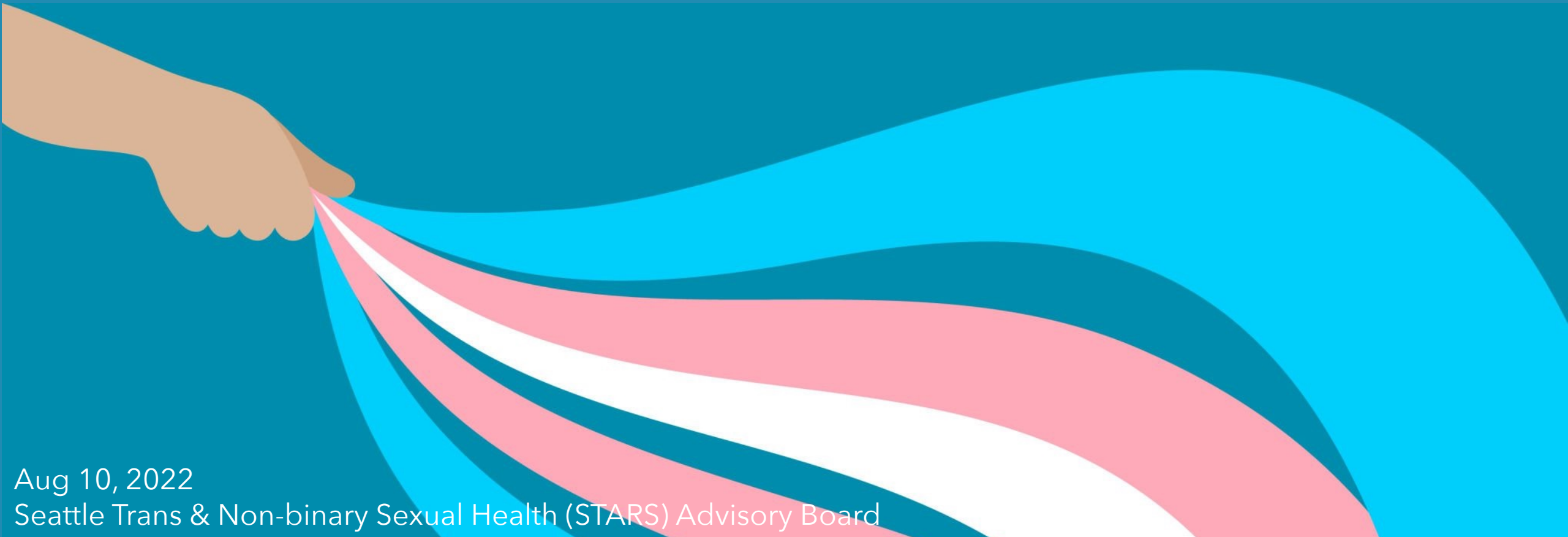


# Transgender Health in Washington State

Presentation for Clinicians and Service Providers:

## **Transgender Health Competency**



Aug 10, 2022

Seattle Trans & Non-binary Sexual Health (STARS) Advisory Board

# Seattle Trans and Non-binary Sexual Health (STARS) Advisory Board



## **Atlas Fernandez**

*Building Changes*  
*They/Them*

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## **Diana Tordoff**

*University of Washington*  
*She/Her*

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## **Overview**

1. *Demographics, Economic & Health Inequities*
2. *Policy & Legal Landscape*
3. *Discrimination*
4. *Health Care Access*
5. *Sexual Health*
6. *Resources*
7. *Q&A*

# From *Cultural Competency* To **Structural Competency**

“The trained ability to discern how a host of issues defined clinically as symptoms [e.g., depressions, substance use, or “non-compliance”] ... represent the **downstream implications of a number of upstream decisions.**”

“Oft-invisible structural level determinates, biases, inequities, and blind spots **shape definitions of health and illness** long before doctors or patients enter examination rooms.”

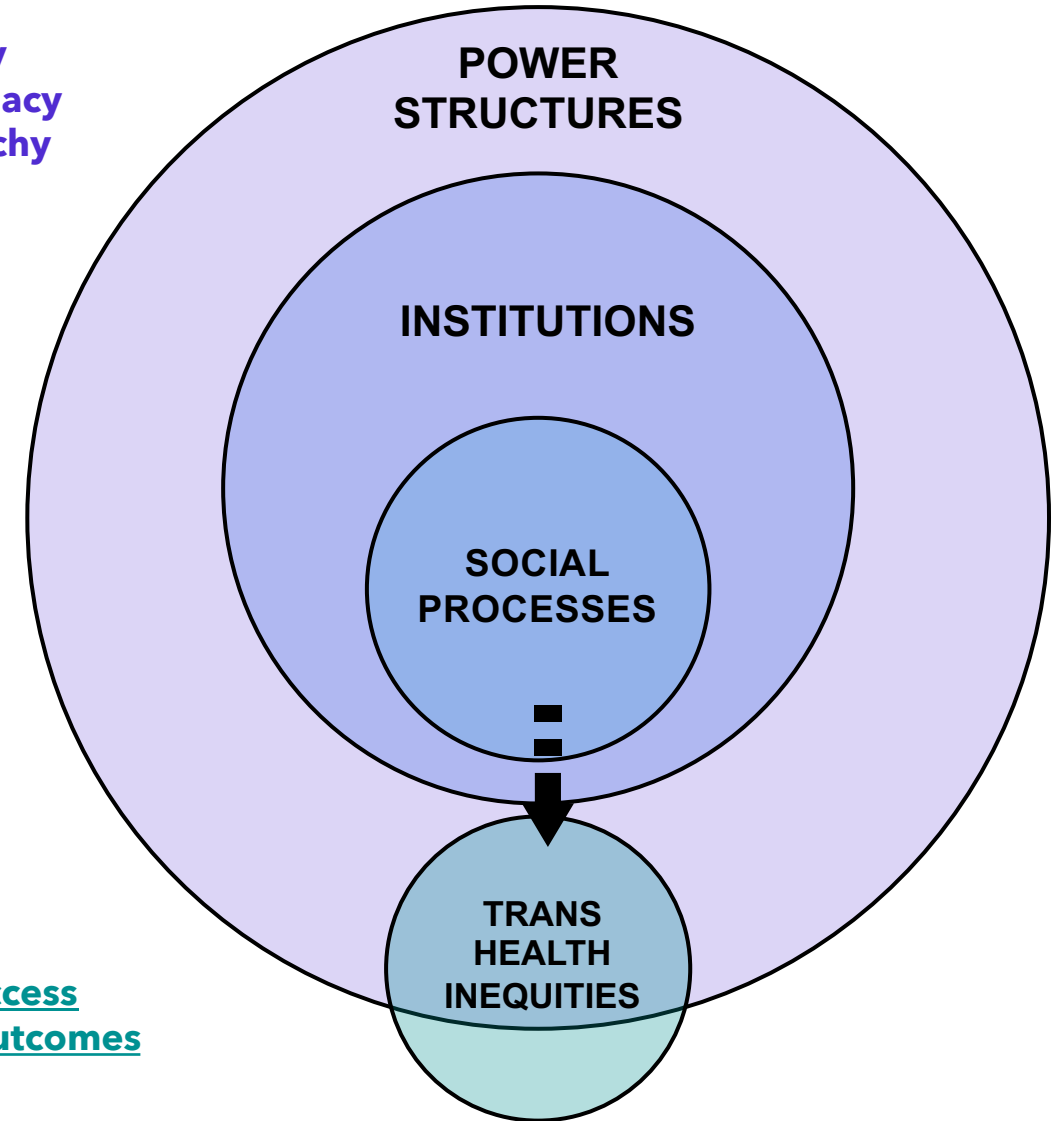
Metzl & Hansen (2014) Soc Sci Med.  
structuralcompetency.org

Cisnormativity  
White Supremacy  
Heteropatriarchy  
Misogyny  
Ableism

Health Care  
Public Health  
Housing  
Criminal-Legal  
Education  
Immigration

Gendering  
Racializing  
Pathologizing  
Criminalizing  
Class  
Exploitation

Inequitable Access  
Inequitable Outcomes



Adapted from the Intersectional Research for Transgender Health Justice Framework (Wesp et al. 2019)

# Terms and Abbreviations

**AFAB** = assigned female at birth

**AMAB** = assigned male at birth

**Cis or Cisgender** = not transgender

**Cisnormativity** = the expectation/assumption that all people are cisgender

**Non-binary** = umbrella terms used to describe a person who doesn't identify with binary genders man/woman or boy/girl. Includes many different genders: genderqueer, gender fluid, non-binary, agender, bigender, and more.

**Trans or Transgender** = an umbrella term to describe a person whose gender differs from their sex assigned at birth

# **Section 1: Demographics, Economic & Health Inequities**



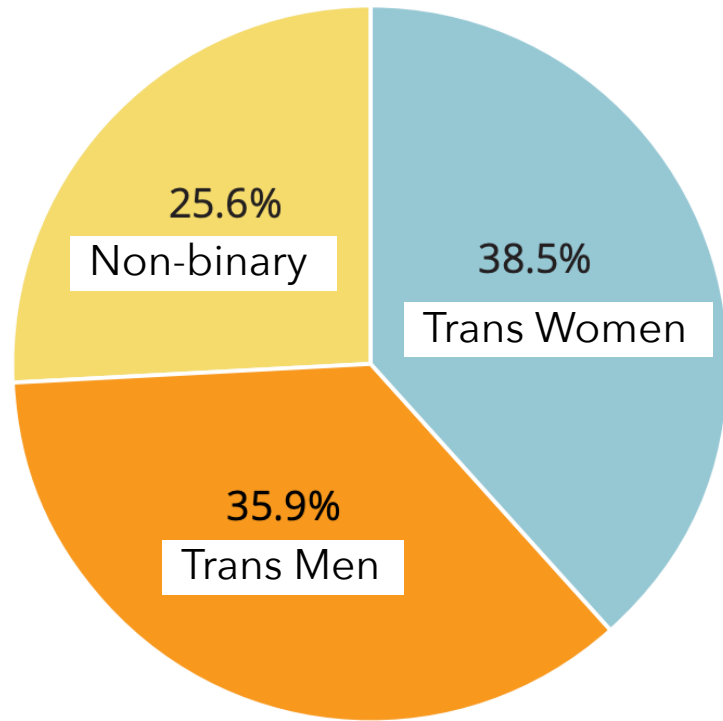
# Transgender People in WA State

- At least **0.6%** of the adult and **1.1%** adolescent population is transgender
  - **33,300** transgender **adults** age 18+ in WA state
  - **5,000** transgender **adolescents** age 13-18 in WA state

