

National Ambulance
LGBT Network



Supporting Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual, Trans staff,
patients and communities

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Celebrating Trans Day of Visibility



We look at the meaning
of this annual event
and its history

Steph Meech
31 March 2020



Introduction



Trans Day of Visibility takes place on the 31 March each year.

Welcome to this 15 Minute Read and this month we are going to talk about the international Trans Day of Visibility. In this edition we will be looking at:

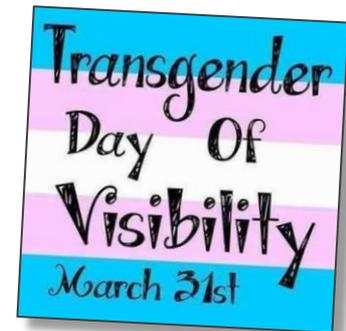
- What is Trans Day of visibility?
- Why is this important?
- What this annual event means to me?
- How can you make a difference?

To start with I will explain how Trans Day of Visibility came about and why this day is more important than ever. I hope you enjoy this 15 Minute Read and please get in touch to let me have your feedback.

Steph x



This month's 15 Minute Read was written by our network's Trans Support Lead, Steph Meech. Steph has worked for the ambulance service for 18 years and is currently a Specialist Paramedic at South East Coast Ambulance Service.



Rachel Crandell



Transgender Day of Visibility is an annual event that is celebrated on 31 March each year. The day is a celebration of transgender and non-binary communities and to highlight the ever growing discrimination that is faced around the world.

Trans Day of Visibility was founded in the United States by Trans Activist Rachel Crandell from Michigan back in 2009.

Her reasoning for this day was that there was already a Trans Day of Remembrance each November but there was not a day to acknowledge and celebrate the living members of the transgender community.

Rachel said to herself, 'Why is that person not me?' and the first Trans Day of Visibility took place on the 31 March 2009. Rachel's vision for the day was to turn the focus to all the good things within the Trans community rather than remembering all

those that have died.

Thanks to the power of social media her vision of an international day of visibility soon became reality and is now celebrated in many countries around the world.



Rachel Crandell (left) had the original vision for a day of visibility



Importance



So, why is Trans Day of Visibility important? After all, the last thing that most trans people want is to be in the spotlight but lets have a look at some statistics.

It is estimated that around 1% of the UK population identify as transgender. This group is often described as an 'emerging population' and that the actual number of people who would identify as transgender could be 3% of the population. This means in the UK alone there are estimated to be between 200,000 and 500,000 people who do not identify with the gender that they were born with.

Transgender hate crimes that were reported to the police in 2019 increased by a staggering 81%. I would like to think that the reason for this rise was down to the fact that the trans community felt safe in coming forward and reporting these crimes. But this still means that two in every five trans people will suffer a hate crime against them.



Hate crimes against trans people are on the increase



Trans Allies



The importance of trans allies is not to be underestimated. Only by more people taking the time to understand the lives of transgender people and how we can make work environments better can be really make a difference.

One of the biggest issues that the trans community will face is inappropriate banter. What often is meant to be an innocent bit of fun can cause distress. I would know as I have been on the receiving end and remember how devastated and hurt I felt.

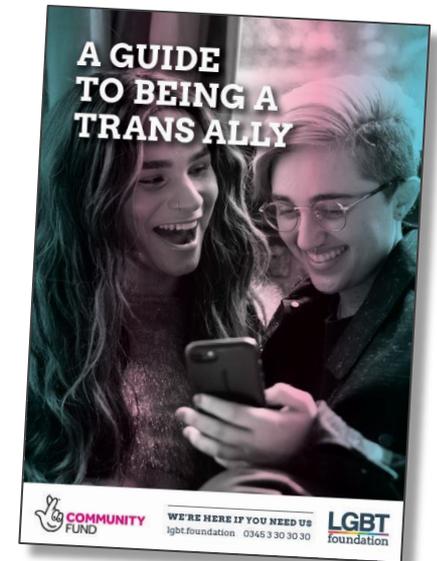
Banter is a difficult thing to give guidance about, and we are certainly not suggesting all banter is inappropriate. In the ambulance service and other emergency services it is part of our culture. When you think about banter try and think through how other people would perceive this. You might think it is funny; other might not see it the same way.

