



Implementation Guide for Inclusive Pharmacy Practice

Practical Guide for Pharmacy Managers and Staff

Actionable strategies you can implement today as a pharmacist to improve the health of trans and gender-diverse people

CREATE A MORE INCLUSIVE SPACE

Use positive space signage throughout the pharmacy and inclusive language for OTC sections

Representation Matters

Signage allows the 2SLGBTQI+ community to be seen and acknowledged. This must be done meaningfully and not performatively. That means that if symbols welcoming trans and gender-diverse people are displayed, you will also need to ensure that their needs can be met (see all other actions, if implemented).



Casey, would you feel more comfortable speaking in private?



There are many ways to do so:

- Put up the poster created by CPhA (available from: pharmacists.ca/safespace)
- Wear pins that signal that trans and gender-diverse clients are welcome
- Wear 2SLGBTQI+/trans pins on your coat
- Display a sticker in the street-facing windows, e.g., a pride flag
- Change OTC section labels from Women's Health, for example, to gender-neutral wording like Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Display resources specifically addressing the needs of trans and gender-diverse clients*

* To find resources for your pharmacy, visit pharmacists.ca/SRH-TGD



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Use pronouns on pharmacy name tags

If the pharmacy name tags include pronouns, trans and gender-diverse clients will feel encouraged to share theirs, too. With this very simple, low-cost action, you can signal very easily that your pharmacy welcomes trans and gender-diverse clients. Pronouns on name tags normalize asking each other for our pronouns and help avoid making assumptions about others.

Offer health information specific to trans and gender-diverse people and stock required medications, supplies and transition-related gear

Making specific resources available to trans and gender-diverse people that actually address their needs is a great way to make people comfortable coming to you with their questions. You can find some patient handouts on CPhA's website.*

By having medications and supplies in stock that trans and gender-diverse clients regularly use (e.g., testosterone injections, appropriate syringes and needle tips), they will feel better supported. Staff should be knowledgeable about what syringes and needle tips to suggest. Ideally, keep a list of specialty pharmacies where you can order compounded medications (e.g., IM estrogen).



Another great way to signal that your pharmacy is a more inclusive place is to stock transition-related items, e.g., binders, tucking material, binding tape, wound care for surgeries, etc. To learn more about gender-affirming gear, see the **Pharmacist Essentials for Gender-Affirming Gear Counselling** learning module on the [CPhA Learning](#) platform.



Provide gender-neutral washrooms for both staff and clients, if applicable

Gender-neutral washrooms are an easy way to signal that everyone is welcome. Your pharmacy might be one of the rare public places in which a trans client will feel safe or be able to relieve themselves when running errands. This applies to washrooms for staff and clients alike.

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FOSTER MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION

Ask for, use and respect chosen names in verbal and written communications as well as on patient-facing labels and receipts

It is of utmost importance to use the correct name when addressing trans and gender-diverse clients. Chosen names should be documented and used at all times. This avoids repeating harm that many trans and gender-diverse people face every day.

Inclusive intake forms can help with asking for chosen names (see below and CPhA's **Intake Form***).

A chosen name (if different from the legal name) should be documented in your software in a **nonjudgmental way**. There are many creative ways to display someone's chosen name on labels and receipts and to claim insurance without using someone's "dead name" (see **Inclusive Data Management in Pharmacy***).



Ask for, use and respect pronouns in verbal and written communications

Pronoun Normalization

As discussed above, if the pharmacy team provides their own pronouns on name tags, trans and gender-diverse clients will feel encouraged to share theirs, too. It is equally important to ask for someone's pronouns directly in a nonjudgmental and open manner. With this very simple action, you can signal very easily that your pharmacy welcomes trans and gender-diverse clients. The pharmacy has an enormous opportunity to normalize asking each other for our pronouns and avoiding making assumptions.

Using a client's pronouns has the potential to create gender euphoria and makes it more likely that they will come back to get services in your pharmacy. It is also just a **basic human right and basic human decency**.

Many pronouns exist, and some are less frequently used. Make sure that your team is aware of the pronouns that exist, how they are used and the fact that people might change them.

