

# Providing Inclusive Care for LGBTQ Patients

A Resource Guide for Clinical Settings



# Providing Inclusive Care for LGBTQ Patients

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# introduction



People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) are members of every community. They are diverse, come from all walks of life, and include people of all races and ethnicities, all ages, all socioeconomic statuses, and from all parts of the country. The perspectives and needs of LGBT people should be routinely considered in public health efforts to improve the overall health of every person and eliminate health disparities. - **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**<sup>1</sup>



**Essential Access Health** champions and promotes quality sexual and reproductive health care for all. Essential Access Health achieves its mission through an umbrella of services including clinic support initiatives, advanced clinical research, provider training, patient education, advocacy and consumer awareness. Essential Access Health funds sexual and reproductive health services for low-income and uninsured clients through nearly 70 health care organizations collectively operating nearly 340 health centers serving more than one million women, men and teens annually in 38 of California's 58 counties.

This resource toolkit is designed to assist healthcare agencies in meeting the needs of their lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) patients. Approximately four percent of adults in California identify as LGBT.<sup>2</sup> Among youth aged 15-21 estimates are higher, with seven percent of young men and fourteen percent of young women identifying as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or other.<sup>3</sup> However, many LGBTQ individuals experience barriers to healthcare access and may delay seeking care out of fear of homophobia, discrimination, and receiving inferior care as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identity.<sup>4,5</sup>

While the LGBTQ community is diverse, significant health disparities that broadly impact this population have been identified. National studies have demonstrated that LGBTQ youth are more likely than their heterosexual peers to experience harassment and violence at school; more likely to abuse alcohol and drugs; at higher risk for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), HIV/AIDS, and unplanned pregnancy; less likely to seek preventive health services; more likely to experience homelessness; and 2-3 times more likely to attempt suicide.<sup>6, 7, 8, 9</sup>

Among LGBTQ adults, high rates of smoking and substance use, heart disease, stress and mental health disorders, and intimate partner violence have been identified as issues of significant concern. Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM) are at increased risk for cancers, including prostate, testicular, colon and anal cancers; eating disorders; and STDs/HIV. Lesbian, bisexual, and other women who have sex with women (WSW) are more likely than heterosexual women to be obese, and have higher rates of cancers, including breast and cervical cancers. Transgender women, particularly transgender women of color, experience high rates of physical violence and sexual assault, and extremely high rates of suicidal ideation and attempts.<sup>10</sup>

Additionally, certain sub-populations within the LGBTQ community are disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS. While men who have sex with men (MSM) account for only 4% of the male population of the United States, they make up approximately half of all persons living with HIV and two-thirds of new infections annually.<sup>11</sup> Young men who have sex with men (YMSM), particularly black and Latino YMSM, are at highest risk of infection.<sup>12</sup> In recognition of the unique needs of this population, this toolkit highlights several resources that specifically address STD and HIV prevention among MSM, and black and Latino MSM in particular.

In order to promote positive healthcare seeking behavior, it is critical that clinics provide inclusive, culturally competent services to their LGBTQ patients. In 2014, Essential Access Health conducted a survey of school-based health centers in Los Angeles County. The survey assessed:

- Agency-wide policies and practices, such as the inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity in patient non-discrimination policies, and the ability of patients to identify as LGBTQ in intake forms and electronic health record (EHR) systems;
- Staff training on culturally competent service provision for LGBTQ patients;
- The physical environment, including the availability of inclusive educational materials and messages in the clinic setting; and
- Critical clinical services, including whether providers are familiar with current STD/HIV screening and other health recommendations for LGBTQ patients.

Several gaps in current knowledge and practice were identified among school-based health centers, including a lack of available inclusive materials in many clinics, and low respondent knowledge regarding critical clinical issues such as screening recommendations for LGBTQ patients and the importance of taking and documenting routine, culturally competent sexual histories.

