



gendered intelligence
increasing understandings of gender diversity

Gendered Intelligence Therapists and Counsellors Network Standards of Provision v2.0, Feb 2023

About the Standards

These Standards of Provision aim to support therapists and counsellors wishing to join the Gendered Intelligence Therapists and Counsellors Network (TCN) and work with trans¹ and gender questioning people (and their families). They offer a framework for practice.

It is expected that all therapists and counsellors in the Network will adhere to this set of standards regarding their provision. Agreeing to work within the Standards is a pre-requisite to be a Network Member, to be listed in the GI Therapists and Counsellors Directory and to take part in TCN supervisions. Therapists and counsellors who are unable to commit to working within these standards are unable to access these opportunities.

Standards of Provision

Members of the Gendered Intelligence Therapists and Counsellors Network agree to follow these principles of practice.

- to understand and work from the position that being trans and/or gender questioning in and of itself is not a pathology or a mental illness², nor is it indicative of any kind of developmental arrest
- to recognise that trans people are particularly at risk of experiencing difficulties with their emotional health and mental wellbeing, due to the barriers they face in connection with their gender identity³
- to treat people in accordance with their gender identity
- to respect people's name, pronoun and the words that they use to describe their identity
- to be inclusive around facilities
- to give inclusive options on databases, records and forms

¹ In this context, we use the term 'trans' to refer to the broad spectrum of people who feel that the sex/gender they were assigned at birth does not match or sit easily with their sense of self. It is a broad term and includes people who might describe themselves as non-binary, gender fluid, agender, transgender, transsexual, and men or women of trans history, among many other words. We also recognise that people may be questioning or exploring their gender identity and not identify as trans, and that people may or may not identify as trans in the future.

² **'Gender Dysphoria Services: A Guide for General Practitioners and other Healthcare Staff'** (Apr 2013): "It should be emphasised that Gender Dysphoria and Transsexualism are not considered, in and of themselves, mental illnesses in any essential sense. The associated pressures of unmanaged dysphoria and/or the social stigma that can accompany gender diagnosis and transition may, however, result in clinically significant levels of distress."

³ Ibid.

- to follow the ethical code of their registering body, ensuring confidentiality and ethical practice for all clients
- not to act in a discriminatory way to a person because they are trans or gender questioning, nor with regard to other characteristics including those protected by law such as age, disability, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation, and those which have no formal protection such as socio-economic background
- to have read and to work within the principles of the Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy in the UK, v2 2017, Revision A 2019 ([link](#)) ensuring that their practice isn't any form of conversion therapy
- to engage with inclusive practices that affirm trans and gender questioning people and their experiences, ensuring space for celebration of trans identities in clinical practice and beyond
- to keep up to date with information, learning and literature around trans inclusive practices
- to provide true and accurate information in the application form(s) for GI TCN Membership and GI TCN Directory entry, and to advise GI of any material changes in a timely manner

In addition, we expect members to attend our supervision sessions regularly, or ensure they have adequate specialist supervision.

Guidance on Inclusive and Affirmative Practice

Though there is little direct guidance on inclusive and affirmative practice for Therapists and Counsellors in the UK, we recommend these two documents from America as potentially useful guides in supporting professional practice and development:

- American Counselling Association Competencies for Counselling Transgender Clients, 2009 ([link](#))
- American Psychological Association Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Transgender and Gender Nonconforming people, 2015 ([link](#))