



VACCA

Inclusive Language Quick Guide VACCA Learning & Development Training Resource

This LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Language Guide has been designed to be a quick reference sheet so that you can ensure your practice constantly considers the safety of LGBTQIA+ community when accessing VACCA services.

- **LGBTQIA+** - This acronym may be shortened or lengthened depending on the community you are working with. The acronym stands for: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, and, Asexual. The + represents a spectrum of identities and experiences.
- **Gender/Gender Identity** – Refers to a person's internalised sense of self which may be masculine, feminine, neither both or moving around freely.
- **Sex** – A person's physical characteristics at birth.
- **Sexuality** – Describes a person's romantic and/or sexual attraction.
- **Lesbian** - typically used to describe women attracted to other women, however people of different genders may also use this term to describe an attraction to women or feminine people.
- **Gay** - The attraction to people of the same gender, historically used to describe men attracted to other men, however, people of any gender may use this term.
- **Bisexual** – the attraction to two or more gender identities. Sometimes shortened to 'bi' or 'bi+'.
- **Queer** – a broad term that can refer to any or multiple LGBTQIA+ identities and experiences. It can also be a political term about the resistance to heteronormativity and celebration of LGBTQIA+ culture. As queer is a reclaimed slur, some members of the LGBTQIA+ community do not use this word and may find it offensive, whilst others may celebrate its use.
- **Transgender & Gender Diverse** – a broad term referring to any individuals who do not exclusively identify with their gender assigned at birth. Sometimes shortened to 'trans'.
- **Intersex** - people who are born with physical or biological sex characteristics (such as sexual anatomy, reproductive organs, hormonal patterns and/or chromosomal patterns) that are more diverse than stereotypical definitions for male or female bodies.
- **Asexual** – people who experience low levels or no sexual attraction. Sometimes shortened to 'ace'.
- **Brotherboy** – is a term used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to describe gender diverse people that have a male spirit and take on male roles within the community. Brotherboys have a strong sense of their cultural identity.
- **Sistergirl** - is a term used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to describe gender diverse people that have a female spirit and take on female roles within the community. Including looking after children and family. Many Sistergirls live a traditional lifestyle and have strong cultural backgrounds.





Inclusive Practice Tips

VACCA Learning & Development

Training Resource

- **Pronouns** – Refer to Gender Pronouns VACCA Learning & Development Training Resource.
 - Ensure you are practicing ‘pronoun cueing’ as often as possible.
 - If you are still learning to use gender neutral pronouns, you should attempt to use them as frequently as possible so that you can practice.
 - Be mindful that LGBTQIA+ people – especially trans, gender diverse, and nonbinary people – may use different names and pronouns in different circumstances. While someone might be open to having their preferred name used with trusted staff, they may also like their legal name to be used with relatives, members of their cultural community, or around other clients of the service to avoid being ‘outed’.
- **NEVER assume someone sexuality or gender identity** – If you are pronoun cueing, you are less likely to have to ask for someone to disclose their gender identity as they will most likely mirror your behaviour. However, if this does not happen, it is important not to assume someone’s gender identity or sexuality and instead politely ask where it is required.
 - You should really consider whether asking someone to disclose their gender identity or sexuality is essential for the work you need to do. Where this information is not essential to the work you are doing, there is no need to ask!
- **LGBTQIA+ representation & visibility** – Ensure that your workspace has LGBTQIA+ representation (e.g. Rainbow Flags, Binbeal Murrup Lanyard, Pronoun Badges). Consider signs that set the expectations of people (e.g. Homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia, and prejudice against or pathologizing of intersex people, are not tolerated.)
- **Person-centred approaches** –
 - Ask questions that are person-centred: nuanced enough to focus on individual needs and safety during intake, assessment, and care planning (not a one-size-fits-all approach), without being voyeuristic, pathologizing, jeopardising their wellbeing, and policing their presentation.
 - Understand that gender, sexual orientation, and the language a person uses to describe themselves can also change over time (National LGBTI Health Alliance 2013).
 - If you are unfamiliar with the language that someone is using to describe their identities and/ or experiences, then acknowledge this. Inform them that you are going to be taking some notes, and that you will do further research and secondary consultation to ensure you are more familiar with language and concepts in future session. Remember, it is not the responsibility of LGBTQIA+ individuals and communities to educate you. That is your responsibility.
- **Discrimination & Harassment** –
 - Be aware of relevant Commonwealth and State/ Territory legislation regarding discrimination and victimisation.
 - Explain to clients that reporting discrimination and harassment does not affect their position or access to VACCA services.
 - Include clear information on complaints pathways, ensure that complaints are taken seriously and managed appropriately, and support the complaints process.