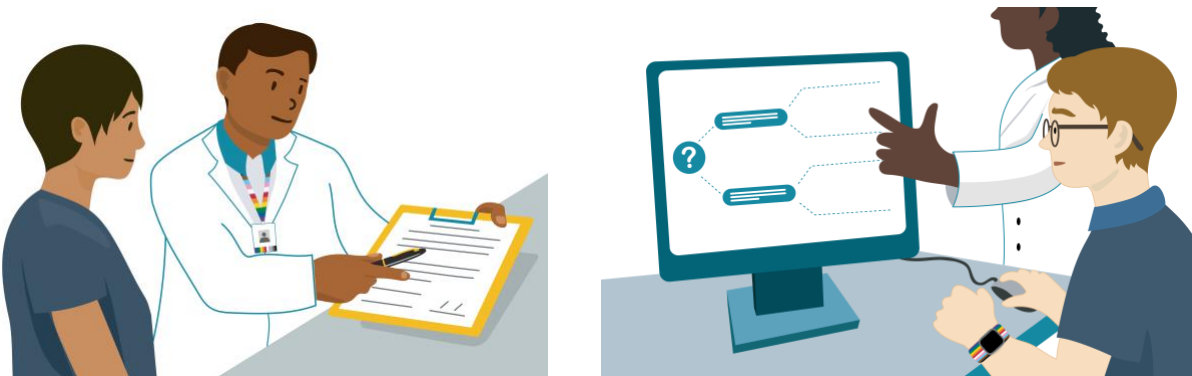


LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Imagery Case Study

As the MRCT Center prepared to launch over 100 additional words for the [Clinical Research Glossary](#) the Health Literacy team started to develop images to visually represent each word featured in the glossary. The MRCT Center created template features to draw upon when creating new images of participants and/or researchers, to support diverse representation across the images. These features include standard colors for clothing and objects in the images; a range in skin tones, hair colors, genders, body types, and ages; and depicted use of assistive technologies (wheelchairs, canes, prosthetic devices). The DEI team then asked about adding LGBTQIA+ inclusive features and collaborated with the LGBTQIA+ Inclusion by Design Working Group to provide guidance to the designers. Key points for the guidance were as follows:

- Representation of all families and all genders is welcome, inclusive of representation of people who are non-binary^a, no gender, or who prefer not to disclose their gender.
- The images could incorporate Pride Flag (preferably Progressive Pride Flag) symbols. However, please understand that such use can sometimes be viewed as reductive^{1, 2} and not everyone sees themselves in the Progressive Pride flag.³ The specific audience/s, context in which images will be used, and options for capturing everyday moments of LGBTQIA people's participation in clinical research should be considered.⁴
- Rainbow symbols may be incorporated in many ways, for example, on lanyards, name tags, pins, watchbands or bracelets, ties, necklaces, pens, mugs, or plant holders.
- If utilized, Pride Flag symbols should be incorporated not only into images with the participant/s, but also with the researcher/s. These symbols should be visible but can be subtle, in recognition that identifying as LGBTQIA+ is but one part of a person's identity.
- Incorporation of symbols, hairstyles, and clothing used among LGBTQIA+ communities as cultural shorthand to signal identities and kinship may be considered.⁵ However, note that these symbols can be interpreted differently by different audiences and are subject to change over time.

Below are the adapted glossary images for “informed consent” (L) and “study design” (R):



^a A nonbinary person identifies outside of a gender binary by seeing themselves as neither a man nor a woman. Nonbinary people are part of the trans community. See: <https://www.nih.gov/nih-style-guide/sex-gender-sexuality>

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- ¹ Google and GLAAD. Inclusive Marketing: LGBTQ+ People. Available from: <https://all-in.withgoogle.com/audiences/lgbtq-people/#reflect-diversity>
- ² GLAAD. GLAAD Media Referencing Guide, 11th Edition. Available from: <https://glaad.org/reference/>
- ³ Human Rights Campaign. LGBTQ+ Pride Flags. Available from: <https://www.sfgmc.org/blog/pride-flags>
- ⁴ GLAAD and Getty Images. (2022). LGBTQ+ Guidebook for Inclusive Visual Storytelling. Helpful Practice to Improve Representation. Available from: <https://custom.gettyimages.com/lgbtq-guidebook/p/1>
- ⁵ Please note that we haven't been able to find a comprehensive list of symbols from a non-commercial source. The Matthew Shephard Foundation LGBTQ+ Terms and Symbols Glossary (<https://www.matthewshepard.org/resources/lgbtq-terms-and-symbols-glossary/>) describes numerous symbols and the UC Davis Resource Center has an extensive glossary of terms that LGBTQIA+ people can use to define themselves and their intersecting identities (<https://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/educated/glossary>). Two commercial sources that have more extensive visual listings of symbols (sometimes with explanation) are: We Are Pride Wholesale at <https://www.wearepride.com/blogs/news/top-common-lgbtq-symbols> and Heckin Unicorn at: <https://heckinunicorn.com/collections/enamel-pins/cat> The MRCT Center does not endorse these commercial entities, which are listed here, only as reference points for discussion, and with the caveat that any use of symbols should always be discussed first with LGBTQIA+ communities.