

# TIPS TO PROVIDE CULTURALLY COMPETENT CARE TO LBQ WOMEN

The most important component is to make your patient/client comfortable, and you can do that by being open and accepting. Don't be afraid to make mistakes, acknowledge them, apologize, and learn from them.



## 1 DON'T ASSUME

Do not assume heterosexuality. Stick with open-ended questions and inclusive language. Also, if sexual orientation is known, do not assume that the patient/client's sexual behavior is consistent with that orientation.

## 2 BE INCLUSIVE

Be open to including same-sex partners or non-traditional family members in decision making. Sometimes chosen family members are more important than blood relations. Also, use patient intake forms and health records that have inclusive language.

## 3 CREATE A WELCOMING ATMOSPHERE

Put up welcoming signs and photos that represent different forms of couples to display a welcoming environment for all. Also, hire LBQ women to increase the representation on your staff.

## 4 ENSURE PRIVACY

Assure the sensitive information that is discussed in the meeting will not be shared with anyone else.

## 5 ASK ALL YOUR PATIENTS/CLIENTS

When asking open-ended questions about sensitive topics, let the patient/client know that you ask this of everyone so that they know they are not being singled out. Instead, emphasize that your questions are meant to gather information so you can provide them the best care.

## 6 BE OPEN

Remember, though you may be using inclusive language, do not forget that your body language and mannerisms can have a huge effect. Maintain an open posture and refrain from crossing your arms or leaning away from the patient/client.

## 7 FOLLOW THEIR LEAD

No matter what the "official" definition is for a term, use the language that your client/patient is using. That is the language that will make them feel the most comfortable.

# Quick Definitions

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to other people

- **GAY/LESBIAN:** Emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attraction to individuals of one's own gender
- **BISEXUAL:** Emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attraction to both women and men
- **PANSEXUAL:** Emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to people of any gender identity

## GENDER IDENTITY

A person's deeply held internal sense of being male or female or somewhere else on or outside the gender continuum

- **CISGENDER:** People whose gender identity or expression aligns with those typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth
- **TRANSGENDER:** People whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth
- **NON-BINARY/GENDERQUEER/ GENDER FLUID:** People who embrace a gender identity that is not exclusively male or female and therefore outside of the binary

## GENDER EXPRESSION

Refers to all of a person's external characteristics and behaviors that represent or express one's gender identity to others

## QUEER

A term people may use to express fluid identities and orientations. Sometimes used interchangeably with "LGBTQ"

# Resources

Scan the QR code for the links to these resources!



## MORE DEFINITIONS

- Glossary of LGBT terms for Health Care Teams (Fenway Institute)
- Glossary of Terms (Human Rights Campaign)

## INCLUSIVE PROVIDERS DIRECTORY

- Find a Provider (GMLA)
- Healthcare Equality Index 2019 (Human Rights Campaign)

## SPECIFIC RESOURCES

- LGBT Aging Project (Fenway Institute)
- Research on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (Williams Institute)
- LGBTQ-Affirming Financial Education and Services (LGBTQ Economics)