Don't forget to use the correct pronouns when

addressing transgender people. For many trans people this a big measure of affirmation. When you take the time to get this right, it will be noticed and you will seen as a supportive person.

If you are unsure what pronouns to use, then ask the person. Similarly, if you make a mistake then just apologise and move on. Don't dwell over it as this or feel embarrassed. We can all make mistakes.

An excellent little booklet is available from the LGBT Foundation which provides useful, and readable guidance.



My Photo Gallery



Having fun at Brighton TransPride 2018 (far left) and some fab-u-lous trans colleagues

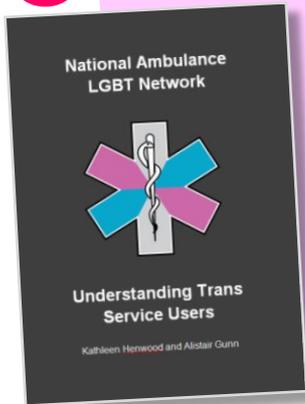




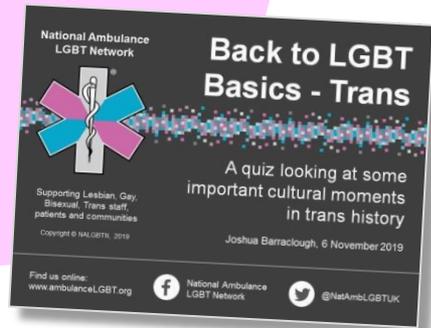
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The National Ambulance LGBT Network has been working hard to produce resources to help ambulance staff provide the best care to transgender patients.

- 1 Our most popular resource is the Supporting Trans People z-card leaflet. It provides very brief information on vocabulary, appropriate questioning and clinical presentations.
- 2 Our research document provides more information and is based on the experiences of 18 patients who have interacted with our services.
- 3 Written for LGBT History Month this interactive presentation is a fun look at trans history. Spot the false facts!

All resources are available through local LGBT Networks and printable versions can be found on our website at www.ambulanceLGBT.org.

Ask the Committee [1]



We asked the National Ambulance LGBT Network committee what Trans Day of Visibility means to them. Here's what they said...

Trans Day of Visibility is about people recognising the importance of enabling people and making them feel safe to be their true authentic selves. It's about being an ally and appropriately challenging the discrimination when we see it, and educating people to raise awareness about gender identity.

Asmina Chowdhury, South East Coast Ambulance

To me Trans Day of Visibility provides an opportunity to show your support for the trans community, it brings attention to a community who don't always have the loudest of voices and are often misrepresented. On this day, allies of the trans community can speak with one voice, start conversations, spread knowledge and call out transphobia. Small actions on this day show our trans colleagues and friends that they have people supporting them and could also inspire others to speak out and become more visible trans allies as well.

Gareth Thomas, Welsh Ambulance Service

Ask the Committee [2]



We asked the National Ambulance LGBT Network committee what Trans Day of Visibility means to them. Here's what they said...

Trans Day of Visibility is the perfect time to learn more about a group of people who have, until recently, been overlooked or, even worse, ostracised by society. In the past five years I have met and got to know a number of wonderful people who identify as trans and experienced for myself the challenges and ignorance that many face.

It takes fortitude and resilience to rise above this but I have also seen how compassion and heartfelt care can bring people to life, allowing us to see another vibrant and wonderful part of our communities.

Trans Day of Visibility should be about opening our minds and allowing ourselves to experience something new. Those whose minds are closed only deny themselves the chance to be part of something special. And ambulance people, more than anyone, should reflect that turning challenge and pain into happiness and light is what we *should* do best.

Alistair Gunn, Yorkshire Ambulance Service

Ask the Committee [3]



