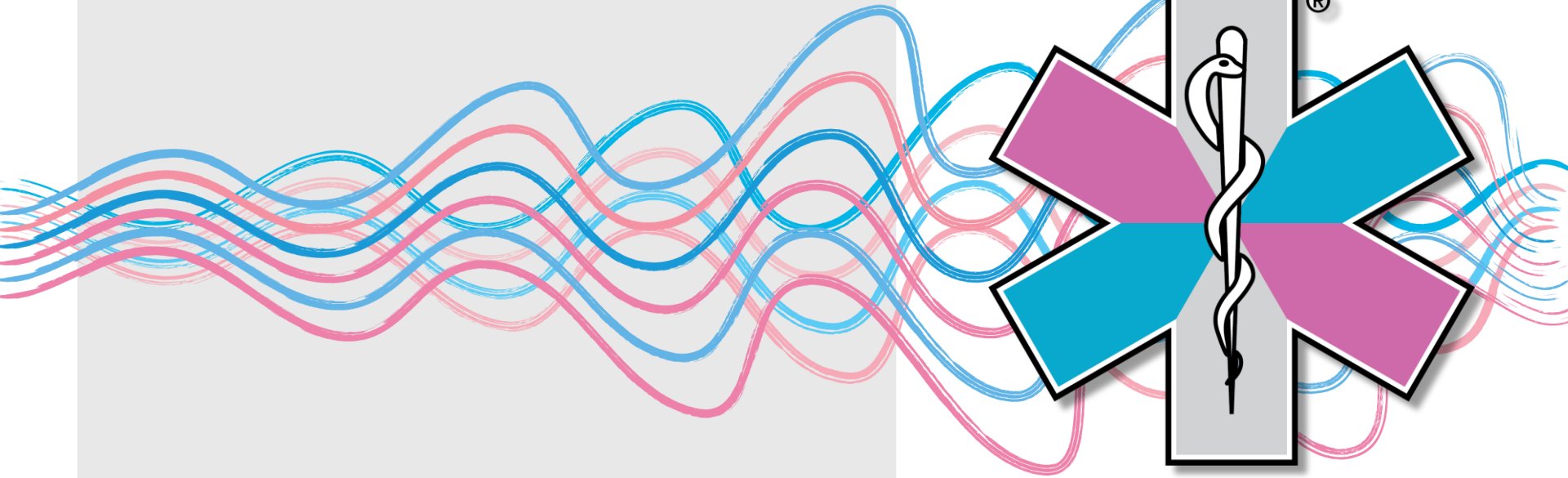


Challenging the Anti-Trans Movement

National Ambulance LGBT+ Network



Caroline Toogood

23 March 2023



Celebrating the sexual orientations
and gender identities of all our
patients, staff and communities

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This 15 Minute Read

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Contributors to this 15 Minute Read
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Jen Palmer-Violet and Kirsten Willis.



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LGBT+ Network Information

The National Ambulance LGBT+
Network exists to provide support to
LGBT+ staff within UK ambulance
services and ensure LGBT+ patients
receive the right care.

The national committee is made up
from two members from each NHS
ambulance service and additional
members with specialist roles. The
committee meets four times a year.

Further information about the
network, copies of our resources, link
to our online shop and a calendar of
events can be found on our website.

Information about LGBT+ networks in
each NHS Trust, including contacts,
can also be found on our website.

You can also contact members of the
committee using the *Contacts* feature
on our website.

[ambulanceLGBT.org](https://www.ambulanceLGBT.org)

Follow us on social media:



National Ambulance LGBT+
Network



@NatAmbLGBTUK

Getting Involved

15 Minute Reads

If you have an idea for a 15 Minute
Read, or you'd like to author an
edition, please get in touch with our
Editorial Team using the *Contacts*
feature on our website.

Author guidance information and a
style guide are available to support
aspiring authors.