This toolkit is structured to help healthcare agencies strengthen their practices by providing recommended resources and best practices. The first section includes resources related to internal organizational issues, such as staff training and agency policies. Subsequent sections reflect clinic flow, addressing topics that patients will encounter as they go through the process of a clinic visit: first encountering the physical environment of the clinic, followed by recommended clinical services, and ending with resources for referrals and additional information. Finally, the appendix includes a self-assessment tool that can be used to identify gaps or barriers in providing LGBTQ-inclusive services within your healthcare setting. Utilizing the self-assessment first is recommended in order to identify which sections in the toolkit to prioritize and focus on initially.

A note on terminology: throughout this toolkit, the terms LGBTQ and LGBT will be used at various times. The distinction is based on the population specified and/or terminology used in the linked resource.

Please contact Essential Access Health's STD Prevention Program at [STDPrograms@essentialaccess.org](mailto:STDPrograms@essentialaccess.org) with any questions or requests for further technical assistance.



# background + statistics

The following resources provide an introduction to LGBTQ health topics, terminology, and sources for current data and research on LGBTQ populations.

## I. LGBTQ Health 101: Terminology + Major Health Issues

- **Straight for Equality: LGBTQ Glossary.** A list of terms to assist staff in conversations about LGBTQ health.
- **GLAAD: Transgender 101.** An introduction to key concepts about gender identity and transgender individuals.
- **SAMHSA: Top Health Issues for LGBT Populations Information & Resource Toolkit.** Terms and definitions of sexual and gender identity for providers, as well as a summary of the top health issues affecting lesbians, gay men, bisexual men and women, and transgender people.
- **Institute of Medicine (IOM): The Health of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People: Building a Foundation for Better Understanding.** The IOM report is a seminal document that outlines the current status of LGBT health and health research in the United States.

## II. Data Resources

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health.** The CDC's LGBT health website contains data and reports, fact sheets, best practices and resources related to the diverse health needs of LGBT adults and youth. Selected fact sheets include:

- LGBT Youth
- Gay Men and STDs Fact Sheet
- HIV and Young Men Who Have Sex with Men Fact Sheet
- HIV Among African American Gay and Bisexual Men
- HIV Among Latinos

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS).** The YRBSS monitors 6 types of health-risk behaviors, including: injury and violence; sexual behaviors; alcohol and drug use; tobacco use; dietary behaviors; and physical activity. This data can be used to compare health risks between heterosexual and gay, lesbian and bisexual (GLB) youth in select districts.

- **Sexual Identity, Sex of Sexual Contacts, and Health-Risk Behaviors Among Students in Grades 9-12: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, Selected Site, United States, 2001-2009.**

**Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD): Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) Data**

- **2013 LAUSD YRBS Risk Behavior and Sexual Identity Report.** This report specifically compares data between heterosexual and gay, lesbian and bisexual (GLB) students, indicating where health disparities exist.

**County of Los Angeles Public Health, Division of HIV and STD Programs: Reports.**

The Division of HIV and STD Programs (DHSP) publishes HIV and STD surveillance reports, which provide rates by age, gender, and race/ethnicity as well as service planning area/health district.

Useful resources include:

- **2013 Annual HIV Surveillance Report**
- **Los Angeles County STD Morbidity Annual Report 2012**

**Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN): The National School Climate Survey.** reports on the experiences of LGBT youth in schools, the extent of the challenges that they face at school, and insights into many other aspects of LGBT students' experiences.

**The Williams Institute:** A national think tank at UCLA Law, the Williams Institute publishes research on sexual orientation and gender identity law and public policy. Research topics include LGBT census and demographics, health and HIV/AIDS.

# training

“ As we learn more about health disparities and effective programs to address them, medical care providers, public health workers, and other human services workers who interact on a daily basis with LGBT persons will need training. Without such training, sexual and gender minorities will continue to interact with a health care system that is unaware, insensitive, and unprepared to meet their needs. ”  
- Kenneth H. Mayer, et al.<sup>13</sup>

The following resources can be used to develop or enhance your agency's trainings regarding LGBTQ health and providing culturally competent services. Many of the included webinars are one hour or less and can be viewed on demand at no charge. Those that offer CME/CEUs are indicated.