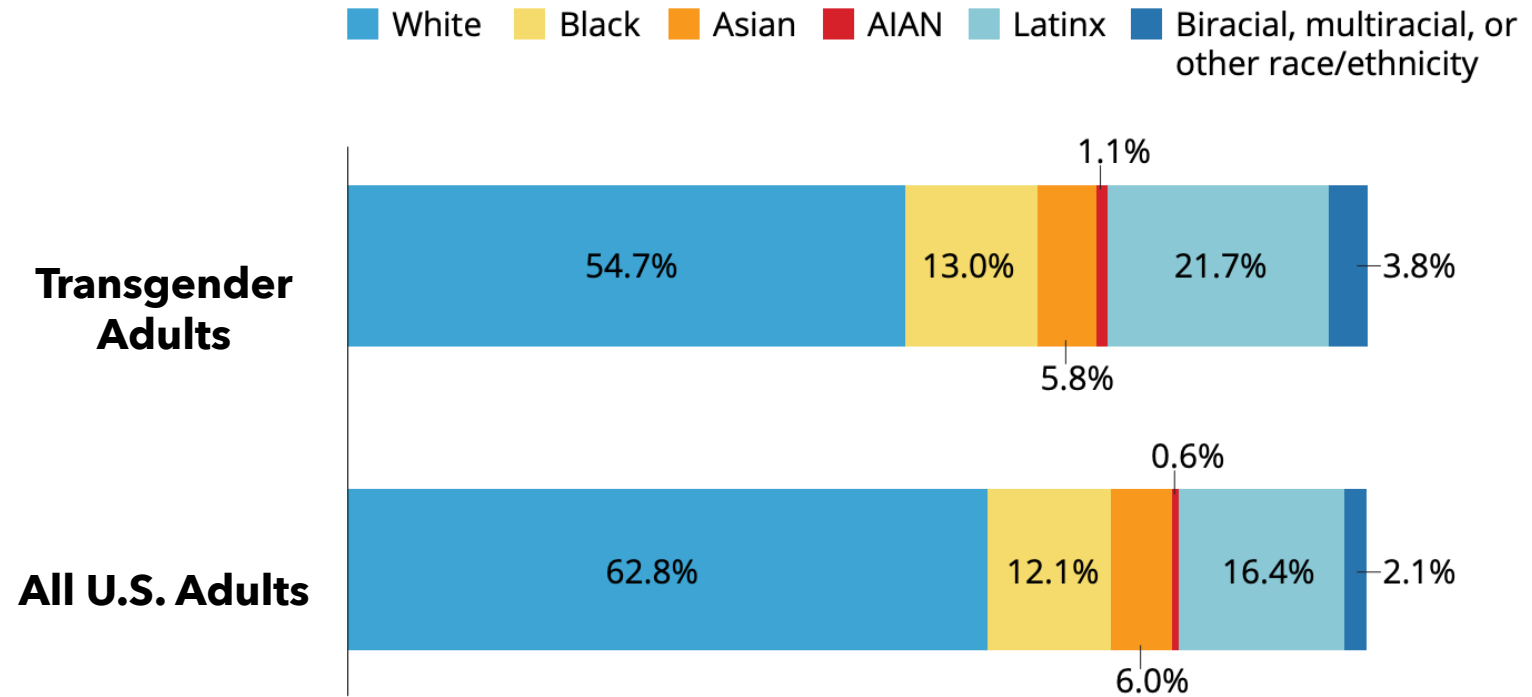


# Transgender People in the US

## Gender



## Race and Ethnicity

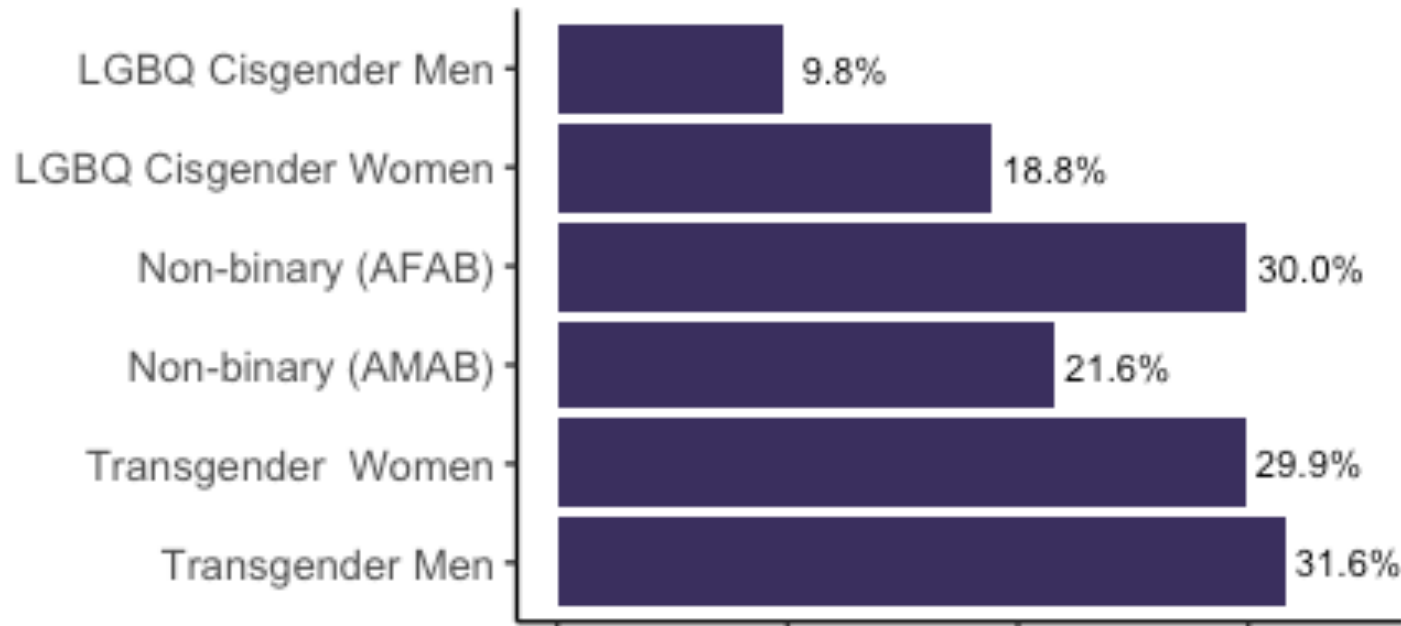


# Experiences of Poverty in Washington State

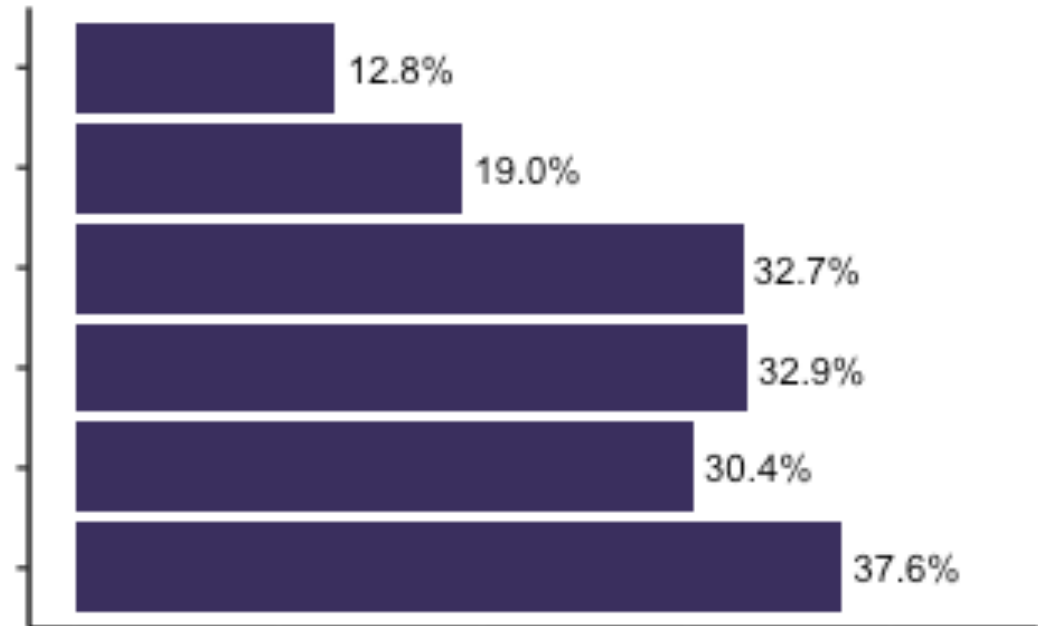
**30%** of trans adults have **incomes below \$15,000**

**35%** of trans adults experienced **food insecurity** in the past year

Income < \$15,000



Food Insecurity





# Experiences of Poverty in Washington State

**13%** of trans adults experienced **homelessness** in the **past year**

**37%** of trans adults **ever** experienced **homelessness**

**26%** of trans adults experienced some form of **housing discrimination** in the past year, such as being **evicted** from their home or **denied a home or apartment** because of being transgender

# Health Inequities in Washington State

**Compared to cisgender adults, transgender adults were:**

- **2.5x** as likely to have incomes **<200% federal poverty level**
- **4x** as likely to report **poor mental** health
- **2x** as likely to report **poor physical** health
- **3x** as likely to be living with a **disability**
- Reported a higher number of **chronic conditions**, including: arthritis, asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and obesity.

# Health Inequities in Washington State

## Overall, among transgender adults:

- **56%** have incomes **<200% federal poverty level**
- **43%** report **poor mental** health
- **23%** report **poor physical** health
- **44%** living with a **disability**
- On average, reported living with **1 chronic condition**, including: arthritis, asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and obesity.

# **Section 2: Policy & Legal Landscape**



# Why do providers need to understand laws and policies?

- **66%** did not know or weren't sure if they **understood Washington State & Federal laws** and rulings that guaranteed their rights and access to medical care.
- **56%** were sometimes comfortable or almost never comfortable **asking about what their rights are in their medical providers office** when unsure or unclear as to what their rights are.

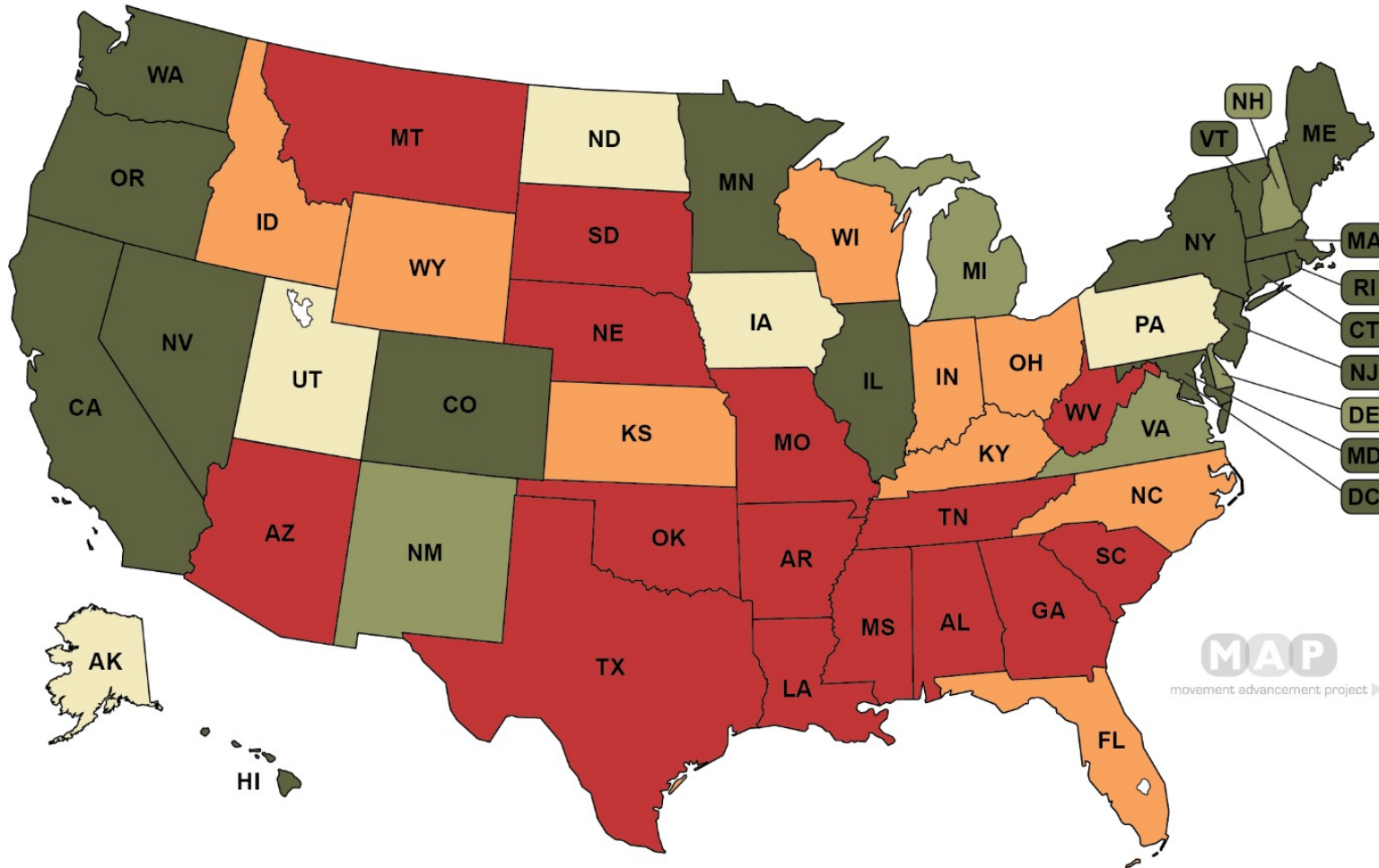


# Laws & Policies in Washington State

Transgender   
Law Center

**Washington State's  
Gender Identity  
Policy Tally: 20 / 22**

7<sup>th</sup> best behind  
California, Colorado,  
Maine, Nevada, New  
Jersey and New York



# Laws & Policies in Washington State

**Washington Law Against Discrimination (WLAD)**, explicitly prohibits discrimination because of “gender expression or identity,” including actual or perceived identity, in the following ways:

- Places of **public accommodation** (i.e., places that serve the public), including restaurants, hotels, and public schools;
- **Housing**, including the renting, buying, and selling of homes;
- **Employment**, specifically in state, municipal, and private workplaces with eight or more employees;
- **Credit** transactions, including loans and credit cards; and
- **Insurance** transactions, including health insurance.

Washington law also protects people from:

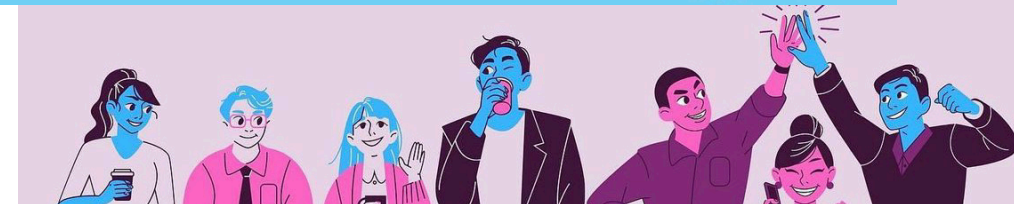
- **Violence** and threats motivated by gender expression or gender identity, and
- **Student-on-student** harassment, intimidation, and bullying motivated by gender expression or gender identity in public schools.