Local Networks

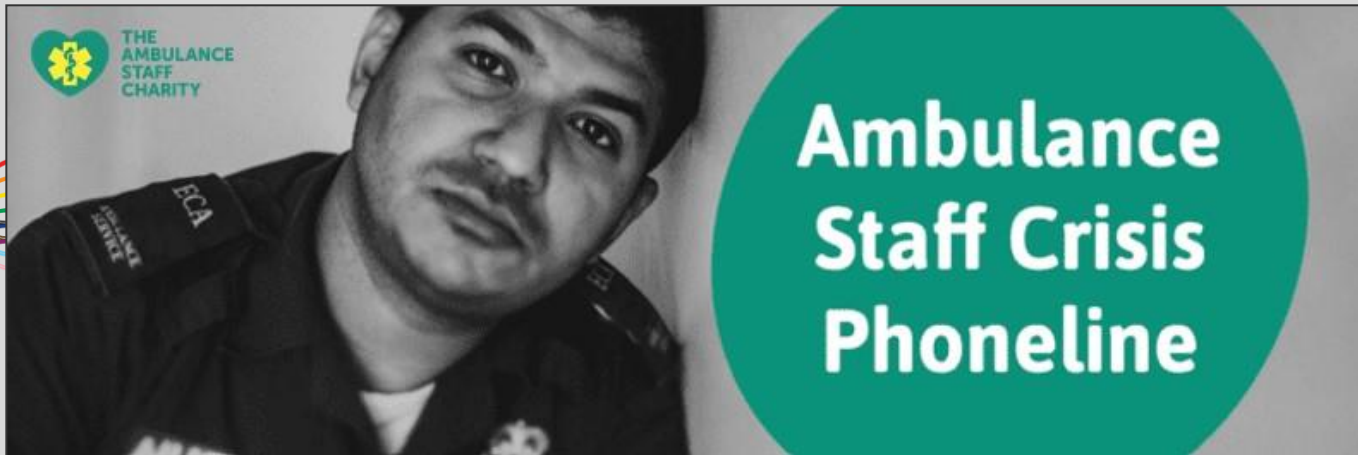
All of our local networks are always
looking for people to get involved.
Have a look at the *Networks* feature
on our website for contact
information.

National committee members are
appointed by local networks.

Events

We publish a calendar of events
that you can get involved with, which
includes our annual conference.
Special events happen in LGBT+
History Month (February) and
throughout the Pride season (June to
August each year).

It is always worth contacting your
local network to see if they are
planning any additional events.

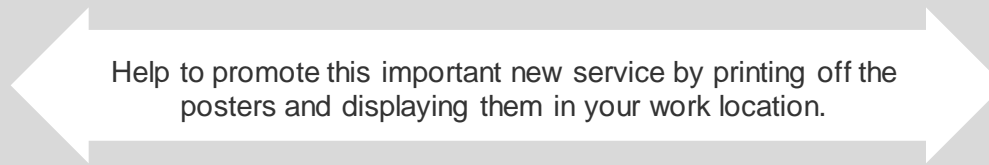


The Ambulance Staff Crisis Phonenumber

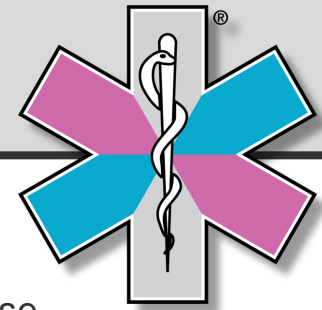
This new dedicated telephone line is available 24-hours a day, seven days a week and is operated by trained personnel. The number to call is **0300 373 0898**.

The service is available to all ambulance personnel.

More information is available at theasc.org.uk/crisis.



Introduction

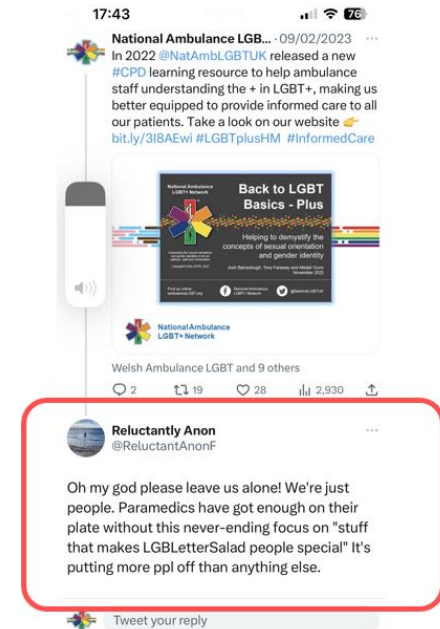


If you have been following the progress of the National Ambulance LGBT+ Network, you will know that we have done a lot of work to understand and support our trans patients and staff. In the last eight years we have constantly been raising the profile of trans people and released new resources, including our *Supporting Trans People* z-card leaflet and *The Ambulance Service Trans Toolkit*. These have gone a long way to improving the lives of trans people that we interact with.