**Best Practices in Creating and Delivering LGBTQ Cultural Competency Trainings for Health and Social Service Agencies:** Developed by the **National LGBT Cancer Network**, this manual provides comprehensive guidance and best practices for designing and evaluating an LGBTQ cultural competency training for your agency.

## I. Cultural Competence Webinars

### **GLMA: Cultural Competence Webinar Series**

This 4 part webinar series explores the health concerns and healthcare needs of LGBT people in order to create a comprehensive system of care that supports positive outcomes and experiences.

### **The National LGBT Health Education Center:**

- **Meeting the Health Care Needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People: The End of LGBT Invisibility.** This webinar provides an overview of LGBT health disparities, demographics, and terminology, as well as key strategies for bringing high quality care to LGBT people at health centers and health care organizations. (CME/CEU available)
- **Creating an Inclusive Environment for LGBT Patients and Staff at Your Health Center.** LGBT people, like all population groups, want to receive health care in environments in which they feel welcome, included, respected, and understood. This webinar describes strategies and model policies for creating LGBT inclusive health care spaces. (CME/CEU available)
- **Caring for LGBT Youth in Clinical Settings.** This webinar discusses the unique health and developmental challenges of LGBT youth, and describes ways to address these issues in the clinical setting. Through sensitive, confidential communication with LGBT youth, clinicians can become a vital source of support for this vulnerable population. (CME/CEU available)



**YMSM + LGBT Center of Excellence:** Young MSM: The People Behind the Epidemiological Term  
Racial and ethnic minority young men who have sex with men (YMSM) experience high rates of HIV transmission. This webinar presents findings about risks in these populations. A panel discussion includes young people who describe their personal experiences, providing insight into why these communities of young men are at increased risk. (CE/CEH available)

**The Center of Excellence for Transgender Health (UCSF):** Acknowledging Gender and Sex. This interactive online course provides information for providers and clinic staff on developing a welcoming environment for transgender patients, including scripts for discussing gender identity with patients.

**Children's Hospital Los Angeles SYPP Center:** The Center for Strengthening Youth Prevention Paradigms (SYPP Center) within the Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine at Children's Hospital Los Angeles disseminates best practices for HIV prevention among youth, particularly young gay and bisexual men and transgender youth of color. Recorded webinars on a variety of topics are available.

- Cultural Competency for Medical Providers and Research Staff Working with Transgender Youth

**TARGET Center:** Optimizing Linkage, Engagement, and Retention in HIV Care for Adolescents and Young Adults of Color. Presented by Fenway Health and the Sidney Borum, Jr. Health Center, this webinar describes how racial justice-focused initiatives and partnerships between providers and community-based organizations can optimize efforts to link youth of color to care.

## II. Clinical Care Webinars

**The National LGBT Health Education Center:** HIV and STI Prevention Strategies for Gay/Bisexual Men and Transgender People in Primary Care. This four-part webinar series, sponsored by the New England AIDS Education and Training Center, explores critical topics in HIV/STI prevention. (CME/CEU available)

- Taking a History of Sexual Health: Opening the Door to Effective HIV and STI Prevention
- Screening and Testing for Sexually Transmitted Infections in Gay, Bisexual and Other Men Who Have Sex with Men
- Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP): Implementation Challenges and Successes
- Understanding and Assessing the Sexual Health of Transgender Patients

**American Medical Association:** Patient Sexual Health History: What You Need to Know to Help  
The AMA has recently developed a video to educate physicians on best practices when taking a sexual history. Often times, it is the sexual history that reveals additional important information about the patient, such as their sexual orientation or gender identity

The **California STD/HIV Prevention Training Center** offers online and in-person courses and technical assistance for health professionals. Selected online learning resources include:

- Self-Study STD Modules for Clinicians (CME available)
- HIV Today: What Everyone Needs to Know
- Social Determinants of Health and HIV (CEU available)
- A Practical Approach to Implementing HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (CME available)
- Delivery of the Positive HIV Test Result (CME available)
- Taking a Sexual History
- Extragenital Testing for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia in MSM
- At the Crossroads: Current Challenges for MSM of Color
- LGBTQI Sensitivity

