



# Queer Connection Lanark

## Guiding Questions

- **What are we already doing to make our agencies/workplaces safe and inclusive for the Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Pansexual+ community (2SLGBTQIAP+) community?**
- **What have we learned along the way?**
- **What do we need to continue this work?**

# What can QCL do to support with this work?

## **Working towards best practices – every equity journey begins with a single step...**

- Advertise specifically to marginalized communities such as the Queer community
- Commit to equity staff training
- Create safe spaces in your offices by displaying pride flag
- Annually review the diversity of your staffing and the language in your job postings
- Find ways to participate in Pride events, ensure that our community knows that you are interested in serving us
- Develop an organizational review of policies and procedures regularly and the training to accompany it
- Create a Diversity Affirming Pledge (see next slide for an example)
- Review your Insurance Benefits plan to see if it includes coverage for Transitioning Employees (see slide 4)
- Have some fun learning along the way (see Erin's terminology puzzle)
- Contact QCL if you have questions

## A Sample of Diversity Affirming Principle

\_\_\_\_\_ will promote and foster the human rights and equitable inclusion of Two Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and non-binary youth through programs, services and community engagement.

The Agency will assure this by:

- Consistently challenging bias/hateful statements;
- Using affirming gender language or gender-neutral language. This includes calling each person by their chosen name and using their pronouns;
- Understanding that sexual identity and gender expression are fluid and respect each person's self-identity as it changes;
- Not making assumptions. This includes not assuming someone's orientation or gender identity based on appearance or behaviour; and
- Valuing everyone. We treat everyone, staff, volunteer or visitor, with unconditional professional regard.

\*\*\* having an Affirming Principle will assist your Agency with policy development and review.

# Overview of Insurance Benefits for Transitioning Employees

## Items covered within Ontario

- **Gender confirming surgery is covered under OHIP in Ontario.** Top and bottom surgeries are included. In order to qualify the client must be assessed and recommended for surgery by one or two HCPs (depending on the type of surgery), a referral completed and submitted to the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and have the surgery approved BEFORE the surgery takes place.
- Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) for trans and non-binary people in Ontario is no longer a specialty area. What this means is that in most cases, **your current primary care provider (doctor or nurse practitioner) can provide HRT for you.**
- **Oral Estrogen and IM/SC testosterone is covered in Ontario through OHIP and ODB.** An Exceptional Access Program form must be submitted to the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in order to receive coverage, and this form is available on their website.

If you are enrolled in the Fair PharmaCare program, depending on your income, many hormone therapies will be covered.

A monthly prescription for oral hormone replacement therapy costs between \$130-\$240 per month. This equates to \$1,560-\$2,440 per year. But, since most insurance pays for HRT pills, patients typically only have to cover co-pay costs, which are around \$30 per month.

## What is not covered

- What is not covered includes: liposuction, electrolysis, chest contouring/masculinizing, laser hair removal, hair transplants, tracheal shaving, voice modification surgery, facial implants, travel involved for surgery, facial feminization/masculinization, and fertility/banking.

# Equity Walks


[Equity Walk Through - EQUIP Health Care | Research to Improve Health Equity Walkthrough Design File Jan 29 2018 \(equiphealthcare.ca\)](#)  
[Equity-Walk-Through-Exercise-March-23-2018.pdf \(equiphealthcare.ca\)](#)

- **EQUIP Health Care has created a video and supporting resources based on an Equity Walk in a health care setting. It is a great example of what you could adapt to your organization with “look fors” the make sense for you.**
- **You can start with halls and walls, for example, (thinking about accessibility, welcome signs, posters on the walls (who is represented and who isn’t), washroom signage, access to hygiene products (period equity), check for graffiti on tables, walls, stalls etc....**
- **From here could go on to do social media “equity walks”, walks through your forms, how your data is presented...**
- **Be sure to celebrate what you are doing, don’t feel you have to make sweeping changes all at once**
- **Think about who will join you in your walk, would you consider inviting youth and families?**
- **How cool would it be to do a walk and then do another one at a later date and take stock of all you have done and apply your learning as you go – equity is an ongoing process**

# Want to Learn More About the “Why” of our Work?

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- Supporting Transgender and Gender Diverse Youth in Ontario Schools – new research from Western University [Western University \(uwo.ca\)](http://www.uwo.ca)
- Still in Every Class in Every School is the Final Report on the Second National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia in Canadian Schools – new data/research from Egale Canada [Still In Every Class In Every School - Egale](#)



Please do not hesitate to reach out to **Queer Connection Lanark** if you have any questions, want to bounce around ideas, or come across some ideas/resources to share  
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