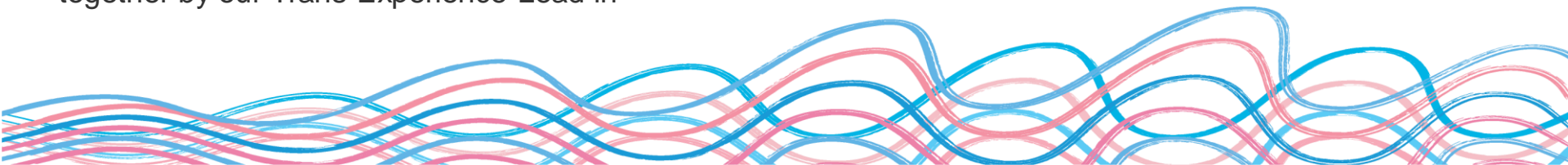
During the same period, as if an opposing movement was trying to shift gear into reverse, the world in general seems to have become more hostile towards trans people. Whilst healthy debates and free speech are to be encouraged, at times some of the representations on social media have become hostile and, at times, offensive.

After the honest and reflective 15 Minute Read put together by our Trans Experience Lead in

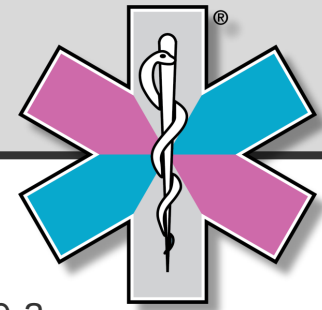
November 2022, our network became the target of some of these representations.



So, why is it important that our network challenges the anti-trans movement and continues our work to improve the lives of trans people?



Introduction



First of all, we know that many trans people do not have a positive experience of health services in general. Sadly, uninformed clinicians and long waits to attend gender reassignment services are pretty standard at this point in time.

Secondly, the law states we must. The Equality Act, 2010 defines nine 'protected characteristics' against which it is unlawful to discriminate. That means our services should embrace the needs of trans people and provide training so that our staff can confidently and competently meet those needs.

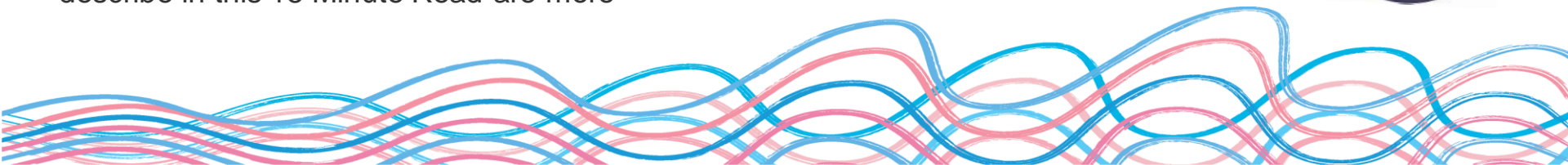
Finally, it is the right thing to do. Discrimination against and hostility towards any group of people based on their being and identity is not fair. I experienced transphobic abuse first hand, standing next to a colleague at a Pride event a few years ago. It was horrible, hurtful and completely unnecessary. A lot of the anti-trans 'incidents' we describe in this 15 Minute Read are more

covert with perpetrators hiding behind their protest that they have a right to speak. That doesn't make those comments, the underlying aim of which can only be to undermine people, any less hurtful.

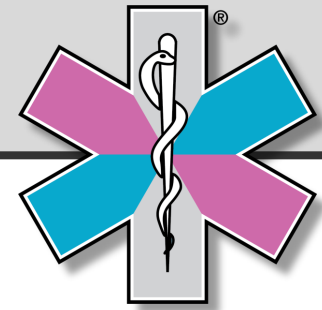
As we approach *Trans Day of Visibility* it seems the perfect time to look at trans issues again. In this 15 Minute Read, committee member Caroline explores the issues from a very personal perspective. She also aims to raise people's awareness of the anti-trans movement and why is it so prevalent at the moment.

Most importantly of all though, is what we can do to support trans people, patients and colleagues, as we strive to provide an exceptional service to all. Read on, and we hope you find this useful.

Alistair Gunn



What is Anti-Trans?



Let's start by explaining what it means to be trans. **Trans** and **transgender** are umbrella terms to describe those who's gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. This is inclusive of trans men and women, and those who are gender fluid, non-binary or gender-nonconforming.

