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INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

IF YOU ARE USING:	REPLACE WITH:
Women	Women and birthing people (or just birthing people)
Mothers/ mums	Birthing mothers/ mums and birthing people/ parents (or just birthing people/ parents) (not all mothers/ mums will be the birthing parent)
Maternal/ maternity	Reproductive, parental or perinatal
Breastfeeding	Breastfeeding and chestfeeding
Breast milk	Parent's milk, breast and chest milk or human milk
Women's healthcare	Reproductive or gynaecological healthcare (or specific scientific names eg uterine healthcare)
Women's health/ 'issues'	Menstrual, reproductive or gynaecological health/ 'issues' (try to avoid negative connotation terms like issues)
Mother/ Mum and Father/ Dad	Parents, caregivers or families
Father/ Dad	Co-parent or non-birthing parent (some fathers/dads may be the birthing parent so would fall under the inclusive birthing parent term)
She/ her/ hers (gendering of birthing/ reproductive pronouns)	They/ their/ theirs (ungendered of birthing/ reproductive pronouns)
LGBT or gay and lesbian	LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, agender and asexual and the plus is inclusive of more)
Female sex/gender or assigned sex/gender at birth	This is usually not needed to specify if you are using 'birthing people' or other inclusive language. Avoid using.

Including LGBTQIA+ People:

Sexuality and Gender

When talking about LGBTQIA+ parents and families we are not just referring to lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual or relationship/ sexuality queer parents and families. We are also talking about transgender, agender, non-binary, genderless and gender queer parents and families. And also including intersex parents and families.

Quick LGBTQIA+ glossary:

These are a basic and non-exhaustive description. Identity, sexuality and gender are very personal and all experiences of them should be respected.

- **L: Lesbian.**
Cisgender, transgender and intersex women and female aligned people who are attracted to other cisgender, transgender and intersex women and female aligned people.
- **G: Gay**
Cisgender, transgender and intersex men and male aligned people who are attracted to other cisgender, transgender and intersex men and male aligned people.
- **B: Bisexual**
People of any gender or non-gender who are attracted to more than just the 'opposite gender'. Some people see pansexual as under the bisexual umbrella.
- **T: Transgender/ Trans Umbrella**
See section below
- **Q: Queer**
An umbrella term for people who are gender and/or sexuality queer/ part of LGBTQIA+. This is a reclaimed slur so do not use to describe someone without permission.
- **I: Intersex**
See section below
- **A: Asexual and Agender**
Asexuality is the lack of sexual attraction to others, or low or absent interest in or desire for sexual activity. Asexual people may or may not experience romantic feelings. Agender is a term for people who don't have a gender, can be seen as similar or the same as being genderless, non-binary, non-gendered or gender neutral. Some people see agender as part of the transgender umbrella.
- **+: For all others included under the LGBTQIA+ umbrella** including culturally specific genders and non-genders, people who are pansexual, gender fluid, demi-gender, demi- sexual and more. I will not explain what all these terms mean in this glossary as using LGBTQIA+ is generally seen as inclusive enough.

We will not be using most of these terms individually, instead we will be talking about people as wide groups, so as much as possible we should aim to use gender neutral and relationship/ sexuality neutral language when speaking about birthing people, families,

relationships and in person centred conversations. This allows all people to see themselves within the conversations we have, rather than us excluding people who should be included. Inclusive language may take a bit of getting used to and initially challenge or intimidate, but it isn't taking away from anyone's experience, in fact it is the opposite and will allow us to include and represent ourselves and people who are also often excluded.

What is cisgender/ cis?

Cisgender is a neutral descriptor for someone whose gender is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. You can be cisgender and heterosexual (straight) or cisgender and lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual or relationship/ sexuality queer.

So because of this, cisgender people can be a part of the LGBTQIA+ community if they are relationship/ sexuality queer but they are not represented in the letters as a gender because cisgender people can also be heterosexual and so would be relationship/ sexuality straight.

What is heterosexual?