# Gender Affirming Care Act (SB 5313)

**In 2021, Earlier this year, Gov. Inslee signed the Gender Affirming Care Act (SB 5313) into law:**

- Two-spirit, non-binary, intersex, and gender diverse people can be prescribed gender affirming care.
- Prevents insurance companies from classifying medically necessary gender affirming surgeries as “cosmetic” in order to limit access to services.
- Insurance company determinations must be made in consultation with medical providers experienced in gender affirming care.

**This law took full effect on January 1, 2022.**





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AN URGENT COMMUNITY ACTION REQUEST  
PART 2 (THE WORK AIN'T OVER YET!)

**SUPPORT 2SSB 5313**

TAKE ACTION AGAINST HEALTHCARE DISCRIMINATION  
IN WASHINGTON STATE

We would like to thank the following  
**Individuals and Organizations:** Senator Liias  
for sponsoring this bill, Office of the  
Insurance Commissioner, Ashley Sutton, Dr.  
Kevin Wang & The Washington State Trans &  
Gender Diverse Community & Allies.

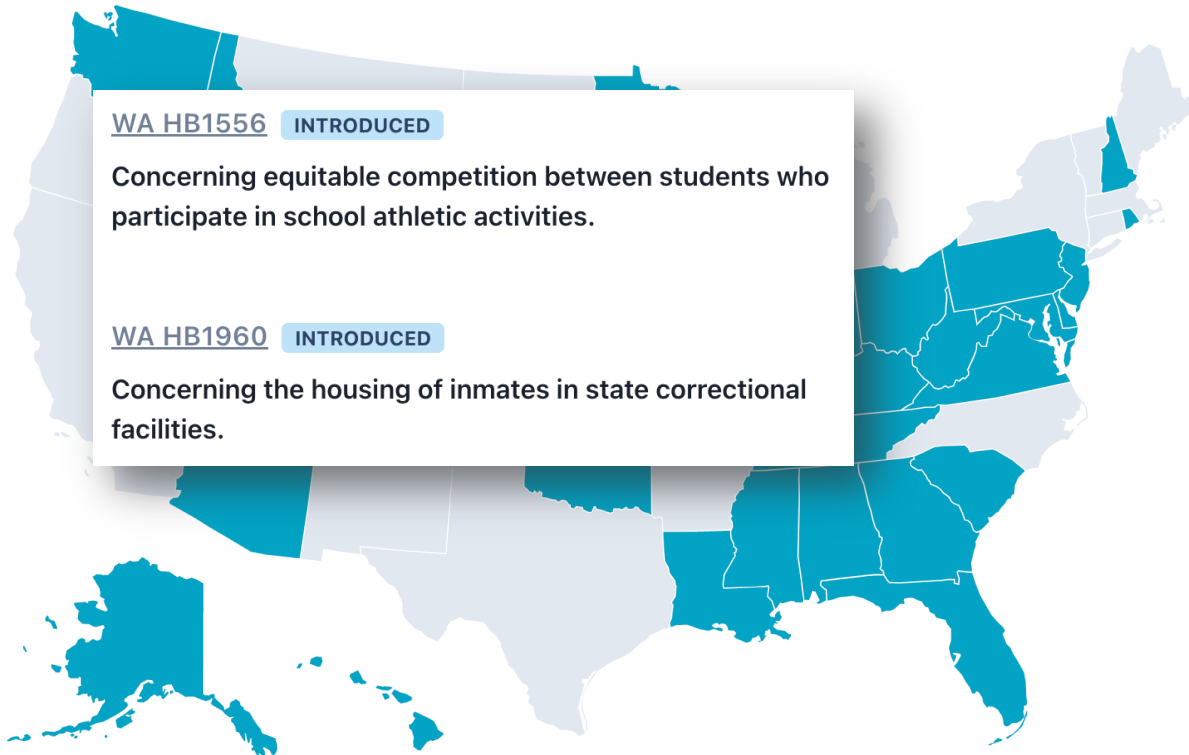
Trans Women of Color Solidarity Network,  
UTOPIA, Legal Voice, Q-law, Ingersoll Gender  
Center, Equal Rights Washington, GSBA, Gender  
Justice League, Lavender Rights Project, WA  
LGBTQ Commission, NoHLA, Washington  
Association for Justice, ACLU



# Rapidly Changing Legal Landscape

171 bills    33 states

26 passed    125 active    20 failed



Chase Strangio @chasestrangio

Alejandra Caraballo @esqueer\_

Florence Ashley @butnotthecity

Erin Reed @ErinInTheMorn

# Impact of Anti-Transgender News



## Negative Transgender-Related Media Messages Are Associated with Adverse Mental Health Outcomes in a Multistate Study of Transgender Adults

Jaclyn M.W. Hughto [✉](#), David Pletta, Lily Gordon, Sean Cahill, Matthew J. Mimiaga, and Sari L. Reisner

More frequent exposure to **negative depictions of transgender people in the media** was significantly associated with:

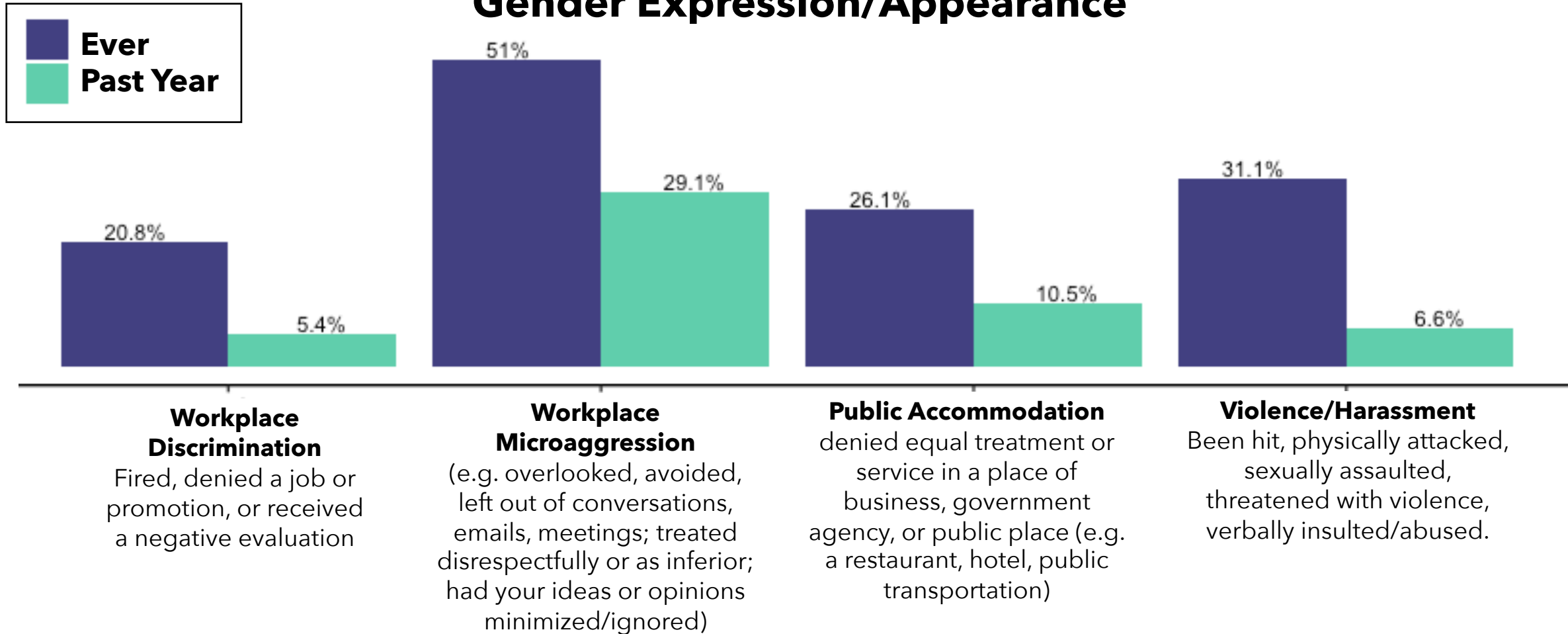
- 18% higher odds of **depression**
- **26%** higher odds of **anxiety**
- **25%** higher odds of **PTSD**
- **28%** higher odds of **global psychological distress**

# **Section 3: Discrimination**



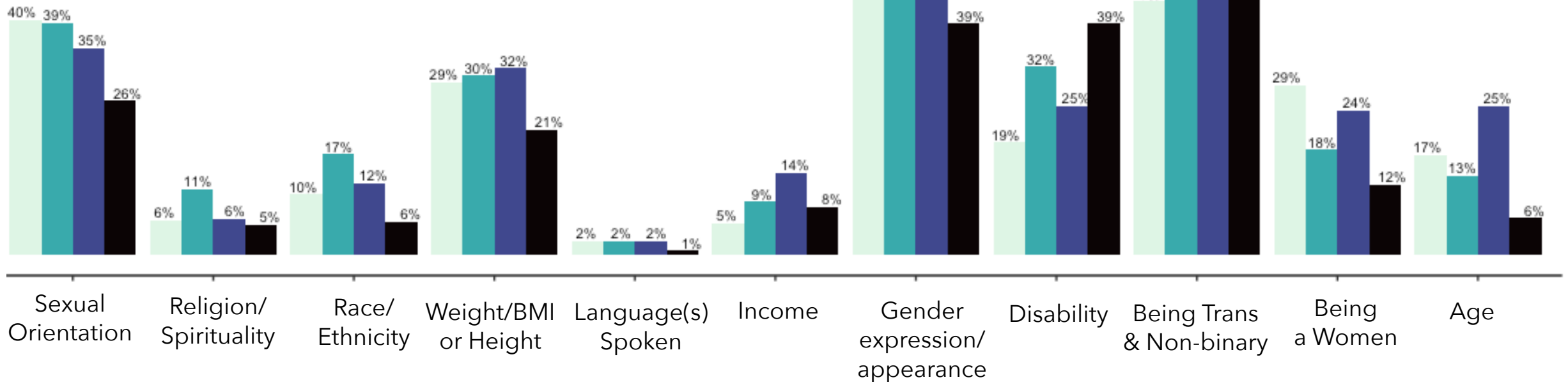
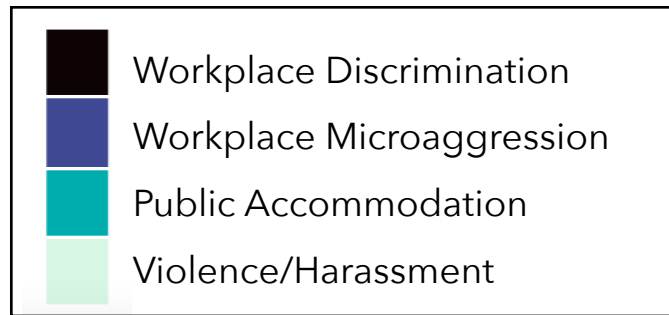
# Experiences of Discrimination in WA

## Discrimination Due to Transgender or Non-binary Identity or Gender Expression/Appearance



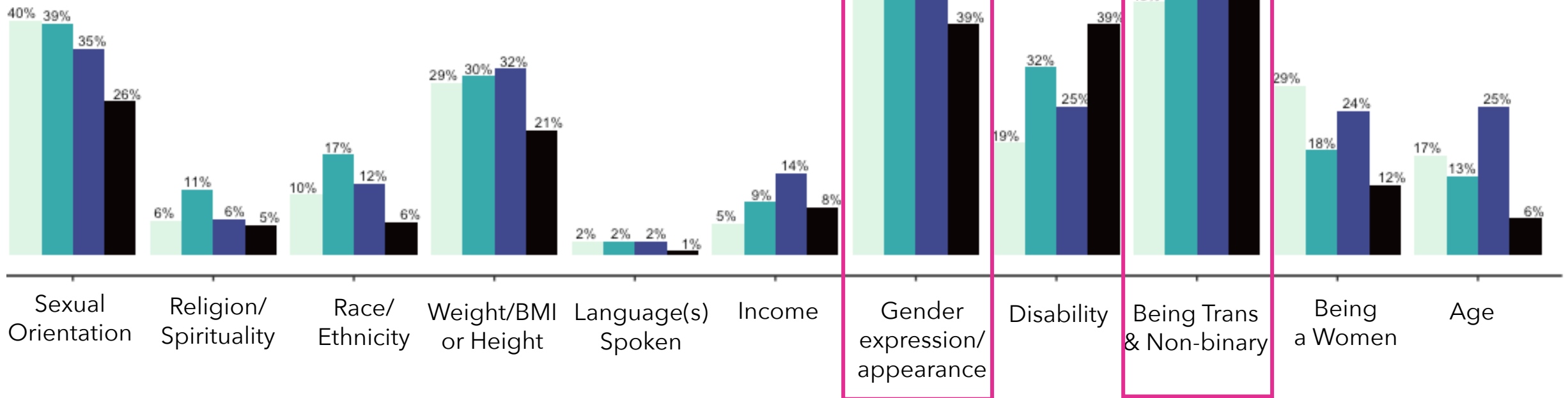
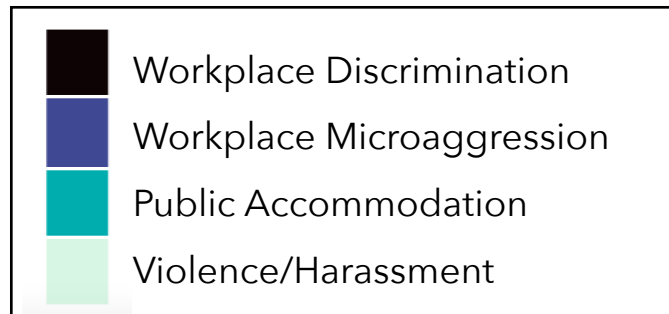
# Experiences of Discrimination in WA

