

# Making Mistakes

## And correcting them

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**TRANS CARE BC**

Provincial Health  
Services Authority

If you make a mistake in your choice of **words**, **terms**, **names**, or **pronouns**:

1 Apologize briefly

2 Use the correct **word**,  
**term**, **name**, or **pronoun**

3 Move on



If you make repeated mistakes, then check-in with the client to address any negative feelings that arise. Flip the page over for more information.

## Helpful reminders

- Don't let fear of making mistakes stop you from providing care to diverse people.
- Mistakes are inevitable. More importantly:
  - ✓ Do we learn from our mistakes?
  - ✓ Do we incorporate these learnings?
  - ✓ Does it improve the care we provide?
- Many people avoid accessing care due to past negative interactions in care settings. An apology after making mistakes can make a difference.
- Relationship building with clients is a key ingredient to providing positive health care experiences, leading to repeat visits and better long-term health outcomes.

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### When a bigger check-in or apology is needed, consider the following:

- 1A Take a breath.** Practice self-compassion. You are not the first person to make a mistake and you will not be the last.
- 1B Apologize.** Allow yourself to feel sorry and/or remorse for your mistake, and at the same time, remember that in this moment it's not about you.
- 1C Acknowledge the harm.** Understand your mistake. Being able to locate where, when, and how you messed up can help you know what needs to happen to make amends. It also shows the person that you care about their well-being.
- 1D Believe & receive.** Sometimes you won't realize you made a mistake until someone else lets you know. The best thing to do in this situation is to simply believe & receive this information. If you are still unclear about how you messed up, you can ask for clarification or commit to doing further learning.
  
- 2A Invite feedback.** An important way to know how to move forward is to ask the person(s) who experienced harm what healing and repair would look like or mean to them. Take guidance and invite feedback, knowing that healing is not achieved with one-time gestures, but with long-term commitment to fostering relationships.
- 2B Be accountable.** Engage in work that can repair the damage done. This doesn't mean undoing the harm and might not even mean receiving an apology, but it does mean moving forward. This might mean pursuing further learning, working to change systems, or engaging in other reparative actions as identified by those who have experienced harm.
  
- 3A Move on.** Forgiveness is possible, but not mandatory. It is possible to move forward without receiving forgiveness for the harm that was done.

## And Then...

Use your experiences to help others with their learning. It can be part of your allyship to gender diverse people to use individual learnings to encourage service-wide change.