

HOT TOPICS – NOVEMBER 2023

TRANSGENDER AWARENESS WEEK

What is Transgender Awareness Week?

This month's Hot Topic focuses on "[Transgender Awareness Week](#)", "a week when transgender people and their allies take action to bring attention to the community by educating the public about who transgender people are, sharing stories and experiences, and advancing advocacy around issues of prejudice, discrimination, and violence that affect the transgender community" [Source: [Transgender Awareness Week - GLAAD](#)]

When is Transgender Awareness Week

Transgender Awareness Week runs from 13 – 19 November. It's purpose is to play a role in raising "the visibility of transgender and gender non-conforming people, and address the issues the community faces" [Source: [Trans Awareness Week | TUC](#)]. Another important date to be aware of this month is 20th November, which is Transgender Day of Remembrance. This date is used to remember all those who were killed as a result of transphobia, as well as focusing attention on the continued violence experienced by those within the transgender community.

So what does 'Trans' mean?

"Trans is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, non-binary, or genderqueer". One of the things that it is important to remember is that "Not everyone identifies as 'male' or 'female'. Sometimes, people assume that being trans is about feeling you are the 'opposite' gender. This is true for some trans people, but not for others. This assumption makes things difficult for those who identify outside of 'male' or 'female', for example non-binary people. A non-binary person may need some different things to feel comfortable to, for example, a trans person who identifies as 'male'". [Source: [What Does Trans Mean? \(stonewall.org.uk\)](#)].

Who supports the LGBTQ community?

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), which was founded in 1985 'is a non-profit organisation focused on LGBTQ advocacy and cultural change. GLAAD works to ensure fair, accurate, and inclusive representation and creates national and local



programmes that advance LGBTQ acceptance' [Source: [About GLAAD - GLAAD](#)]

In June 2023, a host of LGBTQ celebrities & allies called on the heads of a number of social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok and X Corp (previously Twitter) to stick to their Terms & Conditions in addressing "hate, harassment and malicious anti-LGBTQ disinformation" [Source: [LGBTQ Celebrities & Allies Call on Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter to Stop the Flow of Anti-Trans Hate & Malicious Disinformation About Trans Healthcare - GLAAD](#)]



To help you prepare for a discussion with your PDC regarding transgender awareness issues, you may consider the role of social media companies and how their platforms can be used to spread misinformation and inflammatory messages. Reading the Trade Union Congress [guide](#) for trade union members and reps will help you to consider how transphobic hate incidents and crimes may be reported to police. Issued in November 2020, the guide shows that there has been a "big increase in the number of transphobic hate crimes reported by police forces in England, Scotland and Wales" [Source: [Transphobic hate incidents and crimes | TUC](#)]. Furthermore, the MPS Commissioner, Sir Mark Rowley, commented in his foreword of the [MPS Turnaround Plan 2023-2025](#), "We have to tackle standards issues head on. We have been too weak in countering racism, misogyny, homophobia and ableism. We have let down those we're here to protect – particularly ... the LGBTQ+ community". To support your discussion, you should be mindful of the



[protected characteristics](#) of the Equality Act 2010 and British Values [Democracy, Rule of Law, Respect & Tolerance, Individual Liberty].

If you have been affected by anything that you have read in this Hot Topic, you may discuss your concerns with your PDC, HEI staff or your line manager in the first instance. Further support is available at [Switchboard LGBT](#) (0800 0119 100)