

ECG FACTSHEET LGBTI GLOSSARY ¹



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GENERAL

Binary – In relation to sex and gender, binary refers to the traditional understanding of sex and gender as two distinct, opposite and disconnected forms of male/masculine and female/feminine.

LGBTI – An acronym for same sex attracted, transgender/gender diverse and intersex people. LGBTI is short for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex. It is important to recognise that this acronym does not cover all forms of sex, gender and sexuality diversity and is not intended to be limiting. Other terms such as LGB, LGBT, or LGBTIQ (the Q representing ‘Queer’) are commonly used.

SEX

Biological sex – An individual’s biological sex characteristics, which can be described as being female, male or intersex.

Intersex – A term for a broad range of congenital physical traits or variations that lie between stereotypical ideals of male and female. Intersex people are born with physical, hormonal or genetic features that are neither wholly female nor wholly male, or a combination of female and male. Being intersex does not pre-determine any particular gender identity. Although some intersex individuals identify their gender and legal sex as X, the majority of intersex people identify their gender as either M or F.

Legal sex – An individual’s legal sex according to documents such as their birth certificate, passport, Medicare record and other Territory or Commonwealth government documents. In a growing number of jurisdictions, including for people born in the ACT, an individual’s legal sex may be recorded as M, F or X. An individual’s legal sex may or may not reflect their biological sex or gender identity. For example, the vast majority of intersex people choose a legal sex that is accordance with a binary (M/F) gender identity. Many transgender people who reside, but were not born, in the ACT are unable to change their legal sex.

GENDER

Gender expression – The way in which a person externally expresses their gender, which may, or may not, align with their biological and/or legal sex.

Gender identity – An individual’s sense of identity, appearance, mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics. Individuals may identify themselves as male, female, both female and male, or neither female nor male.

Gender transition – A process undertaken by some transgender people to live in accordance with their gender identity. This may, or may not, include social aspects (e.g. changing the way they dress, their hairstyle, the pronouns they use to refer to themselves or prefer people to use when referring to them), legal aspects (e.g. changing their name or legal sex on documents), or medical aspects (hormonal or surgical procedures).

Transgender – An umbrella term used to refer to individuals whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs to their sex assigned at birth. Transgender individuals may identify as female, male, both or neither.

Transphobia – The fear and hatred of, or discomfort with, individuals who are transgender.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Asexual – An individual who does not experience sexual attraction.

Bisexual – An individual who is romantically, emotionally, physically and sexually attracted to more than one sex/gender.

Biphobic – The fear and hatred of, or discomfort with, individuals who are bisexual.

Gay – An individual who is romantically, emotionally, physically and sexually attracted to individuals of the same sex/gender. It is a term most commonly applied to men, but it is also applied to women, although less frequently.

Heterosexual – An individual who is romantically, emotionally, physically and sexually attracted to individuals of the opposite sex/gender.

Homophobia – The fear and hatred of, or discomfort with, homosexual and bisexual people.

Homosexual – An individual who is romantically, emotionally, physically and sexually to individuals the same sex/gender. Gay and/or lesbian are common terms used to described homosexual people.

Lesbian – A woman who is romantically, emotionally, physically and sexually attracted to other women.

Sexual Orientation – An individual’s sexual orientation towards persons of the same sex, persons of a different sex, persons of any sex, or persons of neither sex.



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¹ These definitions have been adapted from resources from the Australian Human Rights Commission and Pride and Diversity. The ECG also acknowledges the contribution that Transformation Solutions has made to the development of this glossary.