TRANS HUB

HEALTH & GENDER AFFIRMATION IN NSW

10 trans questions to ask a doctor

The following questions may help you find a gender affirming doctor who is right for you. Ask as many, or as few, of these questions as you like.

A reception staff member, will generally take your call, and answer your questions. You can request to speak to or leave a message for a doctor if you would prefer.

You can also check their website to see if they include information on trans and gender diverse inclusion.

1. **Is there an inclusion or diversity policy, and does it explicitly include trans and gender diverse people?**

   Sometimes a clinic will have a general policy that may not specifically address trans patients and our needs. A policy that speaks explicitly about trans people is a good sign they have done some work and training to make their services more inclusive.

2. **Is there a policy specifically about supporting gender affirming healthcare?**

   It's a good idea to check if staff have supported someone to medically affirm their gender in the past and they know where to access peer and professional support when a patient seeks it.

3. **Have staff received trans awareness and inclusivity training, and is there ongoing training regarding the experiences and needs of trans patients?**

   Check that this training is part of the induction of new staff and existing staff get regular professional development (ACON Pride Training can assist with this).

4. **Do your intake forms have options for people whose gender isn't male or female?**

   This can help broach whether or not the clinic has thought about how trans people fit into their system, and may indicate that they will have trouble affirming you even if you are a binary gender.

   One way you can test this is to check if the forms you have to complete recognise your gender identity. For example, if they have gender identity options such as male/female/non-binary.

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5. **Can a recorded gender marker be changed in your system?**

   Although medical record systems aren't usually designed with the needs of the trans and gender diverse community in mind, keeping accurate and clear medical records, and ensuring there is flexibility for changes such as gender markers, names and pronouns, is an essential part of patient care.

6. **Do you have any way of noting or changing a person's pronouns in your system, and does this include the use of neutral pronouns, like 'they' and 'them'?**

   Many services use software that doesn't have a specific space for pronouns, and so might use the notes section instead.

7. **Do any other trans or gender diverse people access your service?**

   Knowing that other trans people attend isn't a guarantee that you will be supported but it may help. You needn't ask for details about individual clients.

8. **Do your GPs prescribe gender affirming hormone therapy to trans patients? Do they use the Informed Consent Model or require an approval letter from a Psychiatrist?**

   Some GPs will initiate (start) hormones, and others will only continue them. Some GPs use the Informed Consent Model, and others will require a letter from a Psych and/or Endocrinologist. Knowing what service the GP provides, and if they provide hormonal affirmation at all, can help you make a decision about the service.

9. **Is there an inclusive policy around employing staff from trans and gender diverse communities?**

   Having staff you can relate to and that understand your individual needs is important. Check if the service has a policy in place for positive inclusion of trans people within the staff group.

   Is there a code of conduct for staff and patients that states discrimination and harassment of trans patients will not be tolerated? Anti-discrimination law makes it unlawful for any service in NSW to discriminate against people on the grounds of their 'transgender status'. The Federal Sex Discrimination Act has also made 'gender identity' a protected attribute.

10. **Do you have brochures or other information from LGBTQ services available?**

    This might include brochures, posters, or information about services and events. This may also include linking you to specialist LGBTQ or trans health services, or mainstream services that are trans-affirming.

    For more information & resources, visit **www.transhub.org.au/finding-a-doctor**

TransHub is a digital platform for trans and gender diverse people in NSW, their loved ones, allies and health providers.

It is an initiative of ACON, NSW's leading health organisation specialising in community health, inclusion and HIV responses for people of diverse sexualities and genders.

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