Being heterosexual or as its commonly known as straight, is when you are dating a person who is of the 'opposite gender' to yourself.

Heterosexual isn't under the LGBTQIA+ umbrella as it's own letter because heterosexual, along with cisgender, are society's 'norms'.

But people who are binary transgender eg transgender women or transgender men can also be heterosexual if they are only dating people of the 'opposite gender'.

It's important to understand that making the effort to be inclusive of LGBTQIA+ people is not taking anything away from heterosexual and/or cisgender people. But when society is set up to only include and represent heterosexual and cisgender people, especially in reproductive healthcare and the nuclear family image, it's so important that our advocacy, support and activism includes LGBTQIA+ people and other marginalised people, especially Black LGBTQIA+ people who receive the most violence and abuse by the state, medical and healthcare institutions and are often left out and ignored.

What is transgender/ trans/ the trans umbrella?

Transgender is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth.

The trans umbrella includes (but is not limited to) transgender, gender queer (GQ), genderfluid, non-binary, gender-variant, genderless, agender, nongender, third gender, bi-gender, trans man, trans woman, trans masculine, trans feminine and neutrois. Some gender queer people or people listed above may not wish to identify under the trans umbrella however.

The currently recognised correct terminology to use if you are not transgender or gender queer is that its always best to use LGBTQIA+ if you are talking about the gender queer and relationship/ sexuality queer community as a whole. Use transgender or trans umbrella if you are speaking directly about transgender people.

Being transgender does not necessarily imply anything regarding one's ability to reproduce. Do not assume things about people or their gender or non-gender or sexuality based on the way that they look.

Transgender people can be in a heterosexual relationship or in a relationship queer relationship and are included within the LGBTQIA+ umbrella under 'T'.

What is intersex?

Intersex is an umbrella term for people who's sex characteristics or biological characteristics don't meet medical or social norms. Intersex is a diverse umbrella term and should not be limited to the characteristics outlined here. The working definition is constantly evolving.

Sex characteristics are physical features relating to sex, including chromosomes, genitals, gonads, hormones, and other reproductive anatomy, and secondary features that emerge from puberty.

Being intersex does not necessarily imply anything regarding one's gender or non-gender, anatomy, hormones, relationship orientation/ sexuality or the ability to reproduce. Do not assume things about people or their gender or sexuality.

The term for non-intersex is endosex.

Including Disabled People:

We should aim to include disabled people within our event. We make simple efforts towards this such:

- Live captioning on all live videos
- Closed captioning on all uploaded videos
- Preferably open captions on all uploaded videos if possible as they are more accurate if written by the person uploading the captions
- Written transcripts of videos, podcasts or anything spoken
- Image descriptions added to all images
- Use accessible colours and colour theory to ensure websites/ infographics/ etc can be seen by all
- To speak positively about disability and include and consider disability within suggestions or advice giving
- To not use 'miracle cure' or person/ health/ wellness blaming language or suggestions
- Disability can be visible or 'invisible' so to not assume anything about anyone else

According to the [2018 Papworth Trust figures](#) one in four Black adults have a disability.

More is included within the inclusive event checklist below.

Including All Families:

We should aim to be family dynamic neutral as much as possible. Not all families are nuclear families and we should be inclusive of as many family dynamics as possible. Being neutral within our language allows people to see themselves within the conversations we have, rather than us excluding people who should be included.

Examples of family dynamics can be:

- Birthing parent and non-birthing parent
- Multiple birthing parents
- Adoptive parents
- Single parents
- Heterosexual and cisgender parents
- Relationship queer parents
- Gender queer parents
- Co-parents
- Biologically related but non-birthing parents eg grandparents or siblings of birthing parent
- Surrogates
- Birthing people who have experienced baby or child loss

This is a non-exhaustive list.