### III. Additional Webinars Related to LGBTQ Health and Sexual + Reproductive Health

**National Center for Innovation in HIV Care: Reaching and Connecting LGBTQ Communities to ACA Coverage Options.** LGBTQ persons are more likely to be uninsured than non-LGBTQ persons due to historic barriers to healthcare access. This webinar discusses the influence of the ACA on access to health care for LGBTQ people as well as best practices for agencies working to reach, assist, and connect LGBTQ communities to ACA coverage options.

**Essential Access Health:** Essential Access Health's Learning Exchange frequently offers webinars and in-person trainings for health professionals. Select recorded webinars include:

- Sexual + Reproductive Health: Focus on LGBTQ Patients
- Sexual + Reproductive Health: Focus on Transgender Patients
- Sexual + Reproductive Health: Focus on Adolescents
- Quality Family Planning Counseling (includes motivational interviewing techniques)

Additionally, in partnership with the California Department of Public Health, STD Control Branch and partner organizations, Essential Access Health has developed the Sexual Health Educators (SHE) Training Program. Designed for educators in school, community, and clinic settings who want to build their knowledge and capacity in sexual health and sexuality education; upon the successful completion of required courses, participants will receive a Certificate of Completion as a Sexual Health Educator.



# policies + protocols

“ When a healthcare organization includes the terms “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” in its patient non-discrimination policy, it sends an important message to patients and employees alike: LGBT people must receive equal treatment... Statements that healthcare organizations are committed to LGBT non-discrimination are deeply appreciated by LGBT members of the community and provide important guidance to employees. - **Human Rights Campaign**<sup>14</sup> ”

Policies and protocols establish standard practice within an agency; having LGBTQ-inclusive policies and protocols is crucial to ensure high quality care for all patients. This section contains templates and sample policies that your health center may adopt or incorporate into current clinical practices.

## I. Non-Discrimination Policies

The following organizations have published sample LGBTQ-inclusive non-discrimination policies:

- **Human Rights Campaign:** [Sample Non-Discrimination Policies](#)
- **Straight for Equality:** [Sample Non-Discrimination Policy](#).

## II. Minor Consent and Confidentiality

The following resources outline current laws regarding minor consent and confidentiality in California, and can be used to develop or update your agency's policies regarding confidential care for minor patients.

- **California Adolescent Health Collaborative:** [Understanding Confidentiality and Minor Consent Toolkit](#). This toolkit provides guidance on minor consent and confidentiality laws in California for providers, including explanations regarding mandatory reporting and educational materials for youth and parents.
- **My Health My Info:** [Provider and Patient Education Materials](#). Resources to assist providers in educating patients about their confidentiality rights and new privacy protections. Developed in partnership by the **ACLU of Northern California, ACLU of Southern California, Essential Access Health** and the **National Center for Youth Law**. All materials are available to download for free.



“ Youth list concerns about confidentiality as the number one reason they might forgo medical care. For this reason, youth need assurances of privacy and confidentiality with their healthcare providers. - **Duplessis, Goldstein, & Newlan**<sup>15</sup> ”

# intake forms + electronic health records



Gathering sexual orientation and gender identity data in a standardized way will allow us to better understand LGBT health disparities, as well as to prevent, screen and early detect conditions that disproportionately affect LGBT people. Gathering such data in clinical settings will allow providers to better understand and treat their patients, and to compare their patients' health outcomes with national samples of LGB or LGBT people from national health surveys. - **The Fenway Institute**<sup>16</sup>



Intake forms and EHR systems can be used to capture important information regarding patients' sexual orientation and gender identity. Additionally, utilizing inclusive intake forms and language indicates to LGBTQ patients that they are welcome in your healthcare setting.

