

Briefing Sheet: Trans Status Monitoring

LGBT Foundation supports monitoring trans* status as there is a significant lack of evidence about the needs and experiences of trans people. We believe that monitoring, sensitively implemented, is a clear way to address that lack of evidence and make our needs and experiences heard. Not counting trans people as part of wider equalities monitoring suggests that trans people's needs don't count, and we want to contest that.

Trans status monitoring is important because it enables health and social care bodies to better understand the needs of the local population and to target services more effectively and efficiently. It is also important because, by law, all public bodies must consider how they treat trans people fairly and equally to protect them from prejudice and discrimination (see the Equality Act 2010's public sector equality duty).

LGBT Foundation encourages government, statutory bodies and voluntary and community sector organisations to monitor trans status. This briefing sheet outlines the benefits of monitoring, some considerations for implementation, and sets out a best practice question and answer format.

Benefits for the organisation of monitoring trans status:

- It can highlight inequalities between different groups.
- It is better able to identify issues that affect trans people.
- A better understanding of the potential barriers to services.
- It is better able to provide appropriate and tailored services, and to improve existing services.
- It is easier to monitor incidents of discrimination and prevent them from happening.
- It is better able to measure performance and make changes and improvements to tackle problems.
- Recognising diversity maximises an organisation's investment in its workforce.
- Making the effort to understand staff leads to higher levels of staff satisfaction, higher productivity, and increased employee retention.

Benefits for individual service users and staff:

- Ensuring equality of access to services.
- Improved services that are more specific to service users needs.
- Ensuring equality of access and opportunity at work.
- Creating a culture of inclusivity and openness with the service provider and employer.
- Building up this confidence will lead to increased openness and recording elsewhere.

*Trans is an umbrella and inclusive term used to describe people whose gender identity differs in some way from that which they were assigned at birth; including non-binary people, cross dressers and those who partially or incompletely identify with their sex assigned at birth.

Our recommended question and answer format for monitoring trans status has been agreed as best practice by LGBT Foundation, CliniQ and Action for Trans Health with input from trans communities and the National LGB&T Partnership. This format will be implemented by Public Health England and the Health and Social Care Information Centre in future data collections.

Q1 Gender identity

Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

1. Woman (including trans woman)
2. Man (including trans man)
3. Non-binary
4. In another way
- Z. Not stated (PERSON asked but declined to provide a response)
- X. Not known (not recorded)

Q2 Trans status

Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were given at birth?

1. Yes
2. No
- Z. Not stated (PERSON asked but declined to provide a response)
- X. Not known (not recorded)

A few things to remember when implementing trans status monitoring:

- If at first response rates are low - don't be discouraged. It takes time to embed successful trans status monitoring and build up a culture of openness.
- It is important to find the appropriate time to monitor trans status and repeat it on several occasions – people may not disclose at first but may feel more comfortable later on.
- To be successful, monitoring needs political will from those at the top of an organisation with the drive to make changes to operational systems if necessary.
- You will be collecting sensitive information so having a clear and comprehensive confidentiality policy is essential.
- Staff and service users have to understand why trans status information is being collected, how it will be analysed, what the information will be used for and how it will be safeguarded.
- Trans status shouldn't be treated as a special subject. This means asking it at the same time as questions about other protected characteristics, and asking it of the same people.
- Use your data to improve outcomes for staff and service users – develop targets, plan interventions, and use it as evidence in commissioning services.

For further information on monitoring trans status or sexual orientation, please contact research@lgbt.foundation