Transphobia is the fear or hatred of transgender or gender-nonconforming people. It refers to the negative attitudes, beliefs, and prejudices that some people hold towards individuals who do not conform to traditional gender norms or expectations. Transphobia can manifest in a variety of ways, including verbal harassment, discrimination, violence, and the denial of basic human rights. This can include refusing to use someone's preferred pronouns, misgendering them, or refusing to acknowledge their gender identity altogether.

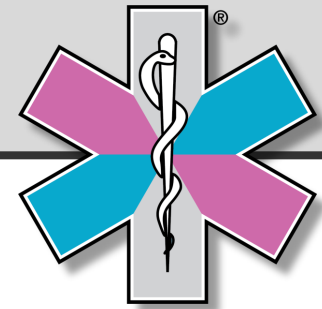
My Experience

It's fair to say I am not perfect, I have definitely fallen victim to constant consumption of anti-trans and cis-normative depictions within media and society. In the past year I have come out as non-binary and use the pronouns she/they. If I were being completely honest with myself I would just use they/them pronouns as they feel a more accurate description of my gender identity.

I'll explain the reason I don't. My gender expression could be considered typically feminine. Despite knowing that gender expression and gender identity don't always correlate, I still fear that people will make assumptions about my gender. This leads to repeatedly correcting people on pronouns and having difficult conversations that leave me feeling vulnerable.

I have chosen to shield myself from transphobia and misgendering in this way even though it

What is Anti-Trans?



means sacrificing my own gender identity. I have spent the past 12 years coming out as a lesbian. Now I have to do it all over again with my gender, which can get a little exhausting.

Being part of the ambulance LGBT+ network, both locally and nationally, has definitely given me the information and experience to challenge my own internalised transphobia.

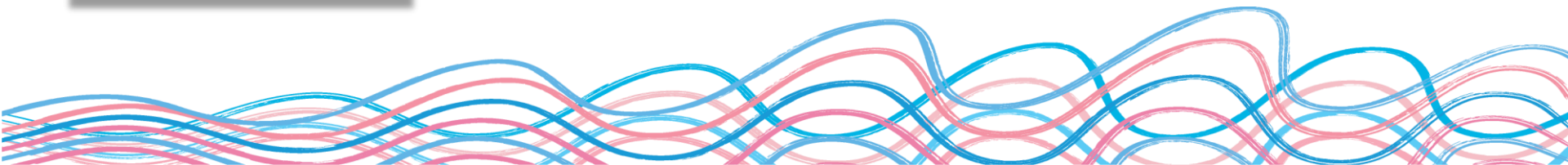


Caroline Toogood is a Paramedic at East Midlands Ambulance Service, and also a Co-Chair of the Trust's LGBT+ Network.

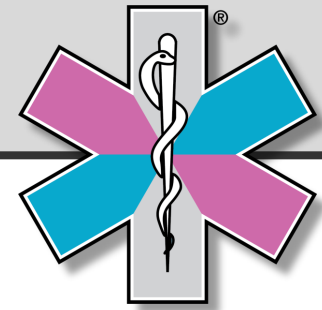
Trans People in the Media

Demonisation of trans people in the media is a growing issue that is causing harm to a marginalised community. Trans individuals are often depicted as dangerous, deceptive, and mentally ill in news articles, television shows, and movies. This harmful representation reinforces transphobia and creates a hostile environment for them. As a result, they experience increased discrimination, harassment, and violence.

The media often focuses on sensationalised stories about trans individuals, perpetuating stereotypes and misinformation. This has led to a widespread misunderstanding of what it means to be trans and what their experiences are like. Inaccurate and negative portrayals of trans people contribute to a hostile political and social climate, where policies aimed at denying basic rights and protections are proposed and passed.



What is Anti-Trans?



Anti-Trans Rhetoric in the UK

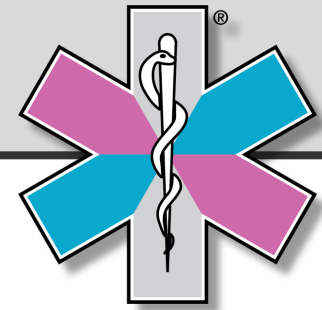
It comes as no great surprise that being transgender is a 'hot topic' at the moment. The recent changes to the gender reform act and UK politicians blocking the Scottish gender reform bill, have lead to the legitimacy and rights of the trans community becoming a public debate that often forgets the experiences of those who are actually trans.

