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**Q: HOW DO I CHOOSE THE CORRECT INFORMATION?**

There are no right or wrong answers. If you don't find an answer that fits, you can choose "Other" or you can talk with your provider.

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**Q: WHO WILL SEE THIS INFORMATION?**

Members of your healthcare team and authorized hospital staff will see this information. This information will become part of your medical record and will be kept confidential in accordance with all legal requirements.

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**Q: WHAT IF I DON'T WANT TO SHARE THIS INFORMATION?**

You have the option to decline to answer any of these questions. You may choose to answer a question at some time in the future and, if you do, that information can then be entered into your medical record.

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**Q: HOW WILL THIS INFORMATION BE USED?**

We will use this information to help meet your health care needs. In addition, gathering this information from our patients lets us evaluate whether there are gaps in care or services among our diverse patient populations. This will help us improve the care we provide to our patients.



**HSS**

Thank you for taking the time to complete these questions. If you have additional questions, we encourage you to speak with your provider.

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**YOU MAY ALSO CONTACT:**

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*Community Engagement, Diversity & Research*  
*Department of Social Work Programs*

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**References**

National LGBT Health Education Center A Program of the Fenway Institute (n.d.).

New Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Questions: Information for Patients [Brochure]. Retrieved from <https://www.lgbthealtheducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/SOGI-Patient-Handout-updated.pdf>.

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**HSS**

**Race, Ethnicity, Language, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Questions: Information for Patients**



HSS now asks all patients about race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation and gender identity. These questions are asked by registration and other staff members. You can also share this information with us using MyHSS.

At HSS, we believe that learning more about our patients will help us provide the highest quality care. Asking these questions is consistent with the hospital's non-discrimination policies and federal, state, and local laws prohibiting discrimination and promotes our commitment to providing the highest quality care to all. Inside are frequently asked questions and answers about why we are asking for this information.

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**We Ask  
Because  
We Care**

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## Q: WHY AM I BEING ASKED ABOUT MY SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY?

Every patient has unique health needs. Research shows that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTQ+) people have health needs that differ from the rest of the population. They also experience higher rates of certain health concerns compared with others. Learning about a patient's sexual orientation and gender identity will help us deliver appropriate health services and culturally sensitive care.



## Q: WHAT IS GENDER IDENTITY?



Gender identity is a person's inner sense of their gender. For example, a person may think of themselves as male, as female, as a combination of male and female, or as neither gender.



## Q: WHAT DOES TRANSGENDER MEAN?

- **Transgender** people have a gender identity that is not the same as their sex assigned at birth.
- **Transgender man (FTM)** describes someone assigned female at birth who has a male gender identity.
- **Transgender woman (MTF)** describes someone assigned male at birth who has a female gender identity.
- **Genderqueer** describes someone who has a gender identity that is neither male nor female, or is a combination of male and female.

## Q: WHAT IS SEXUAL ORIENTATION?

**Sexual orientation** is how a person describes their emotional and sexual attraction to others.

- **Heterosexual (straight)** describes women who are emotionally and sexually attracted to men, and men who are emotionally and sexually attracted to women.
- **Gay** describes a person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to people of their own gender. It is a term most commonly used when talking about men.
- **Lesbian** describes a woman who is emotionally and sexually attracted to other women.
- **Bisexual** describes a person who is emotionally and sexually attracted to people of their own gender and people of other genders.



## Q: WHY AM I BEING ASKED ABOUT MY RACE, ETHNICITY AND LANGUAGE?

HSS is committed to delivering the highest quality of care to patients from all cultural backgrounds. Learning about race, ethnicity and language allows us to deliver care that is respectful and specific to the cultural and language needs of diverse patients, which can lead to better health outcomes.

## Q: WHAT IS RACE?

Race refers to a group or groups with similar features, traits or birthplace. Examples include: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American and White.

## Q: WHAT IS ETHNICITY?

Ethnicity refers to a social group or groups with a shared history, sense of identity, geography and cultural roots which may occur despite racial differences. Examples include: Haitian, Puerto Rican, Chinese and Italian.

## Q: WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY PREFERRED SPOKEN LANGUAGE?

Preferred spoken language is the language a patient feels most comfortable using when discussing health care concerns.

## Q: WHY AM I BEING ASKED ABOUT AN INTERPRETER?

HSS offers skilled medical interpreters and communication assistance free of charge to ensure that all patients and their families receive health care information in their preferred language. Medical Interpretation is provided by onsite interpreters as well as via video and telephonic services. [For more information, please contact Language Services at 212.606.1760.](#)

## Q: WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY PREFERRED WRITTEN LANGUAGE?

Preferred written language is the language a patient feels most comfortable using when reading health care instructions.

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