## Self-Report Reasons for Experiencing Discrimination



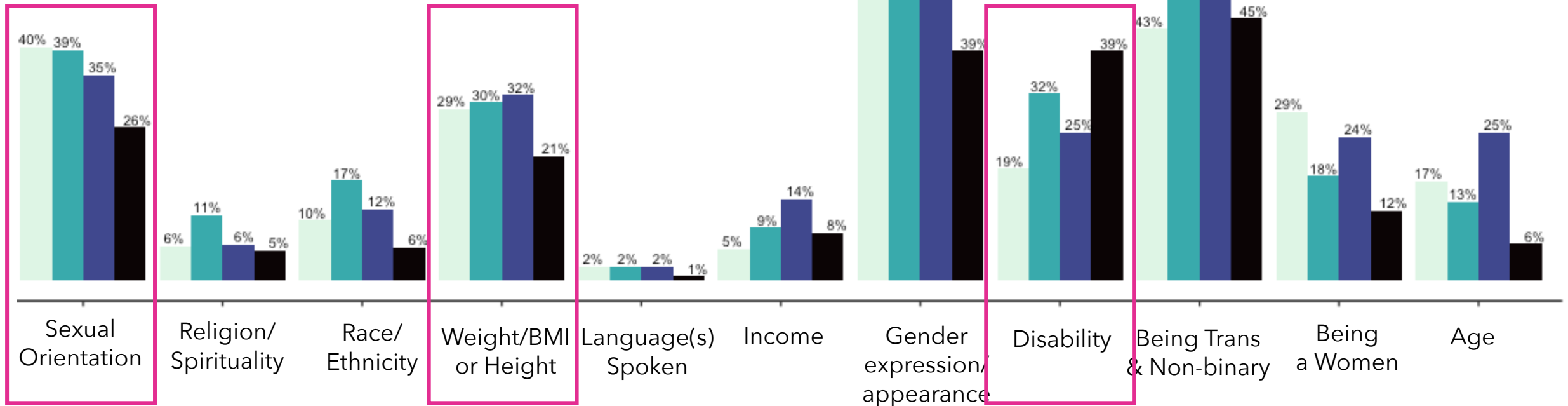
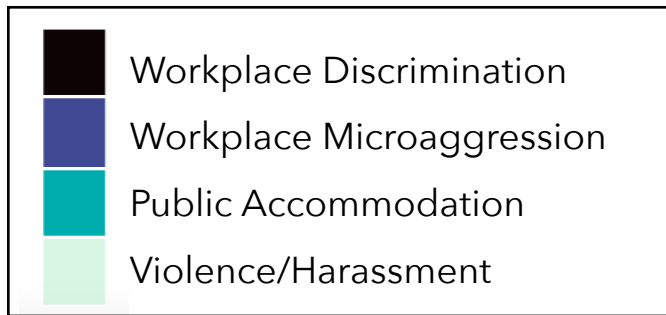
# Experiences of Discrimination in WA

## Self-Report Reasons for Experiencing Discrimination



# Experiences of Discrimination in WA

## Self-Report Reasons for Experiencing Discrimination





# **Section 4: Health Care Access**



# Structural Barriers to Health Care

## Financial Barriers

- 32% did not see a doctor when needed because they **could not afford** it in the past year.
- 62% sometimes or always have **difficulty paying** for health care costs.

## Geographic/ Insurance Barriers

- 47% could not find a gender affirming surgeon that **worked with their insurance**.
- 49% could not find a provider **within 30 miles** of where they live.
- 47% could not access a **mental health provider** on a regular basis due to insurance.



44.9% of respondents do not accept Medicaid

Even though **more than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of trans adults are on Medicaid/Apple Care.**

# Structural Barriers to Health Care

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- 62% sometimes or always have **difficulty paying** for health care costs.

## Geographic/ Insurance Barriers

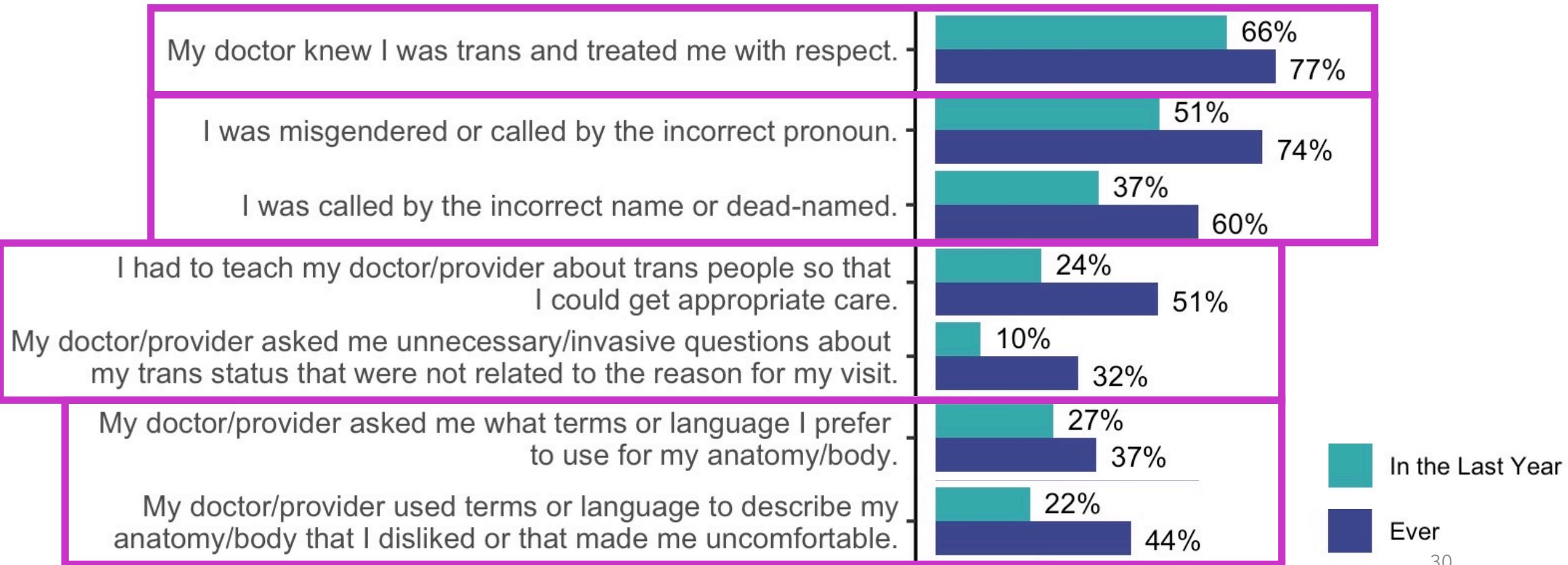
- 47% could not find a gender affirming surgeon that **worked with their insurance**.
- 49% could not find a provider **within 30 miles** of where they live.
- 47% could not access a **mental health provider** on a regular basis.

## Fear of Mistreatment

- 22% did not see a doctor when they needed to in the past year because of **fear of being mistreated**.

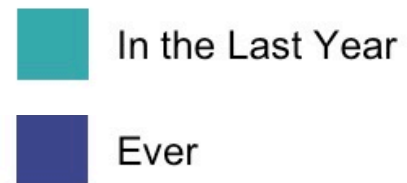
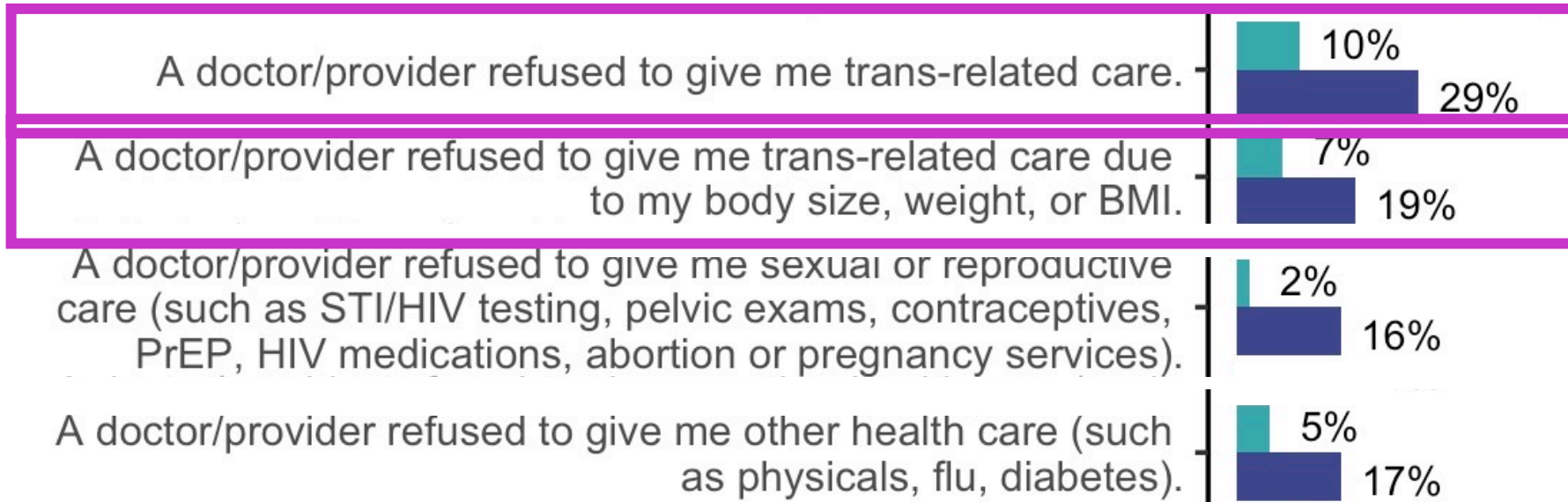
# Health Care Experiences in WA

