

CHALLENGES FOR LGBTQ ASYLUM SEEKERS

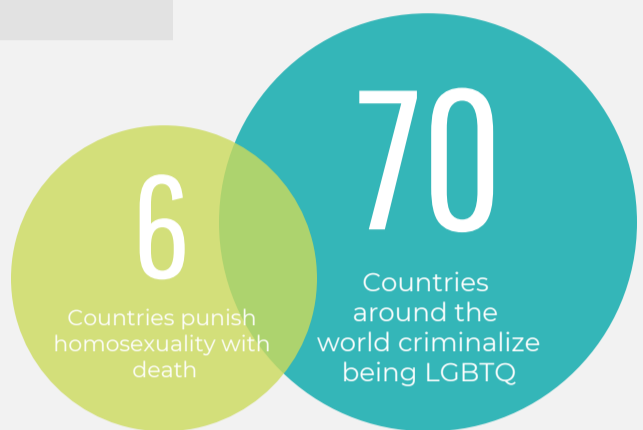
Violence and surveillance often begins at home. Threats may extend into school, work and communities, often forcing people to conceal sexual orientation or gender identity.

In many countries, legal protections do not exist, and people face human rights violations including killing/torture, detention, forced sterilization, discrimination in access to healthcare, education, employment and housing.



Barriers to LEAVING...

- Lack of police protection, arrest, detention, extortion
- Cannot turn to family for assistance due to hostility
- In some cultures, rely on male family members for funding, travel accompaniment, etc.
- Barriers to employment, financial challenges
- Often are under surveillance and monitoring
- Trans people may not have travel documents aligning with their gender identity
- May face heightened scrutiny at borders
- HIV+ people may be barred from travel



Barriers in TRANSIT...



- Poor acceptance in camp settings/harassment by other asylum seekers/refugees
- Concealing identity for fear of persecution
- Discrimination by immigration officials
- Access to healthcare, disruption of HRT

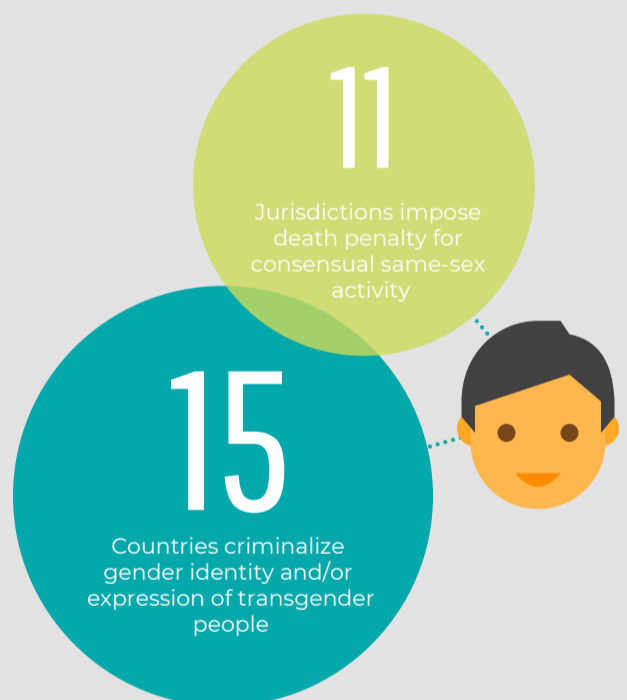


For those fleeing, neighboring countries often unsafe

Immigration system does not recognize that gender identities can change throughout settlement process

Barriers on ARRIVAL...

- **Detention:** subject to abuse and exploitation by detention authorities, other inmates; may be placed in solitary confinement, or with others of incorrect gender identity, or medications withheld
- Criminalization of LGBTQ identity often barrier to open disclosure during interview process, which can affect access to resources on arrival
- Bias and prejudice by officials; poor training, accommodations not offered in interview process
- Traumatic retelling of story
- Maintaining family structure - many countries do not recognize same-sex couples
- Traveling alone without community, resources
- Require additional assistance: protection, safe housing, psychosocial support, medical care, including HRT, surgery, HIV treatment, etc.



How can clinicians help?

- Build **trust**, allow for disclosure
- Give **testimony** in asylum process
- Offer **resources** for mental health
- Assist with accessing other resources, including specific healthcare needs, housing, employment

The U.S. recognizes LGBTQ identity, as well as HIV status, as grounds for political asylum

Sources:

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