Additional information:

NHS Trust Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals

Gender Inclusive Language in Perinatal Services PDF

<https://www.bsuh.nhs.uk/maternity/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2021/01/Gender-inclusive-language-in-perinatal-services.pdf>

NHS

Inclusive Language Guide

<https://service-manual.nhs.uk/content/inclusive-language>

Manhattan Alternative

Gender Inclusive Terms for Sexual Health, Pregnancy and Birth

<https://www.manhattanalternative.com/gender-inclusive-terms-for-sexual-health-pregnancy-and-birth/>

Queer Birth Club (UK)

LGBT+ Competency In Birth and Beyond Course

<https://queerbirthclub.co.uk/#Workshop>

ONLINE AND OFFLINE EVENT ACCESSIBILITY

Hashtag requirements:

When using hashtags that are more than one word, please capitalise each word. This is so screen readers or text to voice software can differentiate between words and also it helps people with dyslexia, vision impairment and others.

Example is:

#FiveXMoreWeekOfAction or #BlackBabyWeek

This applies for all times and places you use hashtags of more than one word including on infographics or images.

Accessibility Checklist 2021

OF: offline events

ON: online events

Gender/ Non Gender:

	ON /OF	Have pronouns written next to all names, and ask participants to include their own pronouns next to their names.
	ON /OF	Use inclusive and non-gendered language within all promo, the event and ensure any presenters, speakers etc also use inclusive language.
	ON /OF	Use terms such as 'MaGe' (marginalised gender, coined by Crystal Michelle) and 'people who experience misogyny' instead of terms like 'non-men' or 'womxn' or 'women and non-binary people'
	ON /OF	Do not assume someones pronouns/ gender/ sex/ assigned x at birth or presentation.
	OF	Make all toilets/ facilities gender neutral and relabel with 'Urinals Only', 'Urinals and Stalls' or 'Stalls Only' etc

Disability:

	ON	What platform is the event being held on? Have you identified the potential problems with the chosen platform?
	ON	Are the online event platform and ticket registration platform compatible with screen readers? (Zoom is and Eventbrite is with some)
	ON	Can any slides or presentations be used with screen readers and understood by blind people and people with limited vision?

ON /OF	Are there BSL interpreters? Is there support for Assistive Listening Devices either event provided or self provided?
ON /OF	If anyone needs any additional support in creating their presentations or presenting is that available?
ON	Provide image descriptions for all images including promo. Be sure to include the full description including any text on the images.
ON /OF	Provide a transcript and subtitles for all videos. And live captioning for live videos. If shared afterwards, live videos would be edited to include an accurate transcript and subtitles.
ON /OF	Allow people during the ticket registration process to request additional accessibility needs.
ON /OF	Have event moderators who introduce themselves and are available to help support with access needs.
ON	Create an accessible website that includes: larger text and buttons, descriptive link text, image descriptions, keyboard functioning as well as mouse functioning, high contrast images.
ON /OF	Large and clear print for all text with a sans serif font. Include an option for Braille for anything in physical copies. Gloss free paper for anything in physical copies.
ON /OF	Provide copies of presentations, event content, recordings etc in advance.
ON /OF	Is the lighting bright enough to see what is going on? This includes video content, people presenting screens and/or physical rooms.
ON /OF	Warnings for flashing lights, loud noises and jumps/ scares/ sudden changes.
ON /OF	Create a low sensory stimulation room or online breakout room with a support staff member available.
OF	Try to limit smells including incense, candles, air fresheners, cleaning products etc. Can ask attendees for 'no-scent' eg perfumes etc.
OF	Include access for service dogs, including a designated relief area.
OF	Provide accessibility information on event listings. Include an event map that clearly labels accessible spaces. See below to tick off accessibility information to include.
OF	Ensure emergency plans e.g. evacuation routes are accessible.
OF	Is there accessible seating? Are there seating options for all standing spaces? Is there space for wheelchairs?
OF	Are there ramps? Where are they? How steep are they?

