TIPS FOR SERVING LGBTQ+ CLIENTS

1

Ask and use current name and pronouns

Make a habit of always asking clients their names and pronouns every time. Many LGBTQ+ people have experienced discrimination and harassment in health environments due to anti-LGBTQ+ bias and policies. Additionally, feelings of safety can change depending on those who are around, how much they trust staff members, and how consistently they are asked. The more consistent a provider is, the more the provider will build a reputation of, and become, an affirming provider.

Examples of how to ask names and pronouns:

- "What are your pronouns?"
- "What name would you like to go by at our office?"
- "How do you pronounce your name and what pronouns do you use?"
- Introduce with your name and pronouns first.

2

Create programs that are gender-affirming

Services that are gender-specific should use gender-neutral language if the service focuses on anatomy or health conditions (e.g., revising "well woman checks" to "cervical cancer screenings"). If services are not focusing on anatomy, allow clients to attend programming that matches their gender identity regardless of perceived gender or sex. Regularly review sex-segregated services to determine if the segregation is necessary and meets the needs of Transgender and Non-Binary clients. Be sure to include Transgender and Non-Binary people in the programmatic review or create an LGBTQ+ community advisory board.

Guide to creating a community advisory board:

https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/104938/tools-and-resources-for-project-based-community-advisory-boards_0.pdf

Toadhenge Consulting LLC

3

Explore your own biases (conscious and unconscious)

"Bias is a prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another usually in a way that's considered to be unfair."
- UCSF Office of Diversity and Outreach.

Providers cannot assume how someone identifies by appearance alone. Physical and emotional safety, fear of discrimination, and interpersonal dynamics with friends and family all affect someone's comfort with expressing gender in a way that matches their identity. Similar fear and experiences of discrimination affect a person's comfort with talking about sexual orientation and relationships. Therefore, we must check our assumptions that LGBTQ+ people will look a certain way.

Learn more about your biases. Take the Implicit Association Test:

https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html

Take a course on unconscious bias:

https://diversity.ucsf.edu/programs-resources/training/unconscious-bias-training

4

Link clients to LGBTQ+ inclusive resources

As part of the support structure for the mentee, the mentor often helps connect mentees to resources to help with growth, healing, and success. LGBTQ+ communities, especially Transgender and Non-Binary communities, report that services that are not affirming of their gender or sexual identity can increase experiences of traumatization and victimization. To mitigate this, mentors can learn about and link LGBTQ+ mentees to resources that are affirming. Resources should be vetted to evaluate if they are gender and sexuality-affirming and willing to provide services to LGBTQ+ people.

Download a resource guide here:

https://cpac.arizona.edu/diversity

Toadhenge
Consulting
LLC

5 Advocate for LGBTQ+ affirming revisions to forms and policies

Include options for gender identity, gender expression, sex at birth, and sexual orientation on demographic forms. Ask all clients for any updates to identity information at regular intervals and allow clients to include a current or chosen name. Only collect legal name and legal gender marker if necessary for service provision. Additionally, non-discrimination policies should include sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression and policy and procedure should be developed on pronoun usage, restroom and facility use based on gender identity, and client and staff rights while transitioning in services and at work (socially, medically, or legally).

Collecting Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Guide:

https://www.lgbtqiahealtheducation.org/publication/ready-set-go-a-guide-for-collecting-data-on-sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-2022-update/

5 Ways to Support Trans People at Work:

https://pages.andycofino.com/transguide

Additional Resources

1. Denver Prevention Training Center. (2023). 5 ways to create gender-affirming health environments. Retrieved from https://denverptc.org/resource.php?id=512
2. Society for Human Resource Management. (n.d.). Ensuring workplace inclusion for LGBTQ+ employees. Retrieved from https://www.shrm.org/resroucesandtools/tools-and-samples/toolkits/pages/lgbtq_inclusion.aspx
3. Yale School of Medicine. (n.d.). FAQs on pronoun use. Retrieved from https://medicine.yale.edu/lgbtqi/community/pronoun-use/

Toadhenge
Consulting
LLC