RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE INCLUSION OF TRANS & NON-BINARY PEOPLE IN ANTI-OPPRESSIVE ABORTION ADVOCACY

It’s really difficult to find specific information on legal frameworks and safe abortion that takes into account gender diversity. Specifically, there is a gap in information in relation to the right to legal and safe abortion and the experiences of trans people, gender nonconforming people, non-binary people, intersex people, and any other person who can get pregnant who is not a cisgender woman. That’s why we put together the following recommendations, which you can use when advocating for safe abortion from an anti-oppressive and gender-inclusive perspective.

1. Make sure you are using a language that includes everyone. When referring to a person it is essential to ask for their pronouns, to ask their chosen name instead of their legal one and pay attention to how they refer to their bodies and respect all of this information.

2. Take into consideration that diverse people with different bodies and identities can get pregnant and therefore have the right to have an abortion. You can use gender neutral terminology in your advocacy such as “pregnant person” and “pregnant people”.

3. Do not assume that everyone who advocates for abortion is a cisgender woman.

4. When having conversations regarding abortion advocacy, include different people with various identities so your advocacy has a broader perspective of what different communities may need.
You will find a deficiency on laws, data and documents regarding the inclusion of different identities, it is necessary to talk about diversity on abortion and not just seeing it from a cis-heteronormative perspective. So, if you have the opportunity, when presenting different law initiatives, you can include trans, intersex, gender non-conforming and non-binary identities on the texts so they have the same rights recognition, otherwise it’s possible that these communities will have a difficult time accessing their abortion rights.

Normally everything is targeted towards cisgender women, so people outside this group doesn’t feel included on this services and documents, sometimes feeling like they have to hide their identities in order to access abortion or even on some occasions they are denied abortion services because the place is women-only, so we need to prevent this and start making safe spaces for everyone.

If you are working on a guide, manual or any kind of documents it’s important to include diverse identities, different life experiences, needs, diverse bodies and any other tools that will help on the creation of respectful, diverse and inclusive spaces and advocacy, a great example of a manual that talks about this is the “TRANS-INCLUSIVE ABORTION SERVICES. A manual for providers on operationalizing trans-inclusive policies and practices in an abortion setting” [1] from the Fédération du Québec pour le planning des naissances (FQPN).

It’s important for abortion providers to be educated on trans health care so that they can be aware of any differences due to testosterone hormone replacement therapy or any other gender affirming treatment. You can organize talks, workshops, capacity strengthening sessions and different ways to bring them experts so they can share the pertinent information.

Something that might help you understand the process of a non-binary person who went through an abortion and why inclusion is important is an article on Women’s Health titled “Transgender And Non-Binary people like me get pregnant and have abortions too” [2], where a non-binary person talks about their process getting an abortion and how they experienced the lack of inclusion of trans people in abortion clinics. They highlight the need to see abortion services adopting gender-neutral language when talking to patients, and they also emphasise the urgent need to include trans, non-binary, intersex and other people who can get pregnant in abortion advocacy strategies.

It's fantastic that you want to engage in the process of making your advocacy a safe and inclusive space for everybody! Just start with the things you can do to achieve this and surround yourself with diverse people who can help you with this process.