

Best Practices for Communicating with Transgender Clients Cheat Sheet

Best Practices	Examples
When addressing patients, avoid using gender-specific terms like “sir” or “ma’am.”	“How may I help you today?”
When talking about patients, avoid pronouns or other gender-specific terms . If you have a record of the name used by the client, use it in place of pronouns.	“Your client is here in the waiting room.” “Max is here for a 10 o’clock appointment.”
Politely ask if you are unsure about a patient’s name or pronouns used	“What name do you go by, and what are your pronouns?” “I would like to be respectful—how would you like to be addressed?”
Ask respectfully about names if they do not match in your records.	“Could your chart be under another name?” “What is the name on your identification?”
Did you make a mistake? Politely apologize .	“I apologize for using the wrong pronoun— I didn’t mean to disrespect you.”
Only ask information that is necessary for providing care .	Ask yourself: <i>What do I know?</i> <i>What do I need to know?</i> <i>How can I ask in a sensitive way?</i>

Adapted from: Affirmative Services for Transgender and Gender-Diverse People--Best Practices for Frontline Health Care Staff. National LGBT Health Education Center, 2020