

INTRODUCTION

The right to health care is a human right and, as such, is inalienable. Its fulfillment is the obligation of the States, guaranteed in the national legislations, pacts, treaties and international conventions. However, a large part of the population still lacks this right.

Trans women live in permanent violation of many of our rights. In Latin America and the Caribbean, we go through situations of systematic violation of our human rights. Historically, "the lack of legal recognition that trans people have lived for years has been one of the main reasons why this population does not have their basic needs met". Evidence of non-recognition of our human rights is the reduction, hindering or interruption of our access to health due to barriers and conditions imposed on public and private services.

Trans women, throughout our lives, we face problems related to health, detached from both the stigma, discrimination and violence to which we are exposed, as a set of problems presented by health services and health care professionals that they work in them.



OBJECTIVES OF THE GUIDE

This guide has been thought of as a tool to improve access to health care services for trans women and it has been designed and written by trans woman. It was built as a source of practical and rapid review, in which those working in health care services can find the necessary information on how to comprehensively address (and from a respectful perspective of human rights) our health. Its central objective is to function as a source of information for people who work in, organize or plan health services.



In an environment of medical consultation or health care approach, what matters is the way in which we call ourselves. If the profile of a trans woman in consultation can be associated, for example, with a "queer" definition but she prefers to be called a transvestite, her decision must be respected. It also depends on that treatment that we stay in treatment and return to health services.

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Health Care Professionals had been trained in comprehensive health care for transgender people during 2016.

The possible consultations that we make in mental health services are related to social elements and life in society and not to our gender identity.

1172

Health Care Professionals had been trained in comprehensive health care for transgender people during 2017.

Every time a trans woman is called from the doctor's office with a male name, the possibility of incorporating her into the health care service is lost and she is discriminated.

733

Health Care Professionals had been trained in comprehensive health care for transgender people during 2018.

But we also think that this guide can be useful for all trans women who can use it as an empowerment tool, turning it into a political advocacy strategy and claiming friendly health care services that meet our specific needs. We hope that this guide accompanies trans women from Latin America and the Caribbean to approach health services and work together with their staff for comprehensive and dignified approaches.

The guide provides recommendations and advice on how to properly accompany us regarding our health and our gender identity.

People who work in health services, in their different spaces and organizational and administrative forms have a lot of power over our bodies and our lives. It is for this reason that we consider that we have to be allies in this urgent task of eliminating the obstacles that exist and achieving our approach, access and permanence in health services, which will quickly impact on an improvement of both public health and of our particular health.



We are not 'men who have sex with men', as they called us for a long time in studies on HIV / AIDS and sexually transmitted infections. We are TRANS WOMEN.

While not all trans women perform sex work, many of us do. It is important that they ask us and act without prejudice or stigmatization before our answers.

It is necessary to generate multiple signals that make us feel integrated and understood by the health services. In cases of not having the resources, interventions can be made on the existing traditional signage, to make it more inclusive.

It is of central importance that the health services (in all their stages: reception, identification, attention) refer to us with the name chosen and according to our identity and not with the name that appears in our official documents

It is necessary that the approaches are respectful and with dialogue, otherwise we do not want to expose our bodies to be reviewed by people who can not call us by our name or use the articles in the corresponding gender.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is of fundamental importance the inclusion of trans women organizations in the design, modification or maintenance of integral health care services for trans women. We have a very deep knowledge about the techniques that work best and about specific ways of approaching our population.

- Employing trans women for initial care and reception in designated and planned areas for transgender people usually improves the quality of care and our experience in health services.

- The agents involved in the provision of health services must respect the gender identity declared by the trans woman. In this sense, it is important that they use the name (corresponding to the identity).

- Integral health care must take into account the diversity in which trans women see each other. Not only the diversity of gender, but the social, ethnic, capacity, age, economic resources, etc.

- Our bodily, mental and social well-being largely depends on the context in which we develop. No diagnosis or treatment, consultancy or recommendation will be correct if the conditions of stigma, discrimination, violence and/or persecution that trans women live almost daily are not taken into account.

- Having a gender identity law modifies these conditions in a very important way. However, many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean do not have one. The gender identity law is the legal basis to guarantee access to all our economic, social, political and cultural rights.

- If the right to health is a human right, the provision of health care services friendly to trans women is a necessary and unavoidable tool for accessing this universal right.

- Signage, brochures and administrative forms must recognize and account for gender diversity (as well as other diversities).

- Health workers should commit themselves to a constant and updated training on gender issues and the adaptation of the body to the gender identity.

- The health care service and its agents must guarantee confidentiality and privacy.

