

# Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

*The more we know you,  
the better we can care for you.*

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At Evangelical Community Hospital, we treat all individuals with dignity and respect. We are asking you about your sexual orientation and gender identity in order to provide the best patient-centered care possible.

## What is sexual orientation?

Sexual orientation describes a person's physical and emotional attraction to others. Some examples include heterosexual (straight), gay, lesbian, and bisexual.

## What is gender identity?

Gender identity describes a person's inner sense of gender. A person may think of themselves as male, female, a combination of both, neither, or as another gender. Some examples include cisgender, transgender, genderqueer, and non-binary.

## Why am I being asked about my sexual orientation and gender identity?

Learning about the sexual orientation and gender identity of our patients helps us better understand the populations we are serving. It also allows us to offer culturally responsive care that focuses on a patient's specific needs.

## What if I'm not sure how to answer?

You can select "don't know" if you are not sure, or you can talk with your provider.

## What if I don't want to share this information?

You can select "choose not to disclose." Later, your provider may ask you these questions privately, and you can ask your provider questions. You never have to answer if you do not want to.

## Why do you ask about my chosen name?

Your chosen name is the name that you want your healthcare providers and staff to call you, regardless of your legal name. Your chosen name will be used to address you during your visit in the outpatient setting. This can be as simple as your given name is Jonathan Smith Jr., and you want to be called John, or Junior. It can also be a totally different name.

## Why do you ask about pronouns?

Pronouns are the words people use when they are referring to you, but not using your name. Examples of pronouns are she/her/hers, he/him/his, and they/them/theirs. Asking about pronouns helps staff correctly refer to patients. Otherwise, staff need to make assumptions, which can lead to embarrassing and disrespectful situations.

## Who will see this information?

Your healthcare providers will see this information and it may become part of your electronic health record. If a staff member enters the information into your health record, that person will also see your answers. If you have concerns, talk to your provider.

## How will my information be protected?

Your sexual orientation and gender identity information is confidential and protected by law, just like all of your other health information. If you are under 18 years old, your parent/guardian may have access to this information. Talk to your provider if you have any concerns.

## How will this information be used?

Your provider(s) will use this information to better understand and meet your healthcare needs. In addition, gathering this information from all patients allows us to see if there are gaps in care or services across different populations.