## Health Care Providers Interactions



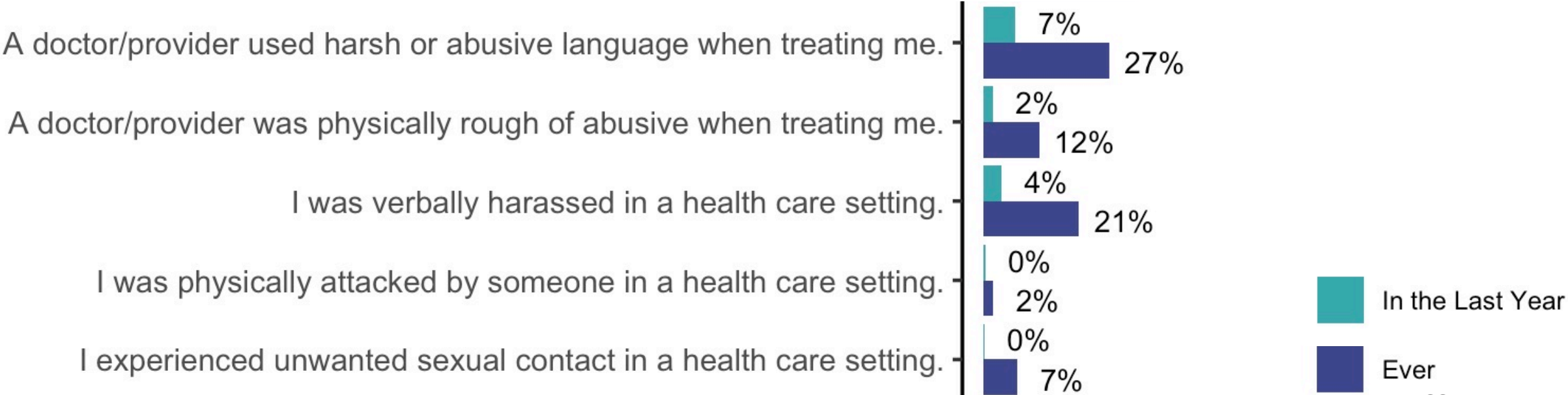
# Health Care Experiences in WA

## Refusal of Health Care



# Health Care Experiences in WA

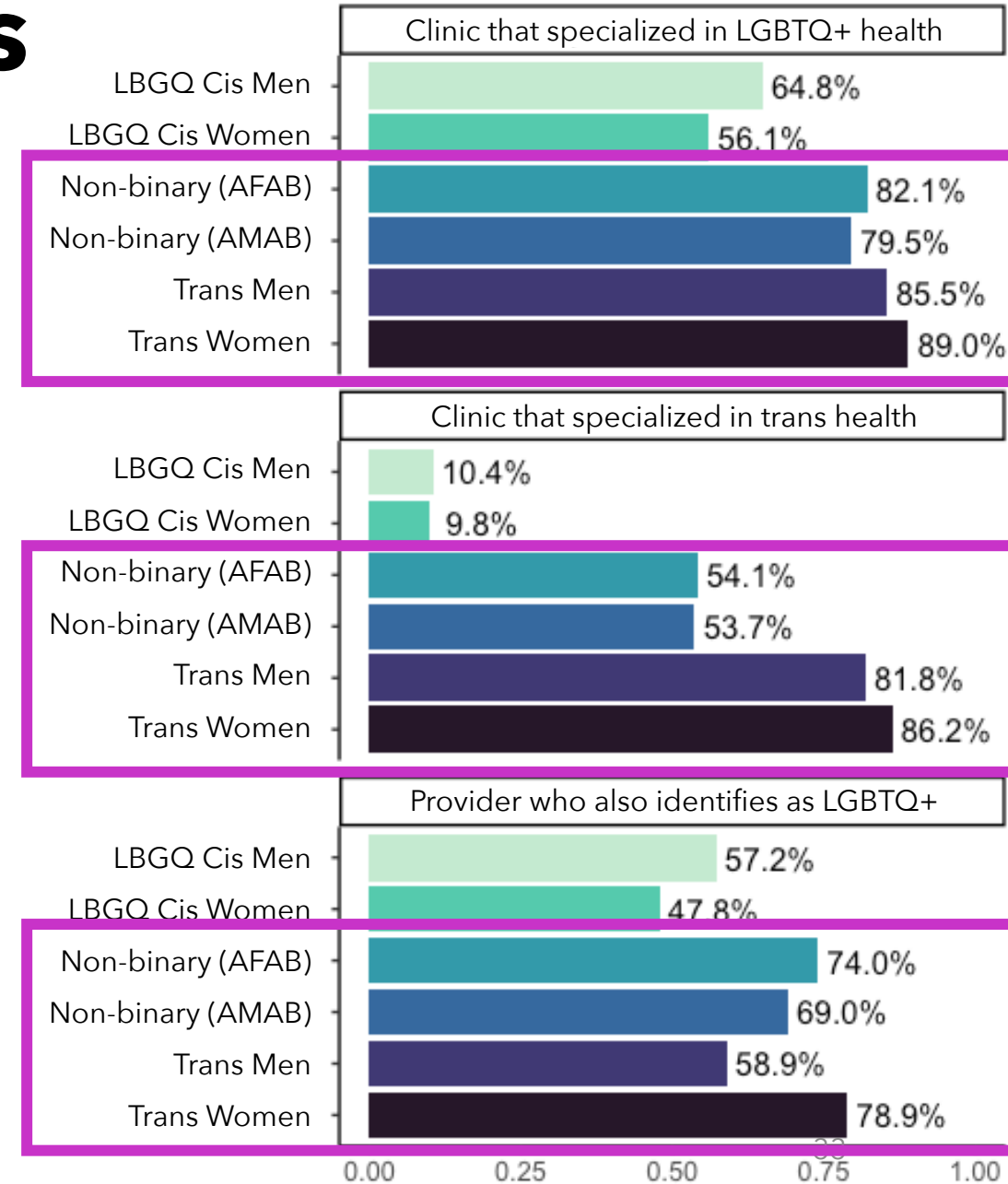
## Verbal Harassment & Physical Assault in Health Care Settings



# Health Care Preferences

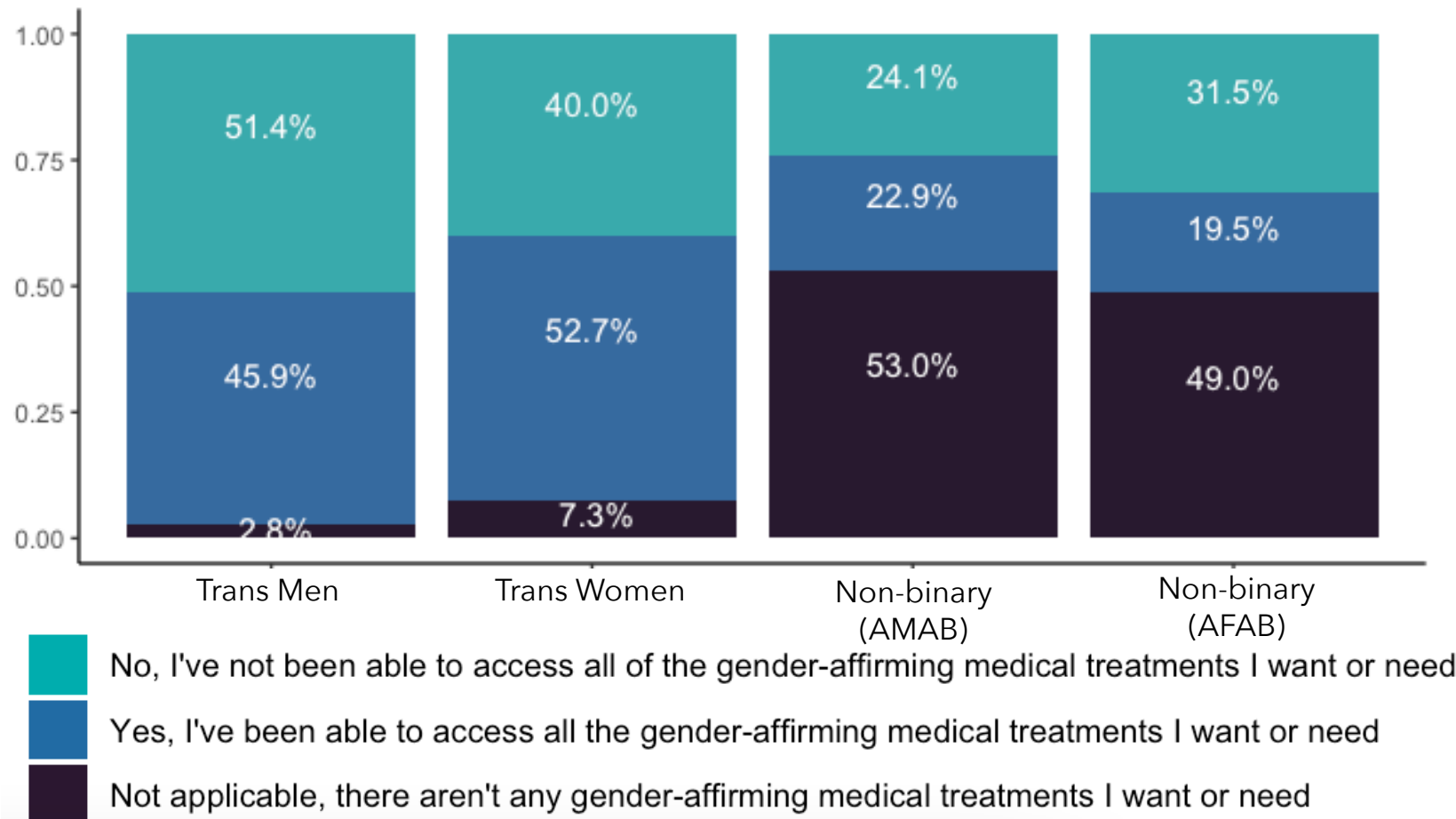
- Most participants preferred to receive medical care at a **clinic that specializes in trans or LGBTQ+ health** or from a **provider who identifies as LGBTQ+**

Prefers to Receive Medical Care at...



# Access to Gender Affirming Care in WA

- **57%** of trans and non-binary people have an **unmet need** for gender affirming health care





# Access to Gender Affirming Care in WA

- **69%** of trans and non-binary people experienced **barriers to accessing** gender affirming care in the past year

Barriers to Accessing Gender Affirming Care in the Past Year	Proportion
Financial Hardship	39.4%
Lack of Knowledge or Resources	37.4%
Lack of Facilities or Providers	30.5%
Lack of Medical Access	27.9%
Another Reason Not Listed:	17.2%
<i>Family</i>	3.40%
<i>COVID-19</i>	2.60%
<i>Insurance Coverage Issues</i>	2.30%
<i>BMI or body size restrictions</i>	1.40%
<i>Discrimination due to disability</i>	1.10%
<i>"Gatekeeping" by providers</i>	1.10%
<i>Lack of Transportation</i>	1.10%
<i>Under 18 years old</i>	1.10%
<i>Unable to obtain referral letters for surgeries</i>	0.90%
<i>Unable to take time off work/school</i>	0.90%
<i>Live in rural areas</i>	0.60%
<i>Mental Health (anxiety)</i>	0.60%
<i>Not "out" as trans</i>	0.60%
<i>Fear of discrimination</i>	0.30%
<i>Lack of racial/ethnically diverse providers</i>	0.30%
<i>Language Barriers</i>	0.30%
<i>Pharmacy Issues</i>	0.30%
<i>Sports restrictions for trans athletes</i>	0.30%

# What is “Gender Affirming Care”?

**Gender Affirming Care** is a broad term that describes care provided by health care professionals who are affirming of transgender people’s gender and are trained to provide competent and inclusive healthcare services. Therefore, gender-affirming care includes preventative care and mental health care from trans-competent and affirming providers.

**Gender Affirming Medical Interventions** can include hormones, androgen blockers, puberty blockers, surgeries, and more!

## Important Caveat with this Language

**Cisgender people also receive these exact same interventions to affirm their gender!!**

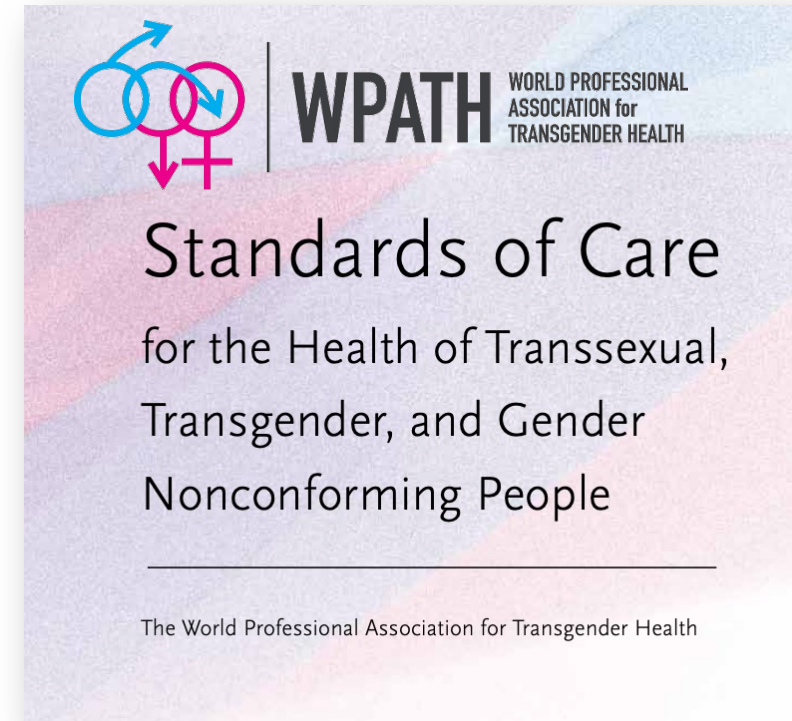
“Gender Affirming Care” has become the language we use to describe the provision of specific *medical interventions* (e.g. hormones, surgeries, etc) *specifically* to transgender people because of **cisnormativity** and a long history of **pathologizing** transgender identities.

