Transgender-inclusive Reproductive and Sexual Health for Transgender People Living with HIV

Provider Update:
HIV & Safer Conception

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Learning Objectives

1. Define the terms and terminology transgender and non-binary people use to describe their gender

2. Increase awareness to the unique sexual health and reproductive needs of transgender and gender non-binary people living with HIV

3. Identify strategies to improve trans-inclusive sexual health and reproductive services for transgender and gender non-binary people
Our mission is to increase access to comprehensive, effective, and affirming healthcare services for transgender and gender non-binary communities.
Current Center of Excellence for Transgender Health (CoE) Projects

- Capacity Building Assistance Project
- Sheroes Community-Based Research Projects
- Transgender Evaluation and Technical Assistance Center (TETAC)
- UCSF Trans Clinical Services
- National Transgender HIV Testing Day, April 18th
- National Transgender Health Summit
CoE’s Capacity Building Assistance Program

- High-Impact HIV Prevention with CBOs
- Transgender health content expert
- Partnerships
  - UCSF Center for AIDS Prevention Studies (CAPS)
  - Alliance Health Project

http://transhealth.ucsf.edu/
Identities and Definitions “refresh”
Gender Identity

A person’s internal, personal sense of being a man or a woman (or as someone outside of that gender binary).

For transgender people, the sex they were assigned at birth and their own internal gender identity do not match.
Key Terms

**Gender Identity:**
Internal sense of gender.

**Gender Expression:**
Outward expression of gender through gestures, behaviors, dress, etc.
People are assigned one of two sexes at birth (or shortly after birth)

1. Male
2. Female
Transgender

An umbrella term used to describe people whose gender or gender expression is different than the sex they were assigned at birth.
Sexual Orientation

Includes:

• Romantic
• Emotional
• Physical attraction

Does NOT include gender identity or gender expression
Common Terms and Identities

- Genderqueer
- Grrl
- Transsexual
- MTF
- Crossdresser
- Two-Spirit
- Non-binary
- Transman
- Man/Male
- Gender Fluid
- FTM
- Boi
- Transwoman
- Gender Non-conforming
- Woman/Female
- Transgender
- Androgynous
- Femme Queen
Core Concepts Review

- Sex assigned at birth
- Gender identity
- Gender expression
- Sexual orientation
What about names & pronouns?

• Why are **names** important?
  • Legal name
  • Preferred name

• Why are **pronouns** important?
  • I don’t know which pronoun to use?!
Burden of HIV among Trans People

• United States – 22%¹
  ▪ Odds ratio of HIV infection is **49 times** greater when compared to adults of reproductive age

• Trans Women of Color significantly higher rate²
  ▪ African American - 56.3%
  ▪ White – 16.7%
  ▪ Latina – 16.1%

• Trans men appear to have lower burden²
  ▪ 0 % to 3%

In comparison to the general U.S. population,

- Transgender people are **four times more likely** to live in poverty
- **30%** of respondents have experienced homelessness in their lifetime
- Among those who saw a health care provider in the past year, **33%** reported having **at least one negative experience related to being transgender**
- **Nearly half (46%)** were **verbally harassed** in the past year because of being transgender

*Statistics: 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey (N = 27,715)*

Transgender people are disproportionately affected by...

- HIV/AIDS
- Discrimination in health care
- Suicide
- Unemployment
- Violence and harassment (verbal and physical)
Trans Women and Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)

- Low levels of awareness, even in areas with stronger medical and social supports (Sevelius et al., 2016, Journal of International AIDS Society)
- No trans-specific guidance for implementation (WHO, CDC)
- Low levels of enrollment and retention in demonstration projects (Liu et al., 2016, JAMA)
- Rarely included in observational studies, rarely disaggregated
- Of the existing clinical trials, iPrEx is the only one with confirmed enrollment of trans women
Trans Research Informed Communities United in Mobilization for the Prevention of HIV

- First PrEP demonstration project initiative to focus on trans communities
- Funded by California HIV/AIDS Research Program (CHRP) (PI: Sevelius)
- Model of Gender Affirmation as conceptual framework, utilizes community mobilization strategies
- Clinical sites
  - La Clinica de la Raza, Oakland
  - Gender Health Center, Sacramento
Trans-Inclusive Reproductive Health
Positively Trans: Octavia
“A Message to Ethan”

