

Inclusive Health Care Glossary of Key Terms

CALD – An acronym for ‘Culturally and Linguistically Diverse’ people, often used as a synonym for multicultural communities

Carer – People who support consumers who are disabled, frail, have a medical condition or a mental illness. Carers can be formal, informal, paid, or unpaid.

Consumers – People who access health care or services. They include patients, their friends, families, carers, and members of the public

Cultural safety – Providing an environment that is safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Cultural competency – Providing an environment that is safe for consumers with different cultures and beliefs to your own

Cisgender – A cisgender person (sometimes just referred to as ‘cis’ for short) is a person whose gender is the same as the gender they were assigned at birth

Disability – People with a disability include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments *

Easy read – A type of communication developed for audiences with intellectual disabilities. It is sometimes called Easy English with short, clear sentences or graphics

Gender Binary – The gender binary is the idea that there are only two opposing genders that people can be – the masculine (boys/men) and the feminine (girls/women). It is a social construct but still appears often when sex and gender are confused as the same thing (e.g., on forms, toilets, titles).

Gender Diverse – Gender diverse is an umbrella term that can refer to people whose gender identity and expression doesn’t fit within the expected binary framework (male or female)

Health Literacy – Individual health literacy is the knowledge, skills, confidence and motivation that people use make decisions about their health in everyday life. The health literacy environment is the place where people seek health information, make health decisions, and use health services.

Heteronormativity – The treatment of heterosexual relationships (opposite sex relationships) as the ‘normal’ expression of sexuality. Heteronormativity often means that social expectations, education, media, systems, and structures focus on opposite-sex relationships, excluding many members of the community

Intersectionality – A term created by scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. Today it refers to the way race, gender, class, sexuality, and other parts of who we are overlap and how this shapes our experiences. Intersectionality means seeing people as a whole and recognising that we all have different experiences, identities, needs and bodies.

LGBTQIA+ An acronym for 'lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual +' The '+' represents people that may not identify with any of the other terms but have diverse sex, sexuality, or gender.

Marginalisation – A process where systems force people or groups into positions with less power, influence, or social capital than other members of the population.

Neurodiversity – A term created by sociologist Judy Singer in the 1990s. Neurodiversity recognises that not everyone's brain functions in the same way. Neurodiverse people may have skills and strengths, ways of learning, socialising, and communicating that differs to those who are 'neurotypical'. Some examples of neurotypes are Autism, ADHD, Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, OCD, and Tourette's.

Plain English – A form of English that keeps sentences short, uses the simplest version of a word, uses active voice, and uses lists to help audiences understand information

Social model – The social model of disability does not view disability as an individual's 'problem' to be fixed by medical professionals. Instead, the 'problem' lies with unnecessary barriers in society. For example, if someone in a wheelchair can't access a building because it has no ramp, the 'problem' is not that the person is in a wheelchair, but that the building has no ramp. In contrast, the **Medical Model** views disability as an individual problem to be treated by medical professionals.

Stigmatisation – Stigma is when a person or group is viewed in a negative way due to the characteristics they have. Stigmatisation is when stigma exists or is developed around a particular characteristic.

Unconscious Bias – Learned attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs. We may not be aware of what these attitudes, assumptions or beliefs are, as they are based on instinct rather than analysis or evidence. This can mean that, without realising, we are basing judgements, thoughts, decisions, or actions on false stereotypes that can harm communities.

Where to learn more?

[A Gender Agenda Glossary](#)

[Orygen Glossary for Cultural Diversity and Mental Wellbeing](#)

[People With Disabilities Australia Language Guide](#)

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