We have seen a rise in anti trans headlines and click bait articles that dehumanise the trans community. A large increase in 'gender critical' groups and lobby groups opposing gender recognition reform. We have particular seen a growth in groups trying to exclude trans women from 'women only spaces'. A particularly pressing topic for these lobby groups is trying to reserve gendered bathrooms for cis women, painting trans women as a threat to other women.

Anti-Trans Timeline

- 2018** Reforms to the gender recognition act do little to aid transitioning and exclude self-identification despite calls for it from the trans community.
- 2020** JK Rowling wins the Russell Prize for her essay stating that the trans community posed a threat to other women.
- 2021** The decision is made to begin the closure of Gender Identity Development Services (GIDS) in the UK restricting anyone under 18 from accessing gender reaffirming and gender dysphoria healthcare.
- 2022** UK Government Bill is introduced that would ban 'unethical and potentially harmful' conversion therapies excluding for transgender people.

What is Anti-Trans?



2022

UK Government statistics reveal transphobic hate crimes have increased by 56% between 2021 and 2022.

2023

UK athletics states it wants to exclude trans women from competing in female category sports.

2023

UK Government blocks Scottish gender reform bill, that would allow people from 16 to change their gender, remove the need for medical diagnosis of gender dysphoria and reduce the time in which people need to live as their chosen gender before being able to gain a gender recognition certificate.

2023

In response to being challenged on why Section 35 was invoked, PM Rishi Sunak, states he is, 'concerned about the impact this new bill in Scotland will have on women and children's safety'.

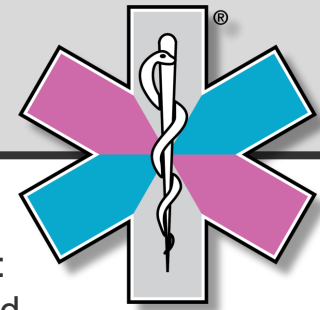
The Fallout

What impact does all this have on trans people? The fact that the 'trans debate' has become so prevalent has made us very wary about approaching the topic. Yet there are any dangers in not talking about it. It has lead to patients being misgendered and inaccurate patient records. Misinformation has lead to missed cancer screening for patients.

Stonewall reported that nearly half of all trans children and young adults have attempted or thought about ending their lives due to external factors, such as discrimination, lack of access to healthcare, relationship or family breakdowns, and bullying.

41% of trans people have reported being victims of hate crime and 28% have experienced domestic abuse. Trans NHS staff have reported higher rates of bullying, physical violence and harassment.

Making a Difference



Pronouns

Pronouns, pronouns, pronouns!
We have heard this term so many times that it seems to have all kinds of scary connotations.



I know first hand it can seem intimidating to ask people from all walks of life what their pronouns are, fearing their response. I can't tell you how many times I have asked patients their pronouns at work and they have responded 'normal' or 'why are you asking that, is it not obvious?' It can be demoralising. However, if it means validating and respecting those to whom it does mean something, it's all worth it.

Using incorrect pronouns has been a reoccurring complaint from the trans community when talking about their experiences within the NHS. It might not seem like much, but using the correct pronouns can lead to greater self esteem, lower rates of depression, less dysphoria, a sense of mutual respect and validation.

Remember that the HCPC states: 'You must complete full, clear, and accurate records for everyone you care for, treat, or provide other services to'. Misgendering someone can lead to inaccurate patient records causing confusion and potential harm.

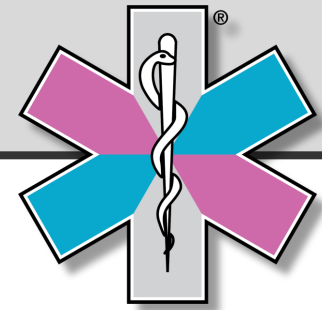
Other Considerations

Be mindful of the media you consume, try to analyse if trans voices are being heard and the correct language is being used. Consider if they are using facts or just assumptions about trans people.

When we interact with trans people, either as patients or colleagues, try to consider the challenges they face and the consequences of these. Being a good informed ally could save someone's life.

Gender is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act, 2010, it's a lawful requirement that we

Making a Difference



don't discriminate based on a person's gender inclusive of gender reassignment. If you believe you are witnessing discrimination or the victimisation of someone based on their affirmed gender make it your duty to report and challenge this.