https://youtu.be/o3mVi7ILsqk
**Thinking about having a baby?**

**TRANS Men LIVING WITH HIV**

**POSSIBLE ROLES AND FAMILY CONSTELLATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gestational Carrier</td>
<td>Carrying a pregnancy that is biologically connected to you (your eggs). This is done through home insemination, or assisted reproductive technologies and carried to term by you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gestational Carrier with Donor Egg</td>
<td>A pregnancy without genetic connection to you (not your eggs). The pregnancy is established by transferring an embryo (fertilized egg) created by in vitro fertilization (IVF) from an egg donor into your uterus. The egg donor may be a friend, relative, or partner or anonymous donor. The egg donor may or may not be a co-parent – depending on the decisions made by all involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gestational Surrogacy</td>
<td>The embryo is created by an egg donor who is not the surrogate (person who carries the pregnancy). This process is carried out via in vitro fertilization (IVF). The resulting child is not genetically related to the surrogate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Surrogacy</td>
<td>A surrogate gets pregnant with their own egg via intravaginal insemination (IVI) or intracervical insemination (ICI) - both of which can often be done at home. Another option is intrauterine insemination (IUI), which can be done in a clinic with a midwife or obstetrician, or at home with a midwife. The surrogate is not an intended co-parent &amp; traditionally does not have any parenting rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption</td>
<td>Forms of adoption include adopting from foster care, adoption within the U.S. through a private agency, and adopting from abroad through private organizations and international government entities. People living with HIV are not allowed to be denied the option of adoption. Single parents, trans people and PLWH may face stigma in their family building journey, depending on where you live. You may need to seek legal assistance and connect with local adoptive parent support groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fertility Preservation</td>
<td>You may choose to freeze your eggs. You can consult with a reproductive endocrinologist or sperm bank about the medical process and costs. Whether the person providing sperm is your partner, friend or a known donor, you may want to test, collect, wash and freeze the sperm you are using for conception as well.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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https://hiveonline.org/for-you/fertility/
Thinking about having a baby?

**TRANS Women LIVING WITH HIV**

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<td><strong>Genetic parent with a co-parent who is also a genetic parent</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Gestational Surrogacy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Traditional Surrogacy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sperm Donor:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Adoption</strong></td>
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https://hiveonline.org/for-you/fertility/
GET YOUR IMMUNIZATIONS UP-TO-DATE
Vaccinations are important before pregnancy, especially if you have a chronic condition like Hepatitis C or HIV.

KNOW YOUR STATUS
Get tested and treated for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) before beginning any fertility treatments or conception process. Many STIs can be present without symptoms. STIs such as syphilis, gonorrhea and chlamydia can be dangerous to you and the baby during pregnancy, and some can cause miscarriages or birth defects. It is important that you and your sexual partner(s) are screened and treated prior to pregnancy.
MINIMIZING HIV TRANSMISSION RISK AND OPTIMIZING HEALTH

**TasP**
TREATMENT AS PREVENTION
With an undetectable viral load, it is nearly impossible to pass HIV. It is important to monitor viral load regularly.

**PrEP**
PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS
If you are living with HIV and the person planning on becoming pregnant and carrying the baby is HIV negative, they may use PrEP to greatly reduce the risk of acquiring HIV. PrEP is a once-a-day pill taken to prevent HIV. PrEP is over 90% effective if taken daily.

**Sperm Washing**
Sperm washing separates the sperm from seminal fluid (which contains HIV). Washed sperm can be inseminated via IUI or can be used to create embryos via IVF.

https://hiveonline.org/for-you/fertility/
Barriers to Care

- Cost
- Insurance
- Transition-related exclusions
- Medical workforce ill-prepared
- Shortage of knowledgeable providers

Improving Care for Transgender People
Conducting Health Assessments with Transgender People

**Things to keep in mind...**
- Don’t make assumptions
- Avoid invasive questions
- Use inclusive language
- Trauma informed care
- **Ask about reproductive desires**

**5 P’s**
- Partners
- Prevention of pregnancy
- Practices
- Prevention
- Past history
How to treat a transgender person with respect?

• You don't know what pronouns to use, ask
• Don't make assumptions about a transgender person's sexual orientation
• Be careful about confidentiality, disclosure, and "outing”
• Be patient with a person who is questioning or exploring their gender identity
• Respect the terminology a transgender person uses to describe their identity
• Understand there is no "right" or "wrong" way to transition - and that it is different for every person
• Avoid backhanded compliments
  • “You’re so brave.”
  • “I would have never known!”
Do Not, Do Not, Do Not…

• ask a transgender person what their "real name" is

or

• ask about a person’s genitals or surgical status

or

• ask how a transgender person has sex
Special Considerations for Routine Health Examinations

- Gender affirming
- Relevant to present anatomy
- Prior negative experiences
- Genital exams
- Discuss procedures
How can you be an ally?

- Challenge anti-transgender remarks or jokes with colleagues and program participants
- Advocate for transgender inclusive polices in your organization
- Set a transgender-inclusive tone in meetings and events
- Listen to transgender people
- Know your limits as an ally
Resources

UCSF Center of Excellence for Transgender Health Website
http://www.transhealth.ucsf.edu/

Acknowledging Gender and Sex Online Course
http://transhealth.ucsf.edu/video/story.html

Thinking about having a baby? A guide for trans women living with HIV

Thinking about having a baby? A guide for trans men living with HIV

Queering Reproductive Justice: A Toolkit
Questions?