

Communicating Your Commitment to Trans Inclusion

Trans communities and healthcare institutions have a long, tumultuous, and traumatic history. For generations, healthcare systems have treated trans people as 'disordered' individuals who need to be 'cured' or 'fixed.' While social acceptance of trans people has grown in recent decades, those histories still influence health services and the relationship between trans communities and healthcare systems.

Historical and contemporary transphobia result in feelings of fear and uncertainty for trans people seeking access to community, health and social services. Given that trans communities have higher rates of poverty, homelessness and other health and socio-economic issues due to transphobia, access to inclusive health services is absolutely essential.

Demonstrating your commitment to trans inclusion is an opportunity to reduce trans people's fears and anxieties about accessing health services. While organizations must take steps to bolster their capacity to deliver trans-inclusive care, they must also communicate their commitment to trans inclusion with the public as a means of building trust with trans and gender diverse communities.

How to Communicate Your Commitment to Trans Inclusion

- 1) Publish a statement articulating your support for trans inclusion, and your organization's commitment to trans inclusion in every facet of your work. Within such a statement, be honest about your organization's current capacity to serve trans people, provide information on what steps you have taken to build your capacity, and include concrete next steps that your organization is taking to advance trans inclusion.
- 2) Communicate with your staff, board and volunteers: Take steps to make sure all employees within your organization understand your commitment to trans inclusion. Provide clear communication to staff and volunteers articulating your expectations of trans inclusion in every aspect of your work and ensure that staff members have access to necessary training and resources to put trans inclusion into action.

3) Participate in local, regional and national events and days of action: There are numerous opportunities year-round for your organization to be present at local events, and to mark important annual events relevant to trans communities.

Examples include: Trans Day of Remembrance, every year on November 20th, Trans Day of Visibility, every year on March 31st, Pride Season - local pride events traditionally take place between June and August every year and the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, every year on May 17th.

4) Share relevant resources and information about trans-inclusive services: Your organization can share resources on trans inclusion, trans health, and trans rights on your social media and website. You can also identify and promote local resources that are specific to trans and 2SLGBTQ+ communities. For resources to share, you can connect with local 2SLGBTQ+ and trans organizations or share resources from provincial or national organizations. Some great places to start include Trans Care BC, Rainbow Health Ontario, The Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity or Egale Canada.