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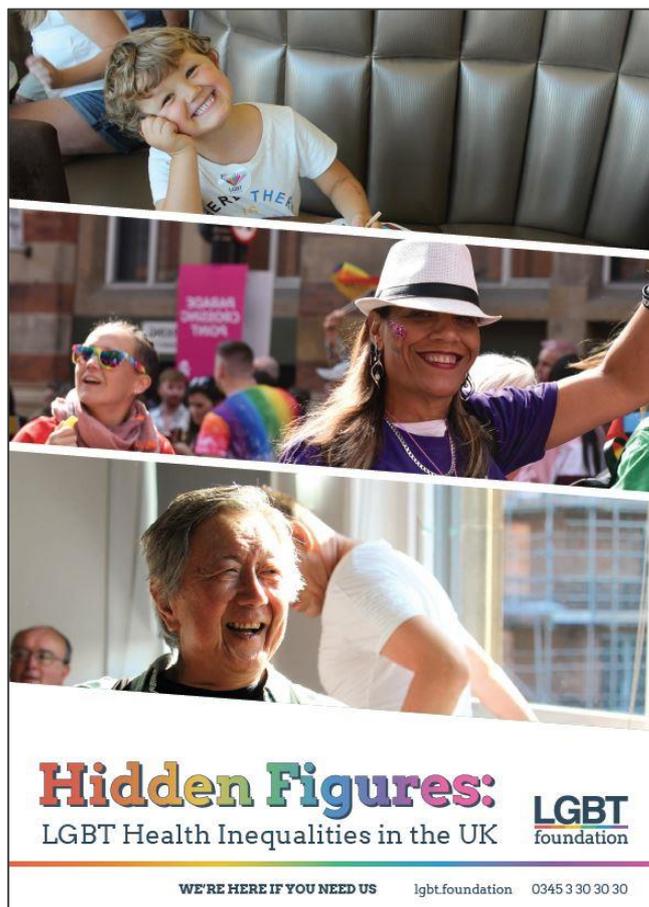
To me, Trans Day of Visibility is a day of empowerment, a day for trans people to be fully recognised as they always should, and a day when trans allies can educate and inform others.

Alex Ewings, London Ambulance Service

To live as their authentic selves, LGBT people often find themselves on a journey from invisibility, through acceptance to celebration. Trans Day of Visibility provides a collective opportunity for us to put the lives of trans people on the map in this important step on the journey to real equality and inclusion.

Tony Faraway, South East Coast Ambulance

Hidden Figures



In March 2020 the LGBT Foundation launched a new report which looks at all the different health inequalities impacting on LGBT people. This is an incredibly comprehensive report, divided into three sections; Starting Well, Living Well and Ageing Well. The report does not draw conclusions or make recommendations, assuming that health providers will draw on the information to understand how they can improve their services and make them more inclusive.

If you don't have time to browse the full report be sure to read LGBT Health Inequalities at a Glance (Page 9) for the most up to date list of challenges facing LGBT people. You can find a downloadable copy of the report in the Useful Documents section of our website.

www.ambulanceLGBT.org

LGBT
foundation

Self-Injury in Young Bisexual People



Self-Injury in Young Bisexual People: A Longitudinal Investigation (SIBL)

We have been contacted by the Division of Psychology and Mental Health at the University of Manchester to see if we can help to identify some young people to take part in this ground-breaking study. The SIBL research project aims to investigate the psychological experiences that are associated with non suicidal self-injury amongst young bisexual people.

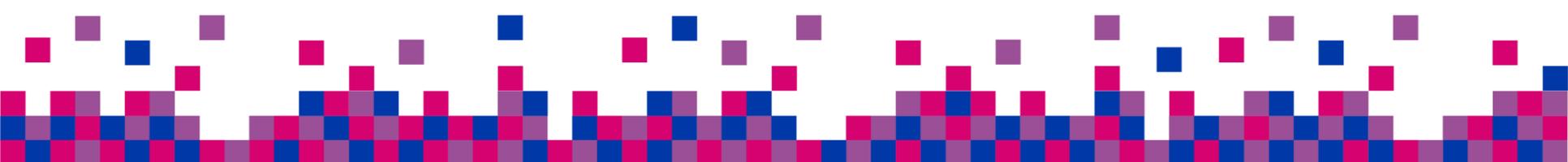
The research takes the form of an online survey which is completed once a week for six weeks. The people required would meet the following criteria:

- Aged between 16 and 25 years old.
- Have experienced non-suicidal thoughts or urges to self-injure and/or have self-injured with no suicidal intent within the last six months.
- Identify as bisexual or as attracted to more than one gender.



The University of Manchester

To make contact about this study you can email SIBL@manchester.ac.uk or search SIBL on Instagram, Facebook or Twitter. Alternatively, use the QR code shown here.



Picture View



Ambulance staff and volunteers gather before Brighton TransPride 2019.