# Care Models for Providing Gender-Affirming Medical Interventions

## Standards of Care vs. Informed Consent

- Mental health assessments
- Letters of approval
- Perceived as pathologizing
- Gatekeeping model of care
- Preferred by most trans people
- Rooted in self-determination & healthcare as a human right
- Acknowledge as a legitimate pathway by WPATH SOC 7

*Both models can be and are used for adults as well as adolescents.*



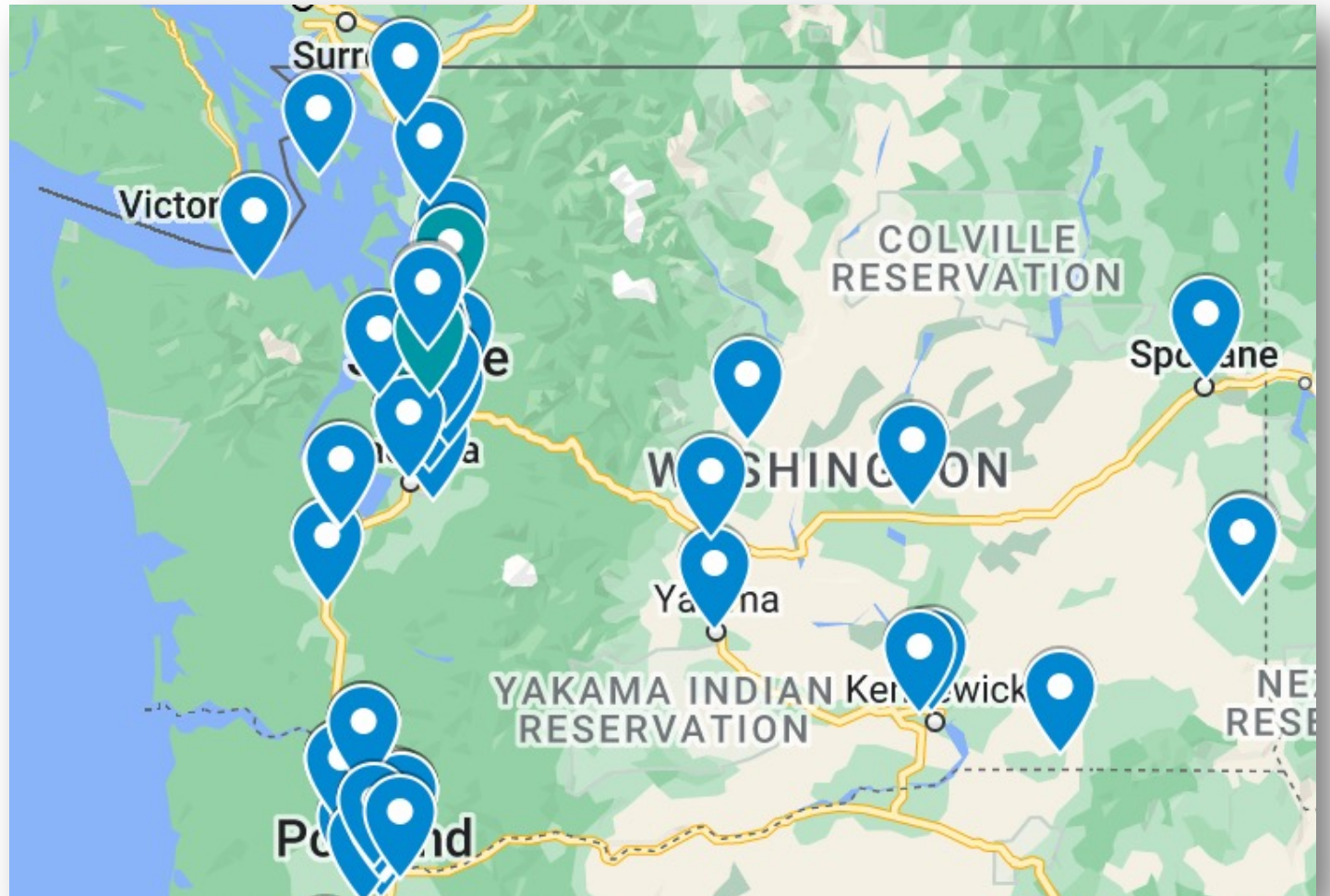
“The defining feature of modern transgender medicine is transphobia. Unlike many fields of medical practice, **transgender medicine was deliberately intended by its architects to prevent and limit as many trans people as possible from transitioning.** This is conventionally termed the “gatekeeping” model of transgender medicine... The story of how this self-limiting principle came to be and why is immensely complex, but it is the overwhelming consensus of the historians... That premise was codified as the field’s best practices in the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, which today goes by the name **WPATH (World Professional Association for Transgender Health).**”

**- Jules Gill-Peterson, Associate Prof. of History, Johns Hopkins University**

# Care Models for Providing Gender-Affirming Medical Interventions

## Erin's Informed Consent HRT Map in the US

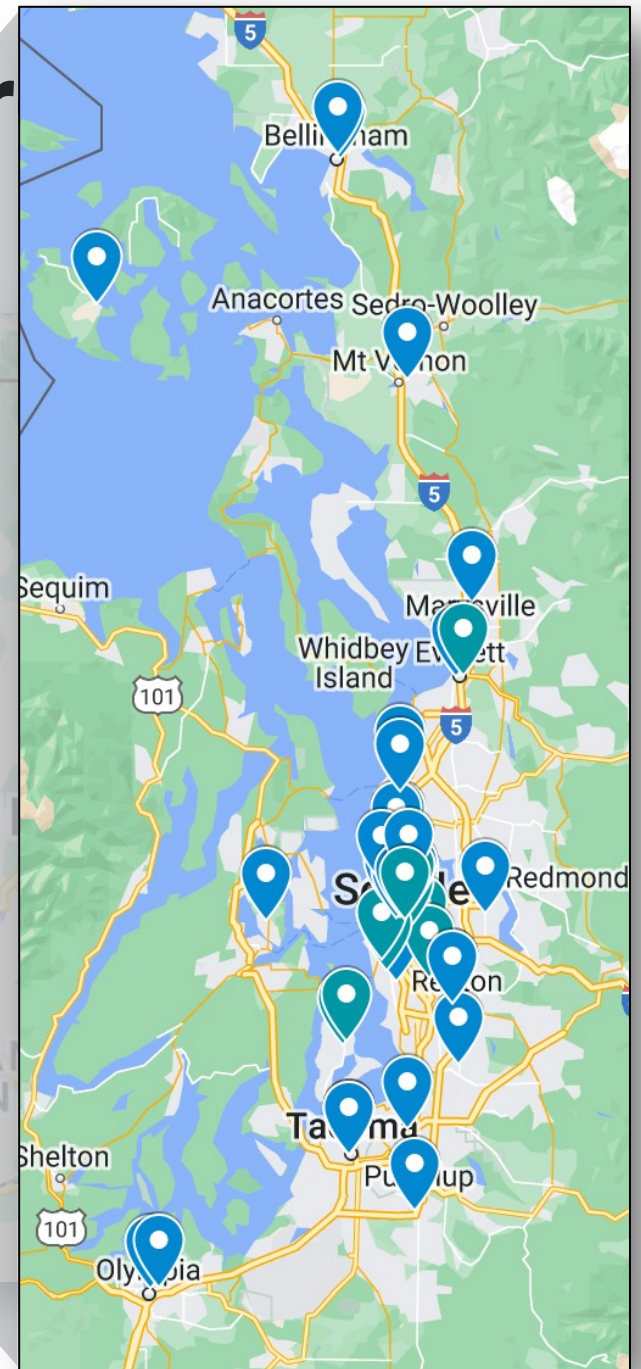
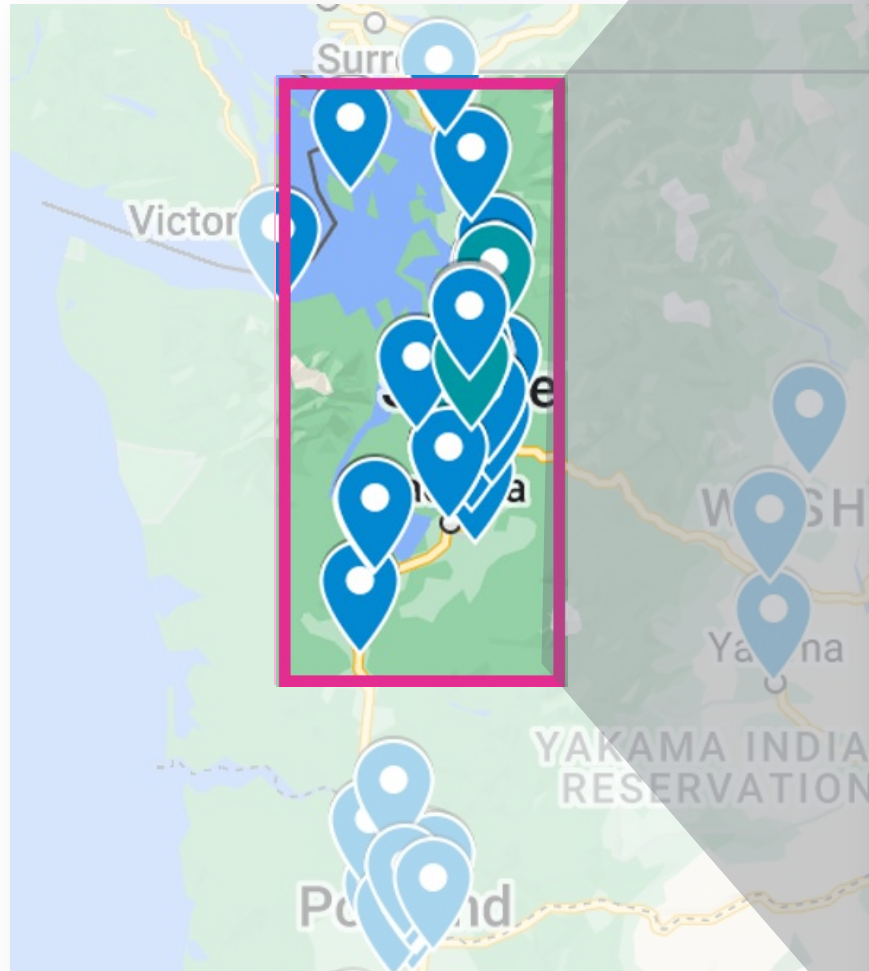
[tinyurl.com/HRTInformedConsentMap](https://tinyurl.com/HRTInformedConsentMap)



# Care Models for Providing Gender Medical Interventions

## Erin's Informed Consent HRT Map in the US

[tinyurl.com/HRTInformedConsentMap](https://tinyurl.com/HRTInformedConsentMap)



# **Section 5: Sexual Health**



# Most Data on Transgender People in WA State comes from HIV/STI Public Health Surveillance Infrastructure

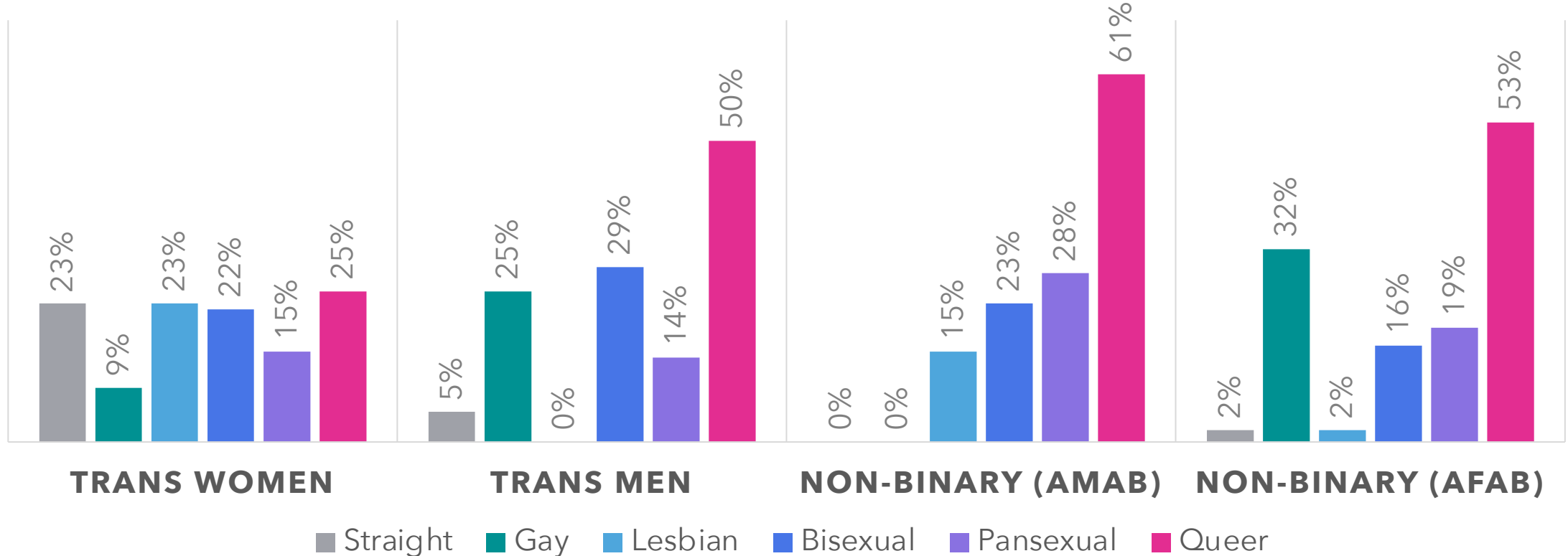
## Transgender people are disproportionately impacted by HIV/STIs in WA

- 7% of non-binary people AMAB, 7% trans women, 2% of non-binary people AFAB, and <1% of trans men are **living with HIV**.
- 34% of non-binary people AMAB, 16% trans women, 15% of trans men, and 6% of non-binary people AFAB were **diagnosed with an STI in the past year**.