## I. Sample Intake Forms

- **Fenway Institute:** [How to Gather Data on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Clinical Settings](#). This brief discusses two methods for collecting data on sexual orientation and gender identity from patients, using intake forms and provider discussions documented in the EHR system. Examples of best practices are provided.
- **Straight for Equality:** [Sample Intake Form](#). An example of an inclusive intake form.

## II. Electronic Health Records (EHR)

**National LGBT Health Education Center (Fenway Institute):** These briefs explain why collecting sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) data will help providers better understand the needs of their LGBT patients, and provide specific guidance on how to ask questions about SOGI, collect data using EHR systems, and address confidentiality issues.

- [Why Gather Data on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Clinical Settings](#)
- [How to Gather Data on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Clinical Settings](#)
- [Collecting Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Data in Electronic Health Records: Taking the Next Steps](#)

**Institute of Medicine (IOM):** [Collecting Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Data in Electronic Health Records: Workshop Summary](#). In 2011, the IOM recommended that information on patients' sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) should be collected in electronic health records, just as information on race and ethnicity is routinely collected. This report summarizes recommendations for documenting SOGI data in EHR systems.

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health:** [Improving Data Collection for the LGBT Community](#). Fact sheet regarding HHS' efforts in developing a national data progression plan intended to begin the integration of sexual orientation and gender identity variables into HHS national surveys.

# LGBTQ inclusive materials + events



Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) patients often “scan” an office for clues to help them determine what information they feel comfortable sharing with their health care provider. - **GLMA**<sup>17</sup>



The following resources define what it means to have an LGBTQ-inclusive clinical environment and provide guidance for designing inclusive spaces and providing targeted outreach. Many of the materials listed below are available to agencies at low or no cost.

**GLMA's Creating a Welcoming Clinical Environment for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Patients** describes strategies for creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for your LGBT patients. Additional resources are included below.

## I. Inclusive Clinic, Outreach + Website Materials

**Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN): The Safe Space Kit: A Guide to Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Students in Your School** provides concrete strategies to create a safe space for LGBT students. Although the target audience for the toolkit is schools, the terminology and strategies to combat anti-LGBT bias are also useful for clinic settings. GLSEN also provides inclusive materials:

- **Safe Space Poster**, free download; also available to purchase.
- **Safe Space Stickers**, free download (for Avery label 5163); also available to purchase.
- **Educator Events Calendar**. This calendar includes key LGBT, social justice and diversity dates throughout the school year.

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Adolescent and School Health Calendar of Events**. A calendar of various awareness days and health information dates.

**Examples of LGBTQ Inclusive Websites:** Including LGBTQ-specific health information on your agency's website indicates to patients that they are welcome in your clinic, and can provide targeted health education and information regarding specialized services.

- **Mount Sinai Beth Israel: LGBT Health Services**
- **St. John's Well Child & Family Center: Transgender Health Program**

## II. LGBTQ-Friendly Provider Directories

In addition to developing LGBTQ-inclusive websites, health agencies may opt to participate in LGBTQ-friendly provider directories. These allow patients to search for clinics or providers who are knowledgeable and comfortable with LGBTQ individuals and their health needs.

The **Healthcare Equality Index (HEI)**, developed and maintained by Human Rights Campaign (HRC), is the national LGBT benchmarking tool that evaluates healthcare facilities' policies and practices related to the equity and inclusion of their LGBT patients, visitors and employees. Healthcare organizations can request to participate in the HEI. It is designed for hospitals and other inpatient healthcare facilities with at least 100 employees.

Smaller medical groups, outpatient behavioral health organizations and solo health practitioners are encouraged to participate in the **GLMA Provider Directory**.

### III. Minor Consent, Confidentiality, and Students Rights Clinic and Outreach Materials

#### California Adolescent Health Collaborative:

- Teen Confidentiality Poster for Healthcare Settings
- Provider to Parent/Guardian Letter

**My Health My Info:** Provider and Patient Education Materials. Resources to assist providers in educating their patients about their confidentiality rights and new privacy protections. Developed in partnership by the **ACLU of Northern California**, **ACLU of Southern California**, **Essential Access Health** and the **National Center for Youth Law**. All materials are available to download for free.