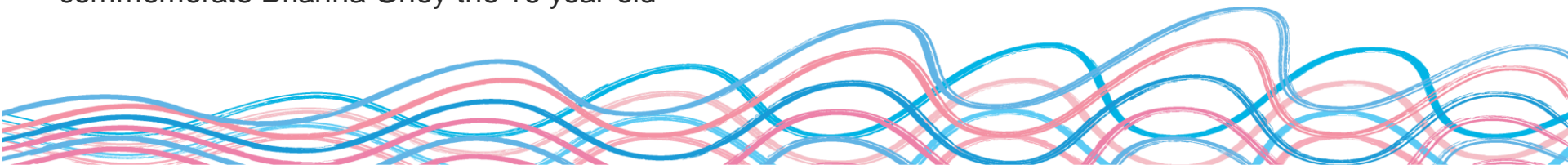
Not the Majority

Even though anti-trans voices seem very loud at the moment 'You.gov' polls have showed that the majority of the UK supports a person's right to transition. Though the polls are split on whether the public thinks trans people should be able to access gender affirming care on the NHS and whether they believe trans people should be excluded from single-sex sports and spaces.

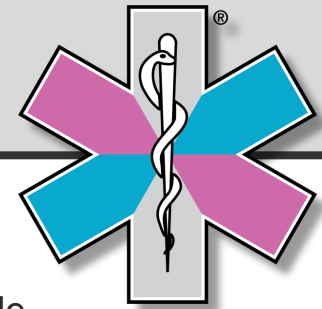
We have also seen a rise in support groups for the trans community with people coming out to protest against Section 35 and vigils held across the UK to commemorate Brianna Ghey the 16 year old

trans teen who was murdered in Warrington on 11 February 2023.

At times it can feel like we are stepping backwards in the gaining of trans rights but we are not alone. We will continue to develop the ways we support our trans community.



Trans Day of Visibility



Trans Day of Visibility is an annual event that takes place on 31 March to celebrate transgender people and raise awareness of the issues faced by the trans community. It was founded in 2009 by transgender activist Rachel Crandall in response to the lack of visibility of transgender people in mainstream media and society.

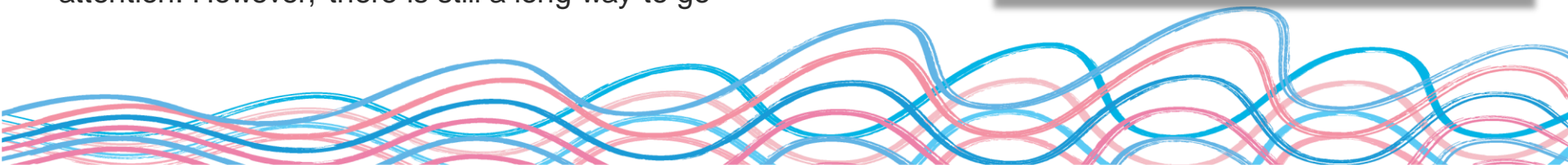
Trans Day of Visibility is a day for trans people to be recognised and celebrated for who they are, and to raise awareness about the discrimination and violence that many trans people face. It is also a day to celebrate the achievements of the trans community, and to encourage people to learn more about transgender issues and become allies in the fight for transgender rights and equality.

The observance of Trans Day of Visibility has become more important in recent years, as the visibility of the trans community has increased and the fight for transgender rights has gained more attention. However, there is still a long way to go

to achieve full equality and acceptance for transgender people, and Trans Day of Visibility serves as an important reminder of the ongoing struggles faced by the trans community.



Campaigners fighting for more progressive trans rights.



Dr James Barry



Dr James Barry (right) is the surgeon credited with performing the first caesarean-section operation in Africa during the early part of the 1820s. This was the first time both mother and baby survived and was attributed to the pioneering work of Barry around sanitation and clean water supplies, as well as his skill as a surgeon.