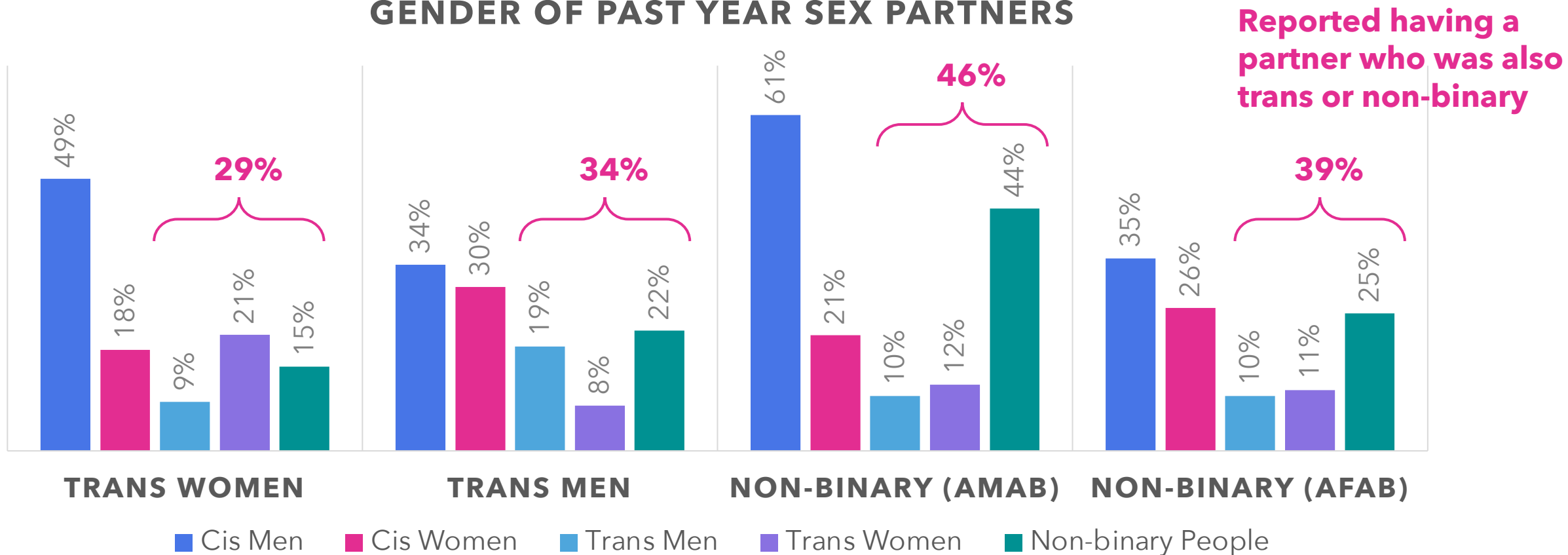
# Trans People are Diverse in Sexual Orientation & Partnerships

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION OF TRANS PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON

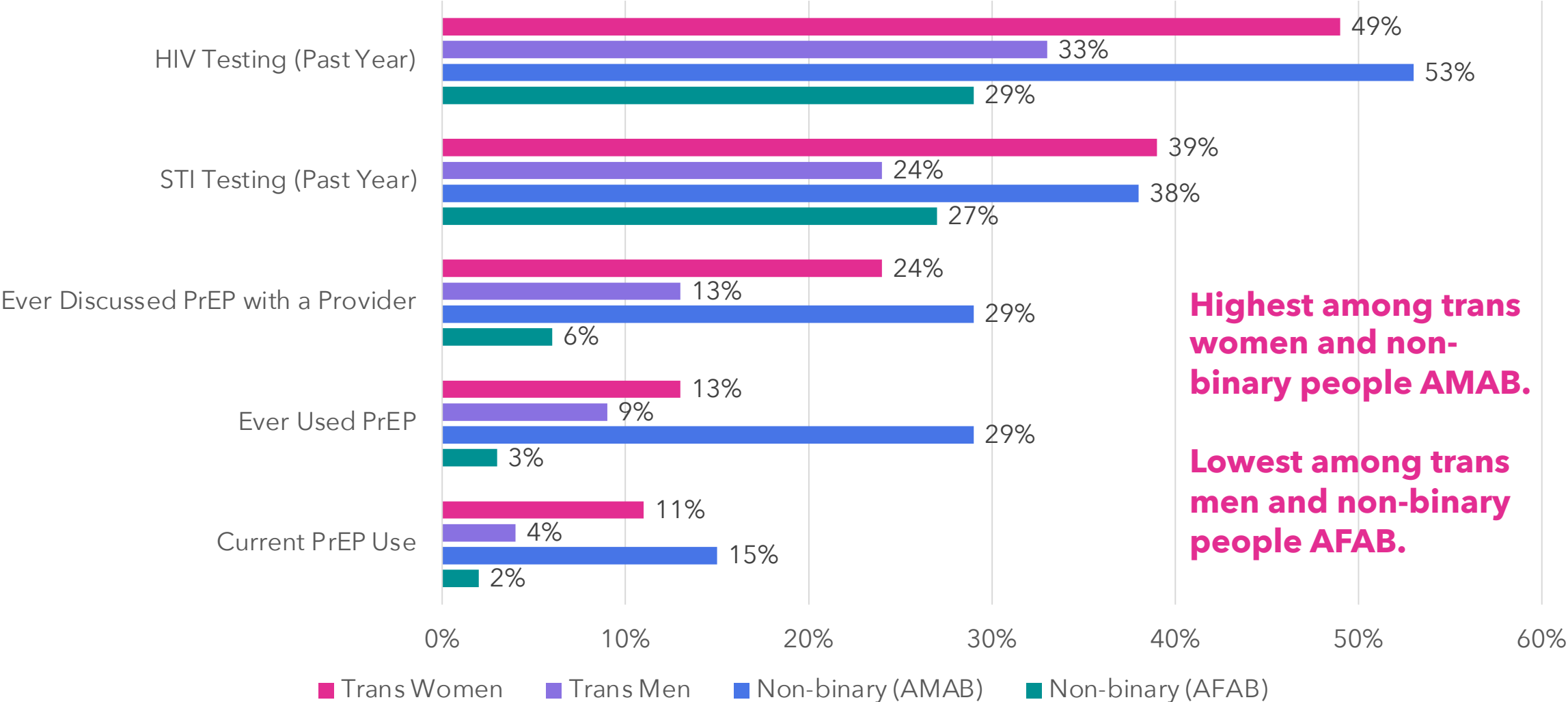


# Trans People are Diverse in Sexual Orientation & Partnerships

GENDER OF PAST YEAR SEX PARTNERS



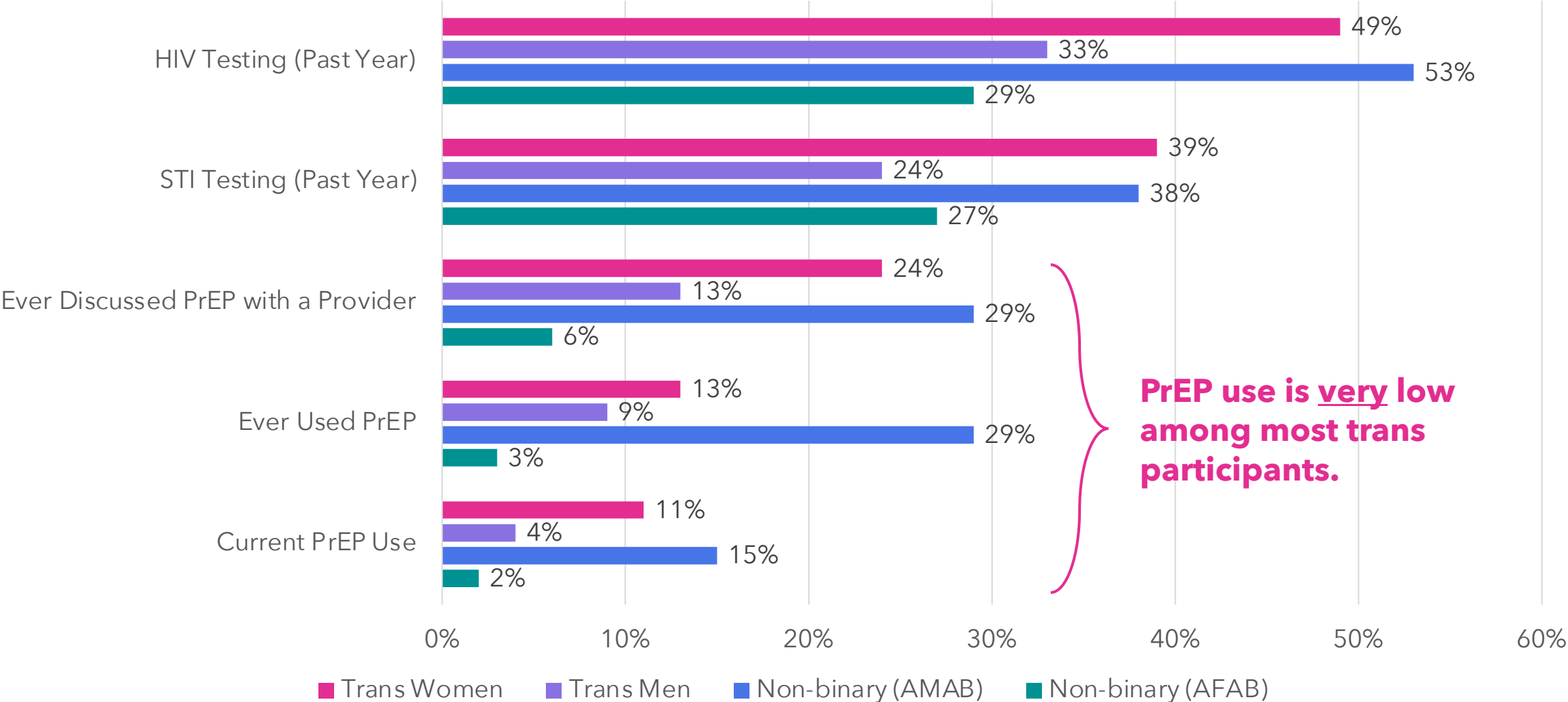
# Significant Heterogeneity in HIV/STI Prevention Utilization