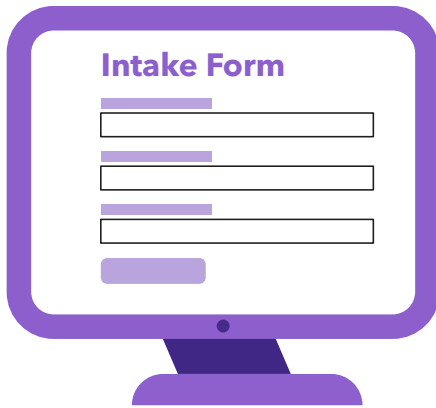
Pronouns should be documented in the inclusive intake form and transcribed into your pharmacy software, either in the existing dedicated space or as a pop-up message or blank notes field (see **Inclusive Data Management in Pharmacy***).

Age	29 years	▼
Language	English	▼
Sex	Female	▼
Gender		▼
Pronouns		▼
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> co/co/cos en/en/ens ey/em/eir he/him/his she/her/hers they/them/their ve/vis/ver xie/hir/hir yo/yo/yos ze/zir/zir 		

*** To find resources for your pharmacy, visit pharmacists.ca/SRH-TGD**



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Implement inclusive intake forms

Using inclusive intake forms is less confronting than directly asking for names, pronouns and gender identity. They provide the person with the power to disclose what they wish. In normalizing the collection of this data, it also serves as an educational opportunity for others (see CPhA's **Intake Form***).

Use gender-neutral language whenever possible

Neutral, polite greetings make all the difference in welcoming someone at the cash or reception (e.g., *Hello, how can I help you?* instead of *Hello Sir*). Using neutral language like **partner, spouse**, as well as **person, client, patient, people, everyone, child** without Mr./Ms./Mrs., husband, wife, son, daughter, etc. will avoid mistakes. Whenever possible, it is best not to make assumptions about someone's gender identity.



Hi, my name is Eli. How can I help you?

Ensure respect and privacy for sensitive matters

Value Discretion

Some clients may associate certain medications with stigma, and some prefer to discuss certain topics in a private space. Providing clients with the choice of using consultation rooms ensures that their privacy is respected. Some clients might only disclose important and valuable information when they are alone in a closed room with a pharmacist they trust. Make sure to ask only questions that are necessary to provide the care they need at that time. Some questions are or may be intrusive and it is best to obtain consent from the client beforehand, if the questions are absolutely needed. For instance, to dispense spironolactone for a trans woman, questions about future or past surgeries are unquestionably inappropriate. Avoid assumptions about someone's anatomy based on their gender expression.



* To find resources for your pharmacy, visit pharmacists.ca/SRH-TGD



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BUILD A SUPPORTIVE TEAM

Provide diversity training for all staff

Investing in education for all staff, including cashiers, clerks, floor staff, supervisors, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, will benefit every client. Everyone at the pharmacy plays a critical role in a client's experience: a patient's experience starts upon entering the pharmacy and ends upon leaving. Investing in education for all staff may decrease negative experiences and increase the likelihood that trans and gender-diverse clients will come back to your pharmacy. CPhA has developed some resources (see below). Many different providers, including community organizations, offer inclusivity training for workplaces.

Check Out Our Resources:

Read the **Guide to 2SLGBTQI+-friendly Language** (available from: www.pharmacists.ca/cpha-ca/assets/File/education-practice-resources/SmashingStigma_languageguide.pdf)

Watch the **Inclusivity Training for All Pharmacy Staff*** video

Enhance your knowledge in the care of trans and gender-diverse people

To provide the best patient care for trans and gender-diverse clients, your team must have the appropriate knowledge and education.

