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## **Terminology**

### **Sexual orientation**

An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people.

### **Gender identity**

One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

### **Gender expression**

External appearance of one's gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

### **LGBTQ+**

This acronym is an accepted short-hand word identifying the family of Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Questioning Queer Intersex and Asexual.

### **Transgender**

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.

### **Gender transition**

The process by which some people strive to more closely align their internal knowledge of gender with its outward appearance. Some people socially transition, whereby they might begin dressing, using names and pronouns and/or be socially recognized as another gender. Others undergo physical transitions in which they modify their bodies through medical interventions.

### **Gender dysphoria \*\***



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Clinically significant distress caused when a person's assigned birth gender is not the same as the one with which they identify. According to the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), the term— which replaces Gender Identity Disorder— "is intended to better characterize the experiences of affected children, adolescents, and adults."

Source: [HRC Terms & Definitions](#)

\*\* This is a very controversial term because it biases those that feel this way as having/experiencing a mental illness. However, prior to 1973, gay and lesbian were classified as mental illnesses until more enlightened people argued otherwise. This term will likely experience the same arguments and will be reclassified somehow in the future.