

Policy & Procedure	<i>ID No.</i>	
<i>Subject:</i> Access Guidelines for Quality Care for Transgender Patients	<i>Category:</i>	Rights & Responsibilities of the Individual
<i>Policy Scope:</i> AtlantiCare Health System	<i>Department:</i>	General

PURPOSE: To provide guidance for staff interaction with transgender patients cared for at AtlantiCare Health System.

PROCEDURE:

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. Transgender--is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity, one’s inner sense of being male or female, differs from their assigned or presumed sex at birth. Transgender patients generally are admitted to hospitals for the same types of care as other patients, although transgender patients may also enter hospitals for transition-related health services.
- B. To “transition” means to undergo a process by which a person changes their physical sex characteristics and/or gender expression to match their inner sense of being male or female. A person may refer to themselves as “in transition when asked about their gender. The process may include a name change, a change in preferred pronouns, and a change in social gender expression through things such as hair, clothing, and restroom use. It may or may not include hormones and surgery.
- C. Gender Identity--is one’s internal, personal sense of being a man or a woman.
- D. Gender expression--is the external manifestation of one’s gender identity, usually expressed through “masculine”, “feminine”, or gender-variant behavior, clothing, haircut, voice, or body characteristics.

II. POLICY

When a transgender patient presents for health care, they will be addressed and referred to on the basis of their self-identified gender, using their preferred pronoun and name, regardless of the patient’s appearance, surgical history, legal name, or sex assigned at birth.

A. PROCEDURE/RESPONSIBILITY

Protocol for interaction with transgender patients:

1. A transgender patient’s preferred pronoun should be determined as follows:

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Owner: Robyn Begley, DNP, RN, Chief Nursing Officer	Source: “Creating equal access to quality health care for transgender patients: Transgender-affirming hospital policies” Lambda Legal & Human Rights Campaign	Authorized By: Robyn Begley, DNP, RN, Chief Nursing Officer. Julie Drew, System Exec Director-Behavioral Health, Executive Sponsor PRIDE ERG Edward G. Hamaty, Jr., D.O., Chairman Dept of Critical Care, Executive Sponsor PRIDE ERG	
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- a. If the patient’s gender presentation clearly indicates to a reasonable person the gender with which the patient wishes to be identified, the hospital staff member should refer to the patient using pronouns appropriate to that gender.
 - b. If the hospital staff member determines the patient’s preferred pronoun on the basis of the patient’s gender presentation, but is then corrected by the patient, the staff member should then use the pronouns associated with the gender identity verbally expressed by the patient.
 - c. If the patient’s gender presentation does not clearly indicate the patient’s gender identity, the hospital staff member should discreetly and politely ask the patient for the patient’s preferred pronoun and name.
2. Staff may only ask patients about their transgender status, sex assigned at birth or transition-related procedures when such information is directly relevant to the patient’s care.

B. Room Assignments

1. Where patients are assigned to rooms based on gender, the Patient Flow Department will assign a transgender patient to a room in accordance with the patient’s self-identified gender, unless the patient requests otherwise. Transgender patients shall be assigned to in-patient rooms in the following order of priority:
 - a. If a transgender patient requests to be assigned to a room with a roommate of the patient’s same gender identity, and such a room is available, the request should be honored.
 - b. If a transgender patient requests a private room and there is one available, it should be made available to the patient.
 - c. If a transgender patient does not indicate a rooming preference, and a private room is available, the private room should be offered to the transgender patient. The offer should be explained to the patient as optional and for the purpose of ensuring the patient’s privacy, safety, and comfort.

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- d. If a private room is not available and the transgender patient does not wish to share a room with a roommate, the transgender patient should be assigned to an empty double room with the second bed blocked.
 - e. If there is no private room or empty double room available, the patient should be assigned to a room with a patient of the gender with which the transgender patient identifies.
 - f. If there is no private or empty double room available and a transgender patient does not wish to share a room, other patients may be moved to make a private room available if doing so would not compromise the health or safety of the patient(s) being moved.
2. The Patient Flow Department shall determine a patient’s self-identified gender prior to assigning the patient a room by reviewing the patient’s admitting/registration record. If upon admission it is impossible for the patient to inform the staff of his or her self-identified gender, then, inferences should be drawn from the patient’s presentation and mode of dress.

C. Access to restrooms

All patients of the hospital may use the restroom that matches their gender identity, regardless of whether they are making a gender transition or appear to be gender-nonconforming.

DEFINITIONS:

AtlantiCare: AtlantiCare is defined as any and all affiliated companies of the AtlantiCare Health System, including its joint ventures operating under the AtlantiCare trademark, and captive professional services corporations such as AtlantiCare Physicians Group.

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