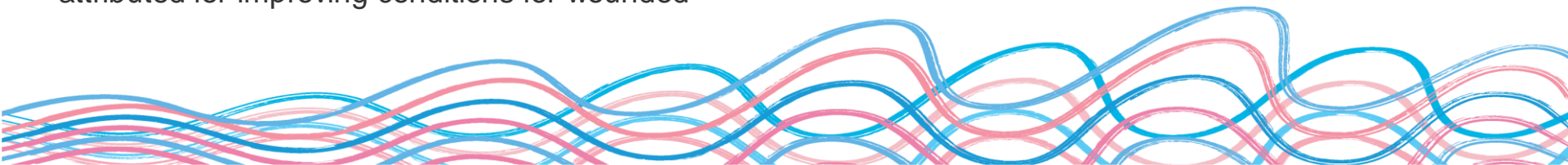
What is not so readily known is that Barry, in today's language, was a trans man. Although Barry's entire adult life was lived as a man, Barry was named Margaret at birth, in 1789, and was known as female in childhood. Barry lived as a man in both public and private life in order, at least in part, to be accepted as a university student and to pursue a career as a surgeon. Barry's biological sex became known to the public and to military colleagues only after a post-mortem examination. He died in 1865, aged 75, from dysentery.

The cause of death is quite ironic, given that he is attributed for improving conditions for wounded



soldiers. After obtaining his medical degree at the University of Edinburgh, Barry served in the military in South Africa. Before he retired, Barry had risen to the rank of Inspector General in charge of military hospitals, the second-highest medical office in the British Army.

Whether Barry chose to live as a man to progress his career, or because he was indeed 'trans', is something we might never know. But one thing his story encourages us to do is look beyond gender to the massive achievements people can make.



Trans People in the Media



Bella Ramsey

Non-binary actor,
guitar player and singer



Isabella (Bella) Ramsey was born in Nottingham in 2003 and became an actor at just 13 years old. Some of their roles to date have been playing noblewoman Lyanna in *Game of Thrones* and Mildred in the 2017 Children's BBC series *The Worst Witch*. Bella's most recent television credit is playing Ellie in the drama series *The Last of Us*.

Ramsey identifies as non-binary and is indifferent to which pronouns are used, telling *The New York Times*, 'I'm very much just a person. Being gendered isn't something that I particularly like, but in terms of pronouns, I really couldn't care less'.

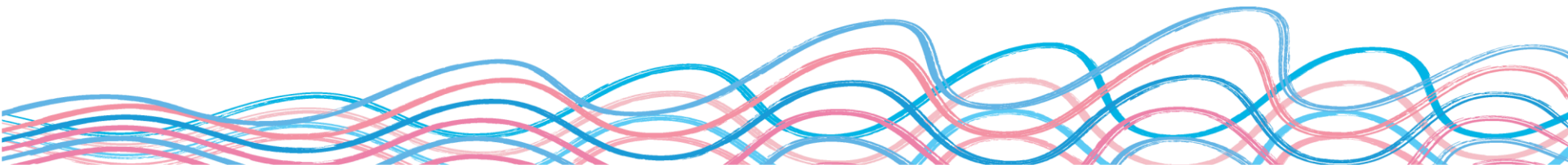
Dylan Mulvaney

Award winning
TikTok sensation

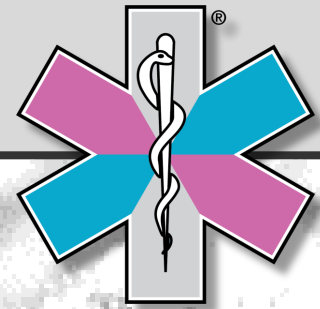


Dylan Mulvaney was born in 1996) and is an American actress and transgender rights activist. She is known for detailing her gender transition in daily videos on the social media platform TikTok. As of March 2023, she has over 10 million followers on TikTok, while her video series *Days of Girlhood*, has received over one billion views.

Whilst Dylan has faced some criticism, even from other transgender people, she has also been nominated for awards. In February this year she accepted a *Queerties Groundbreaker Award* in Hollywood.



'I Need You All to Listen'



A poem by Steph Meech

I need you all to listen
Please just open your eyes
The world right now is changing
Don't listen to all those lies

We are made out to be murderers
Liars, rapists and freaks
Our voices have been muted
We are no longer able to speak

We need to have your help now
Be our voices for all to hear
Tell everyone you see and meet
Please stop the spread of fear