Some key points to know:

- Goals of therapy for gender-affirming care may differ among patients
- Community stereotypes exist
- The overall health of TGD people depends on the critical intersection of physical, mental and social well-being
- Gender expression may differ from gender identity

Continuing Education for Pharmacists

Topics pharmacists should focus on if they would like to enhance their knowledge:

- Feminizing hormone therapy - estrogen and anti-androgens*
- Masculinizing hormone therapy - testosterone*
- Administration techniques for hormone therapy (see www.transcarebc.ca/hormone-therapy/injecting-hormones)
- Administration supplies for hormone therapy (see www.transcarebc.ca/sites/default/files/2024-03/Hormone_Injection_Supplies_Toolkit.pdf)

You can also watch this **Practicing with PRIDE** video (available from:

www.pharmacists.ca/news-events/news/new-resource-practicing-with-pride-top-10-actionable-strategies-to-improve-2slgbtqia-health-in-pharmacy/).

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Reducing Bias and Cis- (and Hetero-)normativity in Daily Interactions and Patient Care Here are a few practical suggestions:

- Critical review of procedures
- Inclusive approach to contraception practices
- Caution when using sex-based calculations
- Recognition of diverse relationship types
- Provide sexual health care
- Provide partner and family support

Create inclusive hiring policies

Making sure that your team itself is diverse can help provide the best patient care. Because representation matters, clients whose reality is reflected in the place they're getting their health care from will be more likely to come back. Unfortunately, this isn't something that works overnight or just magically. Many HR departments provide inclusivity training for managers. You can also reach out to an external firm to coach you on how to decrease biases during the hiring process.

FURTHER STEPS FOR BECOMING AN INCLUSIVE PHARMACY FOR TRANS AND GENDER-DIVERSE PEOPLE

Advocate for changes in your pharmacy software to better reflect the diversity of 2SLGBTQI+ clients

If your software doesn't provide adequate features to document a client's chosen name or pronouns, it will have a big impact if you contact your software provider so they can make changes for the better. Many voices help to make greater change. Repeatedly advocating for inclusive data management options, including printing labels and receipts, will eventually be effective and will make your trans and gender-diverse clients feel seen and well cared for.



Implement and post a nondiscrimination policy

Showing publicly that there is no space for discrimination in your pharmacy and that offensive behaviour won't be tolerated, in combination with following through, is an important step for ensuring everyone's safety and well-being at your pharmacy. HR departments as well as external providers offer training and support for drafting such a document and implementing it.



Intervene when offensive behaviour is witnessed

Speaking up when you notice offensive behaviour is crucial for the person who is attacked or harmed. They need your support. When someone like a pharmacist or pharmacy technician defends them, they build trust and feel better cared for. Speaking up can also simply mean correcting someone's pronouns when you hear them being misgendered by a coworker.

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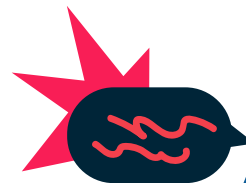
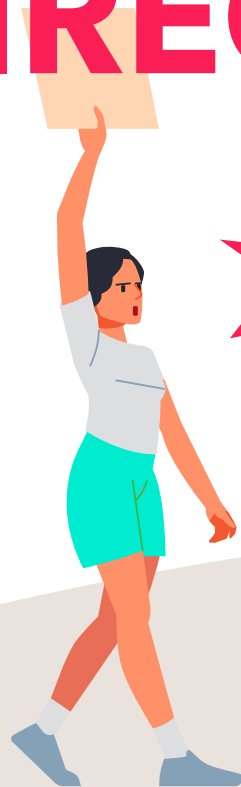
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RIGHT TO BE **DIRECT**



SAY: That's inappropriate! Leave them alone!

Assess your safety first. Speak up about the harrassment. Be firm and clear.



Be an advocate and build community partnerships

Be an advocate (not just an ally). There are many community organizations that you could partner with, donate to and contact in order to work on a project together. See **Resources for Pharmacists Supporting Trans and Gender-Diverse Inclusivity and Care*** to see which organizations are active in your area.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

See **Resources for Pharmacists Supporting Trans and Gender-Diverse Inclusivity and Care.***

- Be empathetic
- Be critical
- Be reflective
- Be open to change

(Inspired by

www.pharmacists.ca/cpha-ca/assets/File/education-practice-resources/SmashingStigma_10Actions.pdf and

<https://ocpinfo.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/supporting-gender-diversity-providing-affirming-care-infographic.pdf>)

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