

BEST PRACTICES FOR SERVING LGBTQ+ PATIENTS

RESOURCES

PURPOSE:

The best practices and corresponding resources listed on the following 3 pages will help your health center address the focus areas displayed in the diagram below. Please note that this document is not an exhaustive list of best practices, and best practices will continue to evolve over time.



	FOCUS	BEST PRACTICES	RESOURCES
1	Buy-in	Leadership at the senior executive level (e.g., CEO, CFO, Medical Director) and the Board of Directors as made providing high-quality, affirming, inclusive health care to LGBTQ+ patients an organizational priority.	
2	Clinical protocols, screening, education, and service provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure clinical protocols are up-to-date and reflect clinical best practices. • Offer pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis for HIV (PrEP and PEP). • Offer gender-affirming hormone therapy (or referrals for this service) using the informed consent model. • Do not make assumptions about a patient’s identity or health behavior. • Provide education, screening, and services appropriate to a patient’s behavior, risk, health status, and anatomy. • Use inclusive questions when taking a medical history. • Be aware that some patients may not be comfortable with gendered terms for body parts. Ask patients what terms they use for their anatomy and mirror those during the visit. • Ask only required and medically necessary information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book: The Fenway Guide to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health (Fenway Health) • Guidelines: Guidelines for the Primary and Gender-Affirming Care of Transgender and Gender Nonbinary People; 2nd edition. (UCSF Center of Excellence for Transgender Health) • Curriculum: Beyond Men, Women, or Both: A Comprehensive, LGBTQ-Inclusive, Implicit-Bias-Aware, Standardized-Patient-Based Sexual History Taking Curriculum (Mayfield) • Toolkit: PrEP Action Kit (National LGBT Health Education Center) • Website: Transline: Transgender Medical Consultation Service • Guide: Pathways to Parenthood for LGBT People (National LGBT Health Education Center) • Commentary: Transgender Men and Pregnancy (Obedin-Maliver)
3	Community outreach and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with the local LGBTQ+ organizations in the area to learn about their programming, the needs of the community, and how you might be able to collaborate. • Establish a Community Advisory Committee to create an ongoing dialogue between the agency and LGBTQ+ communities and to provide guidance and advice on the needs of LGBTQ+ patients. • Conduct market research and develop marketing materials that include LGBTQ+ individuals. 	

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4	Customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be mindful of language (For example, do not use gendered honorifics such as “Sir”, “Miss,” or “Ma’am” and use “partner,” “child,” “baby,” and “parent” when the individual you are speaking with has not indicated the terms that they use for themselves and their family.) • Ask respectfully about names (For example, "Could your chart be under a different name?" instead of “What’s your real name?”) • When you are confused or unsure, simply ask! • If you make a mistake, correct yourself, apologize, and move on (For example, “I apologize for using the wrong pronoun”). • Communicate effectively and respectfully with patients about the reasons for collecting data and the ways in which the data will be used for patient care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact sheet: Providing inclusive services and care for LGBT people: a guide for health care staff (National LGBT Health Education Center) • Glossary: Glossary of LGBT Terms for Health Care Teams (National LGBT Health Education Center) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ English ○ Spanish • App: Pronouns (Minus18) • Web Series: Inqueery (Them.) • Glossary and Videos: Gender Nation (Refinery29)
5	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create accessible, clearly-labeled gender-neutral bathrooms. • Provide affirming brochures, magazines, and posters are available in waiting, counseling, and examination rooms. 	
6	Insurance	For transgender clients, correctly code each service so visit is covered by insurance.	
7	Intake forms, data collection, and EHR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask patient for gender identity, pronouns, name the patient goes by, name, and sex/gender listed on insurance. • Enter data into EHR. • Reference this info when talking to and about a patient. • Customize EHR templates to allow all data to be captured. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief: Focus on Forms and Policy: Creating and Inclusive Environment for LGBT Patients (National LGBT Health Education Center) - See section 5. <i>EHR</i> resources. • Toolkit: Ready, Set, Go! Guidelines and Tips for Collecting Patient Data on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (National LGBT Health Education Center) • Brief: Collecting Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Data in Electronic Health Records: Taking the Next Steps (National LGBT Health Education Center)
8	Non-discrimination policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand institutional nondiscrimination policies to include gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. • Post or provide non-discrimination policy in waiting room. • Establish a system to address complaints regarding treatment of LGBTQ+ people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Example: Best Practices for Including LGBTQ People in Your Nondiscrimination Policy (Fundors for LGBTQ Issues)
9	Referrals	Create and maintain up to date referral list(s) of local support groups, community organizations, specialists, behavioral health providers, and other organizations that are welcoming to LGBTQ+ people.	

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10	Training	Provide ongoing training that addresses A. Clinical care B. Cultural humility C. Customer service D. Data collection and entry E. Implicit bias F. Insurance billing G. Non-discrimination policy and procedures H. Referral process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainer/consultant: The National LGBT Health Education Center Educational programs, resources, and consultation to health care organizations with the goal of optimizing quality, cost-effective health care for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people • Trainer/consultant: Transgender Training Institute National training and consulting services for the benefit of transgender and non-binary communities. • Issue brief: Health and Access to Care and Coverage for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Individuals in the U.S. (Kaiser Family Foundation) • Fact sheet: Affirmative Care for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People: Best Practices for Front-line Health Care Staff (National LGBT Health Education Center) • Scenarios: Learning to Address Implicit Bias Towards LGBTQ Patients: Case Scenarios (National) • Online Modules: LGBTQ Services (Family Planning National Training Centers)

Notes: [National LGBT Health Education Center Resource and Suggested Readings](#) provides an extensive resource list that provides links to key health websites, health initiatives, curricula and training, textbooks, briefs, reports, referral directories, professional associations, hotlines, family and parenting resources, as well as resources specific to youth, transgender people, people of color, families, discrimination, HIV/STI prevention and treatment, and more.

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