

“What do trans and gender diverse people think about sexual health services?”

Findings from: [Inclusive sexual health service \(SHS\) for trans and gender diverse people](https://sti.bmj.com/content/101/5/287)
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What was the study about?

Trans and gender diverse people* are likely to have greater sexual health needs and to experience poorer sexual health than cis people*. They are also less likely to access sexual health services and are more likely to report negative experiences when they do attend. To help address this, we want to find ways to improve access to sexual health services for trans and gender diverse people.

Why is this important?

Sexual health services should be open and welcoming to all. So it is important that trans and gender diverse people can access sexual health services and have positive experiences when they do attend. If we know what trans and gender diverse people think about sexual health services, then we can find ways to improve access and to make sure that sexual health services are inclusive.

What did we do?

We spoke to a range of trans and gender diverse people to ask about their experiences of sexual health services and inclusivity. This included both one-to-one and group discussions.

Key findings

- The people that we spoke to often felt that sexual health services were not set up for them, based on their experiences with other health services and lack of information on NHS websites.
- Simple things, like having a range of gender options on registration forms or displaying a trans pride flag, can help services show trans and gender diverse people that they are supported.
- Staff being kind and not making assumptions was key to making sexual health services inclusive.

What do these findings mean?

The things trans and gender diverse people are looking for from sexual health services are often already provided by them, but services need to build trust. They can do this by clearly showing that they support trans and gender diverse people, and by making sure all staff are aware of how to meet their needs.

* Transgender (or trans) is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth. Cisgender (or cis) refers to people whose gender identity

matches their sex assigned at birth. Gender diversity refers to the extent to which someone's gender identity, role or expression differs from the cultural norms prescribed for a particular sex.