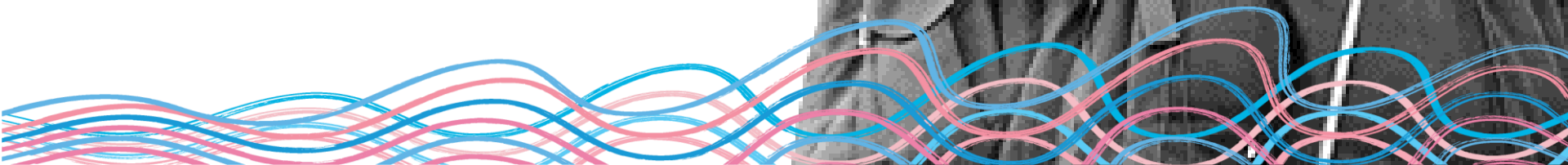
We want to live our lives
Without persecution and without fear
To go about our normal day
Without shedding all those tears



Those people who don't know us
Have an awful lot to say
The vile abuse we suffer
Just happens every day

We need to come together
Present a united front
Shout down all the haters
Don't give them what they want

Just one more thing please
Remember just for me
LGB is stronger
When welded to the T





National Ambulance
LGBT+ Network



National Ambulance LGBT+ Network Conference 15 & 16 June 2023

Brooks Building, Manchester Metropolitan University



The conference will include learning activities held in partnership with the National Ambulance BME Forum and National Ambulance Disability Network



ASSOCIATION OF
AMBULANCE
CHIEF EXECUTIVES

Conference Speakers



Plans for this year's conference are developing nicely and we are delighted to announce some of our guest speakers.



Rev Steve Chalke MBE

Steve Chalke founded the Oasis Trust in 1985 with a vision to build inclusive local communities. Oasis is now one of the largest charities in the UK, as well as working in seven other countries. It

provides housing, education – now a MAT with 52 academy schools – healthcare, various other community-building initiatives and more recently working with the Ministry of Justice building and creating the UK's first secure school – Oasis Restore, which is due to open at the end of 2023.

Steve is also an author, speaker, former UN Special Advisor on Human Trafficking and a Baptist minister. He holds an MBE and various honorary fellowships, all awarded for his work in social inclusion and justice. He continues to lead Oasis and is the founding minister of Oasis Church, Waterloo in central London – a place of inclusion where all are welcome.



Dr Drew Dalton

Drew Dalton (He/Him) is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology and the Programme Leader for the MSc Inequality and Society at the University of Sunderland. Drew has significant industry experience in the Third Sector, human rights and in education. He has been Chair of several organisations including those that have highlighted LGBTQI+ histories and those that support LGBTQI+ Muslims. Currently he is the Founder and Chair of ReportOUT, a global human rights charity for sexual and gender minorities across the globe. Drew is a proud bisexual man.



Cherron Inko-Tariah MBE

Cherron is a former civil servant and has undertaken leadership roles in various policy and strategic positions across Whitehall, including working with Ministers and Permanent Secretaries.

Accessibility



Cherron is no stranger to staff networks and in 2012, she took a leap of faith and left the Civil Service to follow her passion. After publishing her book *The Incredible Power of Staff Networks*, Cherron founded The Power of Staff Networks consultancy. She also founded the National Day for Staff Networks - the first of its kind celebrating the added value of networks.

Cherron received an MBE in 2011 for her services to HM Government and, also for her work in the faith community with young people.

Accessibility

To demonstrate our commitment to intersectionality we have challenged ourselves to put on our most accessible conference to date. Working with the National Ambulance Disability Network we'll be making some changes and additions to make sure everyone can fully participate. Accessibility is not just about physical access to spaces, which is often our first thought when it comes to considering this. Having said this, the Brooks Building at Manchester Metropolitan University is fully accessible throughout for anyone using mobility aids.

For the first time this year we will be introducing a safe space and quiet area for conference delegates. At least one member of the National Ambulance LGBT+ Network will be available in this space at all times for anyone who needs support or just needs some time to reflect. Finally, a dedicated prayer room will be available at the venue for anyone wishing to use it.

Accommodation

Check out the accommodation booking service that is available for anyone heading to our conference. The dedicated facility provided by *Marketing Manchester* offers preferential rate rooms at hotels within easy reach of the conference venue. One feature worth considering is that all bookings are refundable prior to the conference dates should your circumstances change.

Full details of the conference, including links to the accommodation service, can be found at:

ambulancelgbt.org/conference/conference-2023/



National Ambulance LGBT+ Network
Conference: 15 & 16 June 2023

Photo View



Colleagues from East Midlands Ambulance Service attended Pride in the market town of Belper, Derbyshire, in 2022.

The number of smaller Pride events is increasing every year and ambulance presence is also on the rise too.

Photo credit: Jim Bell