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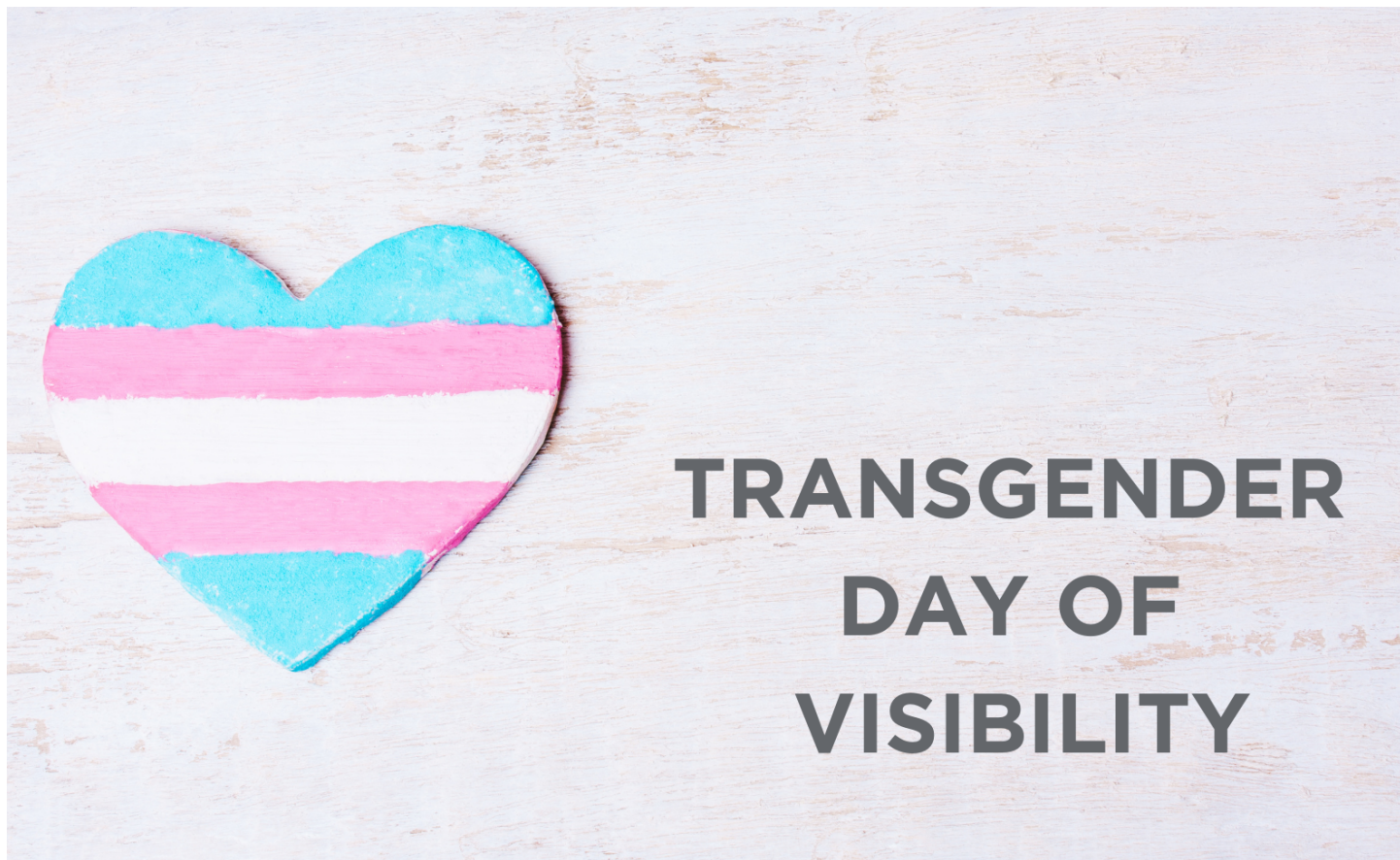
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HSLIC News - LibGuides at University of New Mexico

Transgender Day of Visibility

by Varina Kosovich on March 31st, 2023 in [Health Justice & Equity](#), [New Mexico](#) | [0 Comments](#)



In honor of Transgender Day of Visibility, HSLIC welcomes guest blog contributors Dr. Cameron Crandall, Dr. Molly McClain, and Fabián Armijo. This day is dedicated to celebrating the transgender community and helps bring awareness to the continuing fight for trans equality. Our guest authors will discuss inclusive actions at HSC and the importance of visibility for the trans community.

On Friday, March 31, we celebrate this year's International Transgender Day of Visibility. On this day, we recognize the important work that gender-expansive people have done to raise awareness and fight for basic human rights that should (and must) be afforded to all persons, regardless of gender identity. We celebrate these achievements and will continue to work against misinformation, discrimination, and hate impacting our communities.

Gender-expansive people, including those who are transgender and gender non-binary, continue to face significant barriers in accessing and obtaining appropriate and knowledgeable health care. To

address these concerns, UNM Health and the Health Sciences Center have made numerous enhancements and changes to our system so that we can provide the best possible care for our patients. Some of the changes we have made include:

Inviting all patients to share their gender identity, affirmed name, and pronouns and recording/displaying this information in the electronic health record

Developed a comprehensive service line for adult gender diverse at Truman Health Services

Developing comprehensive services for gender-expansive youth at Deseo Clinic at Southeast Heights Clinic and in pediatric specialty care.

Training over 1,000 staff members in how to work with sexually and gender-diverse patients

Training staff and providers about the critical importance of using the correct pronouns and affirmed names for patients

Buttons and badge buddies with pronouns for providers and staff

Improved signage for universal restrooms

Access to menstrual products in some HSC bathrooms, regardless of gender

Removed sex from arm bands and labels

Access to basic health care is a significant barrier for many transgender patients. Since 2017, at UNM we have invited patients to share their gender identity and affirmed name and have placed this information in the electronic health record. This process lets patients know we see them and reinforces our commitment to providing the best care possible. As a result of these changes and the steady march of increasing visibility of gender-expansive people in recent years helped us recognize the size of the community and the importance of addressing their specific needs to improve health for all.

The changes we have made to date are only the beginning. Similar to the concept of visibility, there is power in what we have started and the recognition that there is much more to do. New Mexico has a growing number of healthcare professionals who provide high-quality services to gender-expansive communities. However, we also recognize that New Mexico does not have enough providers, particularly surgical providers, as many transgender patients need to seek care outside of New Mexico.

Over the years, we have seen tremendous advances in equity and inclusion for LGBTQ persons. The rapid acceptance is due, in part, to the visibility of LGBTQ people in our communities, families, and work lives. The changes we have made are small steps that lead to increased visibility of transgender and non-binary people.

How can you contribute to increasing the visibility and celebration of this important community?

Address individuals using the names and pronouns that they use

Trust that individuals know what gendered spaces they belong in (bathrooms, change rooms)

Avoid gendered language (e.g., sir, ma'am. etc.)

Provide all the same care you would give to your family members and loved ones

UNM Health and Health Sciences providers and staff can obtain a pronoun badge buddy from hospital security

While we are proud of our efforts to improve the recognition, safety, and dignity of transgender and gender-diverse staff and patients, we know there is much left to do to honor those who are gender expansive. We are committed to continuing this work alongside our trans and non-binary friends, colleagues, loved ones, and patients.

Fabián Armijo, MHA, Executive Director DEI, UNM Hospital (he)

Cameron Crandall, MD, Associate Vice President for LGBTQ DEI, UNM HSC (he)

Molly McClain, MD MPH MS, Medical Director, Deseo Clinic, UNM HSC (she)

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