#### ACLU of Southern California: LGBTQ Student Rights Project

- **Your Health Your Rights** Information for teens about privacy and reproductive health care.
- **LGBTQ Students Know Your Rights** Information for LGBTQ students regarding their rights on issues including harassment in school, freedom of speech, student privacy, gay-straight alliances and sex education.
- **Trans Students Know Your Rights** Information for transgender and gender nonconforming students regarding their rights to privacy, preferred name and gender pronouns, and issues such as bathroom use, dress codes, and harassment or bullying.

### IV. Inclusive Healthcare Coverage Materials

**Where to Start. What to Ask: A Guide for LGBT People Choosing Healthcare Plans.** Developed by **Strong Families** and a coalition of partners, this guide is designed to assist LGBT individuals in evaluating their healthcare needs, navigating new insurance options, and choosing the best plan for themselves and their family.

**Optimizing LGBT Health Under the Affordable Care Act: Strategies for Health Centers.** Developed by the **Center for American Progress** and the **National LGBT Health Education Center** of the Fenway Institute, this brief outlines ways in which the ACA can improve LGBT health as well as outreach strategies for health centers.

### V. Prevention Education

#### California Education Code

Educational materials or presentations designed for use with adolescents in school-based settings should adhere to the California Education Code. Below are selected resources related to the Education Code, requirements for health education, and specific guidance related to sexual health education.

- **Health Education Content Standards for California Schools Kindergarten through Grade Twelve.** The Health Education Content Standards are the framework for health education instruction in California public schools, developed by a committee of health educators and teachers.
- **California Comprehensive Sexual Health & HIV/AIDS Prevention Act** defines the legal requirements and guidelines for sexual health educations and HIV/AIDS prevention education in California public schools.



### Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool

- The Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (HECAT) is the CDC's tool for evaluating the effectiveness and appropriateness of health education curricula, based on the National Health Education Standards and CDC's Characteristics of an Effective Health Education Curriculum. This tool can be used to evaluate, select and strengthen health education programs. Modules address specific health topics, including sexual health.

## VI. Prevention Education Materials

Providing LGBTQ-inclusive health education materials, such as brochures and pamphlets, relays critical health information to LGBTQ patients, and indicates that their health needs are a priority in your clinical setting. Agencies may consider developing their own health education materials, or purchasing materials that are designed to be LGBTQ-inclusive.

The following organizations publish age appropriate, evidence-based education materials covering a variety of health topics including STD/HIV prevention.

- Channing Bete
- ETR Associates
- Journeyworks
- Sexpressions

### Additional Resources for Inclusive Health Education

**CDC: The Facts Brochures** provide comprehensive information on STDs that can be downloaded or ordered. Available in English and Spanish.

The **California Health Kids Resource Center** maintains a comprehensive collection of reviewed health education materials, made available to schools and professionals working with students. Educational materials discussing sexual health and STD/HIV prevention are included in the **Health Education Library**.

**California AIDS Clearinghouse** is the California Department of Public Health's repository of appropriate, culturally sensitive HIV prevention and risk reduction materials. Select materials can be downloaded; others can be requested through the CAC or your local health jurisdiction.

**Center of Excellence for Transgender Health (UCSF):** Developed in collaboration with Essential Access Health, the following brochures address sexual health for transgender patients. Available for download.

- Sexual Health for Transwomen
- Salud Sexual para Mujeres Transgenero (Spanish)
- Sexual Health for Transmen
- Salud Sexual para Homres Transgenero (Spanish)

# clinical care of LGBTQ patients

The following resources include information about health disparities experienced by LGBTQ populations, and clinical recommendations designed to address these issues. Of particular importance are guidance for comprehensive sexual history-taking, which provides important information about sexual practices and risk-factors, and current screening guidelines.

## I. Providing Culturally Competent Care

**Gay & Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA): Guidelines for Care of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Patients.** This resource provides an approach for healthcare providers to understand healthcare disparities affecting LGBT populations and create welcoming clinical environments for LGBT patients. The report includes recommendations for staff training; clinical considerations for LGBT individuals; and sample intake forms.