**Highest among trans women and non-binary people AMAB.**

**Lowest among trans men and non-binary people AFAB.**

# Significant Heterogeneity in HIV/STI Prevention Utilization

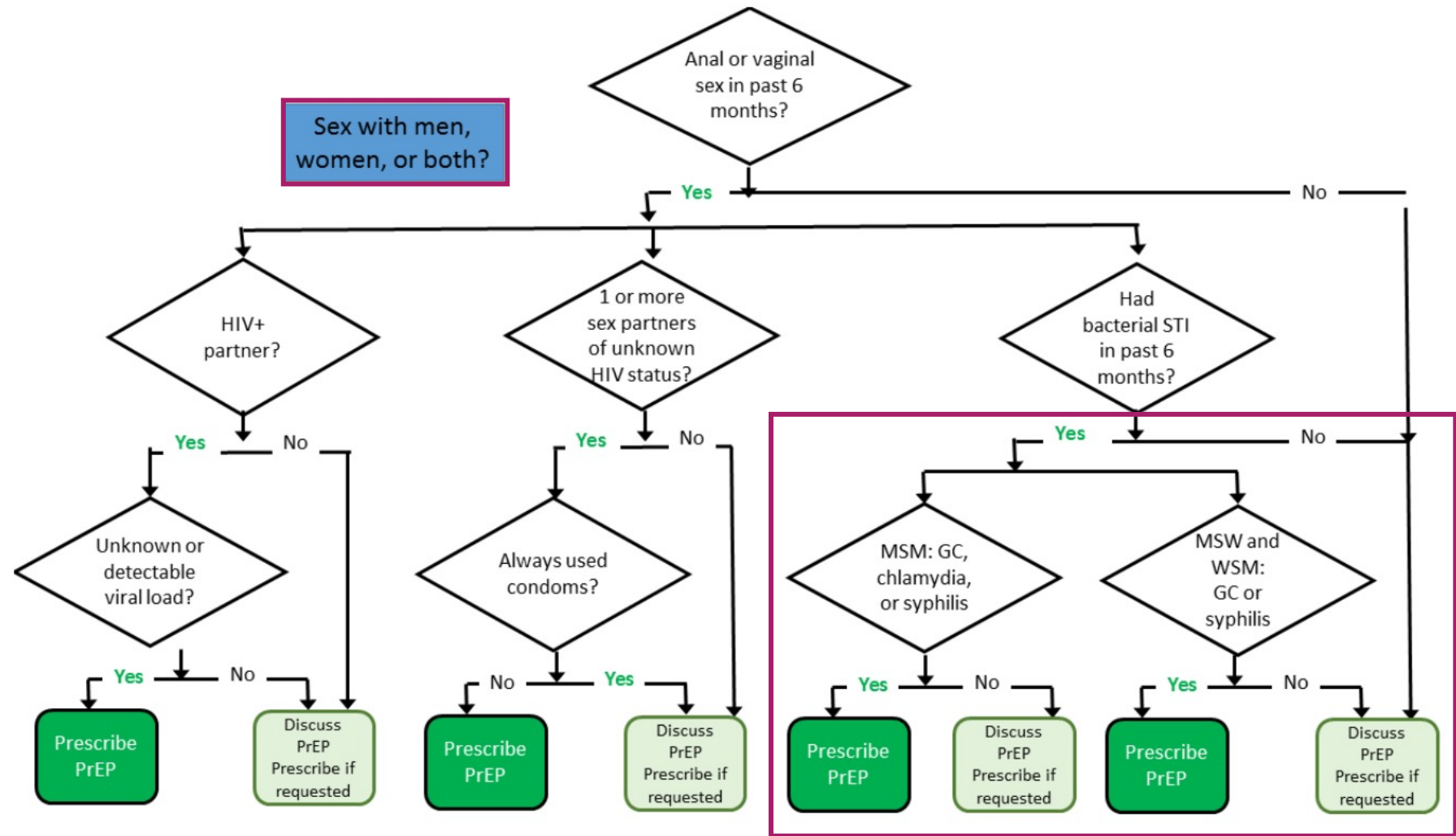


# PrEP Recommendations (2021)

Figure 2 Assessing Indications for PrEP in Sexually Active Persons

Anal or vaginal sex in past 6 months **AND** any of the following:

- HIV-positive sexual partner (especially if partner has an unknown or detectable viral load)
- Bacterial STI in past 6 months
- History of inconsistent or no condom use with sexual partner(s)



# Section 6: Resources



# Data on Transgender Populations in WA

## 2015 U.S. TRANSGENDER SURVEY



The 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey (USTS) is the largest survey examining the experiences of transgender people in the United States, with 27,715 respondents nationwide. The USTS was conducted by the National Center for Transgender Equality in the summer of 2015. Of respondents in the USTS, 1,667 were Washington residents.<sup>1</sup> This report discusses the experiences of respondents living in Washington.

### Income and Employment Status

- 14% of respondents in Washington were unemployed.<sup>2</sup>
- 28% were living in poverty.<sup>3</sup>

### Employment and the Workplace

- 16% of respondents who have ever been employed reported losing a job in their lifetime because of their gender identity or expression.
- In the past year, 28% of those who held or applied for a job during that year reported being fired, being denied a promotion, or not being hired for a job they applied for because of their gender identity or expression.
- Respondents who had a job in the past year reported being verbally harassed (17%) and sexually assaulted (1%) at work because of their gender identity or expression.
- 23% of those who had a job in the past year reported other forms of mistreatment based on their gender identity or expression during that year, such as being forced to use a restroom that did not match their gender identity, being told to present in the wrong gender in order to keep their job, or having a boss or coworker share private information about their transgender status with others without their permission.

### Education

- 79% of those who were out or perceived as transgender at some point between Kindergarten and Grade 12 (K–12) experienced some form of mistreatment, such as being verbally harassed, prohibited from dressing according to their gender identity, disciplined more harshly, or physically or sexually assaulted because people thought they were transgender.
- 57% of those who were out or perceived as transgender in K–12 were verbally harassed, 26% were physically attacked, and 14% were sexually assaulted in K–12 because of being transgender.
- 21% faced such severe mistreatment as a transgender person that they left a K–12 school.

a vision for greater access to

## gender affirming healthcare

For a future where our communities can feel whole, safe and at home in their bodies.



INGERSOLL GENDER CENTER

[www.ingersollgendercenter.org](http://www.ingersollgendercenter.org)

PUBLIC HEALTH — SEATTLE & KING COUNTY

## 2021 PRIDE SURVEY REPORT

Social Determinants of Health and Barriers to Health Care for LGBTQ+ People in Washington State



@rut.mala.oliver

[ustranssurvey.org/reports](http://ustranssurvey.org/reports)

[ingersollgendercenter.org/2019-healthaccessreport](http://ingersollgendercenter.org/2019-healthaccessreport)

[tinyurl.com/WApridereport](http://tinyurl.com/WApridereport)

# Trans-led Orgs in Washington



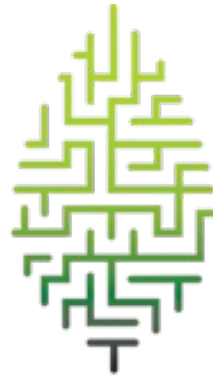
**Washington  
Gender  
Alliance**



**Spokane TALL**  
(Transgender, Advocacy,  
Learning and Leadership)



**Seattle  
Non-binary  
Collective**



**Gender Diversity**



**femme & them**

**Queer & Trans\* POC  
Birthwerq Project**

**Conspiracy of  
Geniuses**

& Rad Care Mutual Liberation Arts & Healing Network



# Washington Resources Guides

[kctransguide.org](http://kctransguide.org)

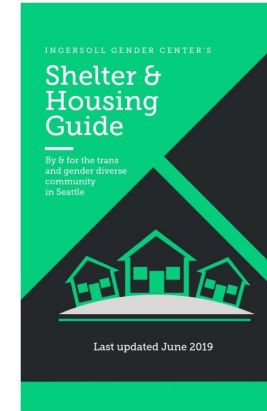
## 2017 KING COUNTY TRANS RESOURCE & REFERRAL GUIDE



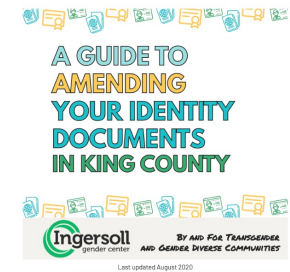
[ingersollgendercenter.org/guides](http://ingersollgendercenter.org/guides)



Seattle Trans Tenants Rights Guide



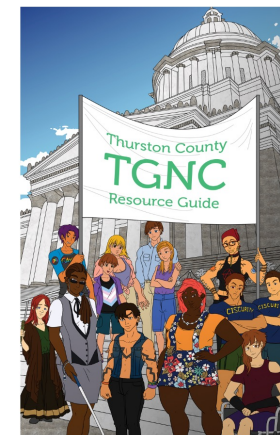
Housing and Shelter Guide



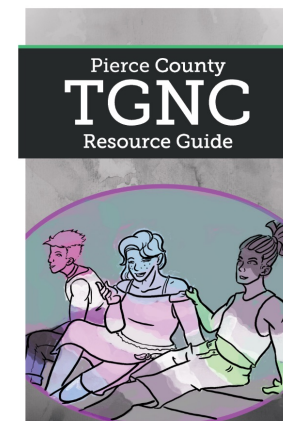
Guide to Amending Identity Documents in King County



Snohomish County



Thurston County



Pierce County

# Resources on Transgender Health Care



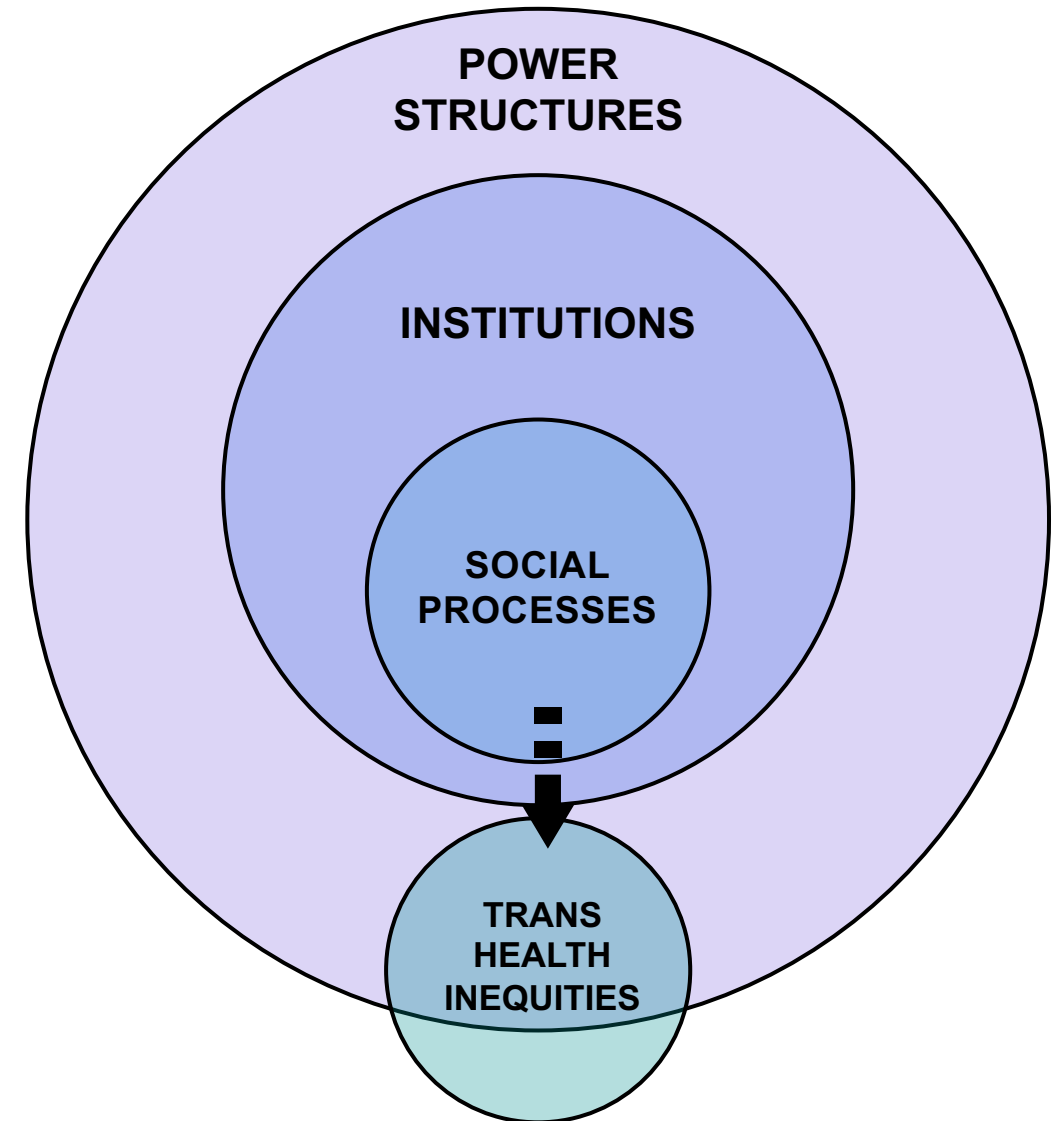
Guidelines for the Primary and Gender-Affirming Care of Transgender and Gender Nonbinary People

Center of Excellence for Transgender Health

- [Trans 101: Transgender People in Everyday Work and Life!](#) (online course)
- [Acknowledging Gender and Sex](#) (online course)
- [Transgender HIV Testing Toolkit](#) (toolkit)
- [National Transgender Health Summit](#) (biennial conference)

# Structural Competency to Better Serve Trans Patients

- **Cisnormativity, cis-sexism, and transphobia** impact everyday life and access to resources
- Protective **legal/policy** landscape in WA
- **Insurance** denials for transgender care
- Limited inclusion in research & public health surveillance
- Experiences of **poverty** due to economic disenfranchisement
- Frequently experience **discrimination** in public places, work places, and health care settings.
- Health care avoidance due to **financial/structural barriers** and fear of **mistreatment**
- Gaps in knowledge about trans health
  
- **Inequitable Access to health care**
- **Inequitable Health Outcomes**



Adapted from the Intersectional Research for Transgender Health Justice Framework (Wesp et al. 2019)

**What will you do next to improve  
trans health equity in WA state?**



# Thank you!

## Contact Us:

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## Community Chat

August 11, 11am-Noon



**Atlas Fernandez**  
*Building Changes*



**Brian Minalga**  
*Fred Hutch*



**Diana Tordoff**  
*University of Washington*



**Nicole Perry**  
*Lavender Rights Project*



**Moderated by:**  
**Genya Shimkin**  
*University of Washington*

**Register Online**  
[tinyurl.com/comchatWA](https://tinyurl.com/comchatWA)

## Acknowledgments:

### STARS Advisory Board

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### Funders

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FOR PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE

