

**NHS Rainbow Badges**

At the Academy we want to showcase one of our core values; ‘We are inclusive’ by giving staff the opportunity to show their support for an open, non-judgemental and inclusive organisation for our LGBT+ staff, participants and patient volunteers.

The [NHS Rainbow Badge initiative](https://www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/about-us/who-we-are/NHS-Rainbow-Badges.aspx) originated at Evelina London Children's Hospital and aims to make a positive difference by promoting a message of inclusion.

**Why wear a badge?**

By choosing to wear the NHS Rainbow Badge, you’re sending a message that people can approach and talk to you. You aren’t expected to have the answers to all their issues and concerns, but you’re there to listen and will know how to signpost to the available support.

LGBT+ people can face inequalities and barriers to accessing healthcare and services; research has shown that negative attitudes towards LGBT+ people are still common within the NHS. A recent [Stonewall survey](https://www.stonewall.org.uk/lgbt-britain-health) estimates that one in five LGBT+ people are not out to any healthcare professional about their sexual orientation when seeking general medical care, and one in seven LGBT+ people have avoided treatment for fear of discrimination.

Having simple visible symbols - such as these rainbow badges - can make a big difference for those unsure of both themselves and of the reception they will receive if they disclose their sexuality and/or gender identity.

**How do I earn my badge?**

The NHS Rainbow Badge initiative isn’t just about wearing a badge, it’s about proactively promoting inclusion in the Academy and throughout our work. This could be done in several ways such as:

* Making a pledge on social media about how you will be an effective LGBT+ ally
* Write a blog on being an ally or on LGBT+ inclusion
* Looking at LGBT+ representation of our applicants, participants and other people working with the Academy

You will need to clearly show that you are actively driving the inclusion agenda in your area of work in order to receive a rainbow badge. Please contact Lyle Anderson for more information on how to do this successfully.

**What to do if an LGBT+ person approaches/discloses to you**

The badges aren’t designed as a symbol intended to prompt disclosures, but they may prompt someone to disclose information about their own sexuality or gender identity, perhaps for the first time. Wearing the badge doesn’t mean you’ll have all the answers but you should be prepared to listen and signpost them to relevant information. You may be the first person an LGBT+ person has felt confident enough to share their feelings. For them, it may be one of the most important moments of their life and how you respond to it is something they will remember.

**Where to signpost people for support**

* NHS Improvement have an Employee Assistant programme (EAP) which you can contact for support. Call 0800 783 2808 or visit EAP online and enter 72936 for both the access code and password.
* The internal NHS Leadership Academy LGBT+ Asset Group can help signpost to several available charities for LGBT+ people
* Christeen Birch is the NHS Leadership Academy’s Freedom to Speak Up guardian and can be contacted confidentially on 07833 111 819
* The charity [Stonewall](https://www.stonewall.org.uk/) have excellent resources to support LGBT+ people, including web pages for people who are [coming out for the first time](https://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/coming-out/coming-out-adult-1)
* [Gendered Intelligence](http://genderedintelligence.co.uk/) is a not-for-profit community interest company aiming to increase understanding of gender diversity

**More information**

Got a question about the project? Please email Lyle.Anderson@hee.nhs.uk who is looking after the NHS Rainbow Badge initiative on behalf of the national Academy.