

Interview Guide

Study Title: **Exploring Sexual Function and Practices Among Transgender and Non-Binary People (EXPAND – TNB)**

The following **interview guide** being is used for this study. You will be asked to provide answers only to those questions that are willing to respond to.

For questions you are unwilling to answer, please indicate one of the following reasons: A. Uncomfortable answering, B. Question is too personally invasive, C. Don't know how to answer/unsure what to say, D. Other.

Gender and Sexual Anatomy:

Many non-binary, transgender and cisgender folks may be able to relate to experiences of “coming into their own” with regard to their gender. For some individuals, experiences of transition may be relevant, while others may relate more to a developmental process of solidifying their “sense of who they are” related to their gender (e.g. understanding oneself to be gender fluid). Can you tell me about how you came to know your gender?

The following topics may be helpful to consider when answering the following question:

- How do you describe your gender?
- What are your pronouns?
- Does the sex you were assigned at birth differ from your gender (how so)?
- Can you describe any details about your gender expression including physical, psychological, social demonstrations of gender, that you consider to be important for me to know?
- If relevant – Please consider describing any relevant changes that you have made to your body (including hormone therapy) or any surgeries that you've had related to your gender expression?

What words do you use (or avoid using) to describe your genitals or genital function?

Sexual health care:

In a health care setting if your doctor used words like “penis”, “vagina” or “vulva” and (insert other words they used in above question) how would this fit or not fit for you?

Have experiences with questioning either your gender or sexual orientation ever inhibited your ability to express yourself sexually? (If so, how?)

Sexual Expression:

Before we begin talking more specifically about your sexual experiences, are there things that you think are important for me to know about your history of sexual experiences or your access to, or history of receiving sexual health care?

Is being sexual important to you? (If not already clear)

Sexuality can be a multifaceted experience, including physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual elements of experience. Is the use of your body an important aspect of experiencing your sexuality?

Sexual Activity:

What kinds of sexual activity do you engage in on your own, if any?

Are you able to experience sexuality in relationship with other people? If not, are there difficulties that may prevent this for you, that might be worthwhile for us to know?

What kinds of sexual activity if any do you engage in with your partner(s), if any?

In sexual medicine, there is often a strong focus on physical capacity. Recall that main focus of this study is to inform our understanding of sexual function specifically. For this reason, we will be asking more specifically about your bodily experiences related to sexual activity.

What parts of your body do you use in your sexual activity?

The following topics may be helpful to consider when answering this question:

- Do you avoid using any specific parts of your body during sexual activity (if so, why)?
- Does your use of specific body parts differ based on whether your activity is alone or partnered? (if so, why?)
- Does the gender, body, and sexual orientation of your partner influence what body parts you use? (If so, how)?
- (If relevant – does your own gender, or how you are presenting influence the kinds of sexual activity you are engaging in?)

(if not already articulated in the above questions/answers: query penetrative and receptive penetrative activities)

(if not already articulated in the above questions/answers: query experiences of dysphoria related to use of body in sexual acts)

Do you use any prosthetics, tools, sexual aids or toys in your sexual practices (e.g. prosthetics, vibrators, medications, lubricants)? If yes, can you describe what you use?

Do you use any articles of clothing in your sexual practices (e.g. binders, bras, boxers, briefs)? If yes, can you describe what you use?

Does Kink play a role in your sexual experiences? (If so, how?) How does it facilitate your sexual expression?

Sexual Function:

For the following questions, we are going to ask about your experiences relating to sexual desire, arousal, pleasure, orgasm and pain. We are particularly interested in knowing if the questions we are asking are questions that feel relevant to you. Please let me know if you feel the question is not relevant.

Sexual desire can be considered the wanting or being interested part of sexuality. It can be experienced mentally and physically.

(Prompt only if needed – depending on answer: In this question we are interested in knowing, how you experience sexual desire, rather than what causes you to be interested in sex.)

How would you describe your experience of sexual desire/interest/libido?

The following topics may be helpful to consider when answering this question:

- What are the relevant aspects/components of your experience of sexual desire? (e.g., thoughts, bodily sensations...).
- How do you experience of sexual desire when you are with a partner(s) vs. when you are on your own?
- If relevant - has your experience of sexual desire changed over the course of establishing/affirming your gender? (some possible considerations may include the potential impact of social affirmation, or impact of gender affirming treatment such as hormone therapy or surgery, or impact of moving away from a binary gender)?

Sexual arousal can be considered the mental or physical response that occurs once a person becomes sexually activated or involved. How do you experience sensations of sexual arousal?

How would you describe your experience of sexual arousal/excitation/being “turned on”? (e.g., thoughts, bodily sensations...)

The following topics may be helpful to consider when answering this question:

- Do you experience subjective/mental arousal? (e.g. the mental experience of being turned on). If so, how?
- Do you experience physical arousal? (e.g. sensations in the body) If so, how? Please describe how you experience physical sensations of arousal in different parts of your body.

(Prompt if needed: Examples of genital sensations e.g. genital engorgement, swelling, pulsing, erectile response, expansion, lubrication, fullness, tingling, warmth)

- If relevant - have your experiences of these sensations or locations changed over the course establishing/affirming your gender? *(some possible considerations may include the potential impact of social affirmation, or impact of gender affirming treatment such as hormone therapy or surgery, or impact of moving away from a binary gender)?*

(if not already articulated in the above questions/answers: query role/importance of ejaculation, lubrication and erectile response)

(if not already articulate in the above questions/answers: query how erectile quality could be measured?)

Anything that I'm missing about your experiences?

(e.g. prostate)

Orgasm can be considered a build-up and release of muscular tension or sexual energy. How would you describe your experience of orgasm? This may include comments related to intensity, experiences of pleasure or pain, experience of ease or difficulty, frequency...

- If relevant - Has your experience changed (frequency, quality, etc) over the course of establishing/affirming your gender? *(some possible considerations may include the potential impact of social affirmation, or impact of gender affirming treatment such as hormone therapy or surgery, or impact of moving away from a binary gender)?*

Pleasure can be considered enjoyable and pleasant physical and mental sensations that accompany sexual experiences. Can you describe your experience of sexual pleasure?

The following topics may be helpful to consider when answering this question:

- What aspects of sexuality are pleasurable for you?
- Do you experience pleasure beyond experiences of orgasm?
- If relevant - Has your experience changed over the course of establishing/affirming your gender? *(some possible considerations may include the potential impact of social affirmation, or impact of gender affirming treatment such as hormone therapy or surgery, or impact of moving away from a binary gender)?*

Sexual satisfaction is considered to be an individual's emotional response to their subjective evaluation of the positive and negative aspects of their sexual relationships. How do you know if you experience sexual satisfaction?

The following topics may be helpful to consider when answering this question:

- What are some (individual/personal) factors that contribute to your sexual satisfaction? (e.g. confidence, safety, feeling sexy, feeling like you embody your gender, relaxed etc)
- What are some relational (interpersonal/with another person) factors that contribute to your sexual satisfaction? (e.g. feeling desired, connected, safe, accepted, having your gender affirmed and embraced, etc).
- How is your experience of sexual satisfaction different from your experience of sexual pleasure?
- If relevant - Has your experience changed over the course of establishing/affirming your gender? *(some possible considerations may include the potential impact of social affirmation, or impact of gender affirming treatment such as hormone therapy or surgery, or impact of moving away from a binary gender)?*

Do you experience any unwanted physical pain during your sexual encounters? Can you describe your sexual pain?

Sexual difficulty:

Do you consider yourself to have difficulties related to any of the above categories (desire, arousal, orgasm, pleasure, satisfaction, pain etc)?

- Are any of these difficulties distressing for you? Which ones?
- What are the ones that affect you most?
- What strategies or treatments have you tried to address any sexual difficulties?

Closing:

Is there anything else ~~about your sexuality~~ that you'd like to share with us about your gender, body, or sexuality?

What was it like for you to participate in this interview today?

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