	OF	Are there stairs? How many? Where are they? Do they have railings? Are there alternatives?
	OF	Are there ledges or is the floor flat? How high are the ledges?
	OF	Are there accessible toilets? Where are they? Is there space to get a wheelchair in? How many toilets are there?
	OF	Is there accessible parking? How close to the event?
	OF	Is there an incline or hill?
	OF	How wide are the doors? Is there enough space between doors? Will they be open or closed?
	OF	Are seats, tables, counters and screens at an accessible height for all people?
	OF	Is there enough space between aisles, tables and seating? Recommended aisle space is minimum 36 inches.

Class:

	ON /OF	Is the event free? Or are there sliding scale/ free tickets available for people on low/no incomes?
	ON	Does everyone have access to the internet? Does internet access need to be provided?
	OF	Does support with travel costs need to be provided?
	ON /OF	Is reading or writing a requirement for the event and is this provided and/or accepted in an easily understandable, non-academic way and is there support if people need it? (Also can be used for people with dyslexia and other access needs)
	ON /OF	Do event co-hosts/ presenters need specific equipment and is this provided for them? Can borrowing laptops, phones, microphones, headsets etc be an option?
	OF	Provide free childcare/ creche.

Health and Safety:

	OF	Cover electrical wires that cross the floor with tape. Ensure no other wires can be taken off the walls.
	OF	Ensure slip resistant flooring and if carpet that it is firm. Any soft indoor or outdoor area will be reinforcing with a firm slip resistant cover.
	OF	Make sure all outdoor spaces are well lit.
	OF	If the event runs into the night, have people to help walk groups to transport links.

	OF	Ensure there is clear signage from the street (and local travel links if needed) to the event.
	OF	Ensure all important information e.g. signage, programmes and emergency plans inside the event are at an accessible height to all and facing the right way with support staff nearby.
	OF	Make sure red cords are touching the floor in all toilets. Add cards explaining red cords if needed.
	OF	Check fire exits and ensure all signage is up to date.
	OF	Have regular toilet and facilities checks/ rota to ensure cleanliness and safety.
	OF	Have access to cleaning supplies.

Refreshments:

	OF	Publicity must state whether food is available or not and if this is a catered event, provide menu on the expanded event description eg on the website or link to the cafe/ business menu if it is externally catered.
	OF	Provide low cost/ free/ sliding scale options for food.
	OF	Ensure dietary requirements and allergens are clearly labelled and try to provide inclusive foods if only one option eg allergen free vegan food
	OF	Have support staff available if the food is 'self-serve' not prepackaged or served.
	OF	Be aware of cross-contamination and try to minimise it.
	OF	Provide bent plastic drinking straws and options for handled and non-handled cups as well as disposable plates, cutlery and cups.
	OF	Provide a prepared cut food option.
	OF	Follow correct health and safety procedures for catered events.
	OF	Have support staff available to help carry plates, trays or move chairs etc.

COVID Specific:

	OF	Ensure the space is social distancing safe.
	OF	Provide hand sanitiser and an accessible hand cleaning station.
	OF	Schedule in break times for regular cleaning.
	OF	Require people to check in with the NHS Covid App.
	OF	Require people to provide a negative lateral flow test taken the day of the

		event (taken BEFORE attending the event)
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Additional Accessibility:

	ON /OF	Ensure there is no potentially offensive or triggering content being put out.
	ON /OF	Provide a schedule with timings, location, speaker details and event name in advance.
	ON /OF	Ask for feedback from all participants to try and get a fuller representation of whether access needs were covered for all people.
	ON /OF	Content warnings for any potentially triggering content.
	ON /OF	Have easily identifiable support staff and provide a contact for them which people can access throughout the event.
	ON /OF	Plan in time for breaks.
	ON /OF	Additional language support for people with dyslexia and/or English second language. Translations or interpreters as an option.
	ON /OF	Provide enough time between the event being announced and the event starting for people to see the event, ask for accessibility needs and the accommodations to be made with continued communication.
	ON /OF	Offer an over the phone or in person event booking option in addition to an online booking option.
	ON /OF	Free spaces for support staff, carers, translators etc.