Clinical Toolkit

Clinical Tips: Sexuality Diversity

Sexuality refers to a broad spectrum of feelings of romantic or sexual attraction. Sexuality is distinct from gender [see Gender Diversity]. Sexuality diversity refers to the diversity that exists in the spectrums of sexuality. See the Genderbread Person for another resource on sex, sexuality and gender.

'Sexuality diverse' is an imperfect and broad term used to describe people who are asexual, same-sex attracted or attracted to more than one sex. Young people having these experiences may identify with labels such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual (i.e. being attracted to people of all genders), asexual (i.e. not experiencing/rarely experiencing sexual attraction), queer (this term can reflect a range of sexual and gender identities) and those who are unsure (i.e. questioning). Conversely, they may not identify with any of these labels.

Sexual identity is different to gender identity [see Gender Diversity] (i.e. our sense of our self when it comes to being male, female, non-binary, masculine or feminine). Some young people who identify as sexuality diverse also identify as gender diverse (e.g. transgender, intersex or genderqueer).

A headspace guide exist for working safely and inclusively with sexuality diverse young people.

Clinicians should avoid making assumptions about gender identity and sexual orientation:

- When appropriate, sensitively ask a young person their sexual orientation / gender identity.

- Avoid 'heteronormative' language (in consultations and on intake forms, health records, etc), and ensure that reception and clinical staff do the same.

- Acknowledge the role of the same-sex partner and/or chosen family in the individual's life.

- Provide ongoing support to enhance health service access for those who identify as LGBT+.

- Recognize their own cultural lens and biases, which could damage the therapeutic relationship and negatively impact care for the young transgender person, noting that it may be preferable for some clinicians to refer to LGBT+ sensitive referral networks and resources.

More information can be found at:

- It's pronounced Metrosexual (including a graphical depiction of gender and sexuality: The Genderbread Person)

- Reachout – Understanding Your Sexuality

- Minus 18

- ygender.org.au

- genderqueer.org.au

- trans101.org.au