

Diversity and Inclusion

Best Practice Guide: *People's Pronouns*

What are pronouns?

Pronouns are words we use to talk about people when we don't use their name. For most of us, we don't give the pronouns we use to describe ourselves or others a very much a thought. But many of our colleagues and the people we serve and provide care to think about them often. Next to a person's name, the pronouns we use when talking with and about others are an important and meaningful way of showing respect and dignity. This guide provides some current best practice tips when using pronouns.

Why do pronouns matter?

Alberta and federal law protects people from discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

Everyone has the right to be called by the name and pronouns they go by. Using incorrect pronouns around others could expose personal information about the individual and even put them at risk.

Using correct pronouns shows our intention to live AHS Values. It's one way we put Our People Strategy into action focusing on ensuring that we all have safe, healthy and inclusive workplaces.

Most importantly, it tells others that "I've thought of you, you are welcome here, you belong here."

And if you get it wrong? And you will! Simply apologize and commit to trying harder next time and move forward positively in your work relationship.

Personal Pronouns

She	Her	Hers
He	Him	His
They	Them	Theirs
Ze	Zir	Zirs
Per	Per	Pers

How can we use pronouns to create a sense of welcoming?

- Whenever you meet someone new, consider introducing yourself with your pronouns like "Hi, my name is Jamie, I am your nurse today, I use she/her pronouns"
- If you are hosting or participating in a meeting, especially an online or phone meeting, model inclusion by sharing your pronouns
- Consider adding your pronouns to your email signature or attach a pronoun pin to your ID lanyard
- Never assume someone's pronouns by the way they look or by the sound of their voice
- When in doubt ask "Can I ask you a question about your pronouns" and if they say yes, then ask "What pronouns do you use?"
- If you are still unsure and aren't in a position to ask, use gender neutral pronouns, *they/ them*, or the name the person goes by