [Pose](#) (recommended by the speaker for its portrayal of transgender people by transgender actors)

Additional Resources

- [Center of Excellence on LGBTQ+ Behavioral Health Equity](#)
- [Inclusive Evidence-Based Practices in Gender Non-Binary Mental Health Services](#) from SMI Adviser
- [LGBTQIA+ Behavioral Health Resources](#) from Northwest MHTTC
- Addressing Our Bias When Working with the LGBTQ+ Community (**Parts 1, 2, and 3**) from National Hispanic and Latino MHTTC
- [Building Your Toolkit to Serve the LGBTQ Community](#)

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