**The National LGBT Health Education Center: Understanding and Eliminating Health Disparities.** This report outlines basic LGBT terminology and demographics, health disparities, and describes key issues to address within the healthcare setting in order to provide LGBT-friendly medical care.

**Straight for Equality: Straight for Equality in Healthcare.** This guide describes actions that providers and staff can take to support LGBT individuals in their healthcare setting.

**National Association of Community Health Centers: Reaching Out to “Other” Special Populations: Providing Services to LGBT Patients** provides guidance for health centers on furnishing services to meet the needs LGBT patients.

**National Coalition of STD Directors (NCSD): Addressing Stigma: A Blueprint for Improving HIV/STD Prevention and Care Outcomes for Black and Latino Gay Men.** This report provides recommendations to help health centers reduce stigma around sexuality, race and gender identity in order to enhance HIV/STD prevention services for Black and Latino MSM.

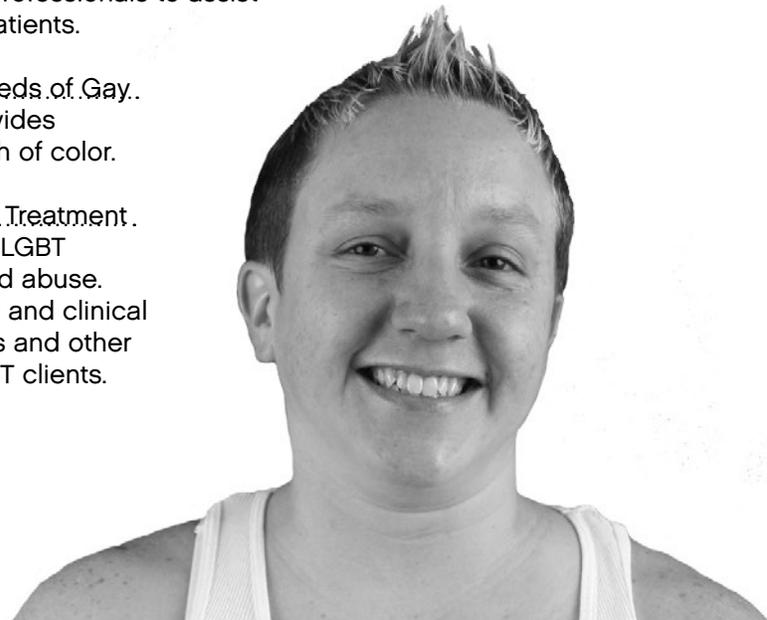
**World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH): Standards of Care for Health of Transsexual, Transgender, and Gender Non-Conforming People.** The standards of care provide clinical guidance for health professionals to assist transsexual, transgender and gender-nonconforming patients.

**The Williams Institute: Provider Perspectives on the Needs of Gay and Bisexual Male and Transgender Youth of Color** provides recommendations for improving support for LGBTQ youth of color.

**SAMHSA: A Provider’s Introduction to Substance Abuse Treatment for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Individuals.** LGBT populations experience high rates of substance use and abuse. This guide provides background information on cultural and clinical considerations for counselors, therapists, administrators and other substance abuse treatment providers working with LGBT clients.

## II. Comprehensive Sexual History-taking

**National LGBT Health Education Center: Taking Routine Histories of Sexual Health: A System-Wide Approach for Health Centers.** This toolkit provides



detailed guidance regarding sexual histories; considerations for special populations including MSM and transgender individuals; and practical resources such as sample EMR templates and relevant ICD-9 codes.

**CDC: A Guide to Taking a Sexual History.** This guide outlines the key components of sexual history-taking, and provides scripts for discussing partners, practices, protection from STDs, past history of STDs, and prevention of pregnancy.

**Adolescent Health Working Group: Sexual Health: An Adolescent Provider Toolkit.** This toolkit, designed for providers, focuses on healthy sexuality and healthy relationships, integrating information regarding the sexual health of all young men and women, LGBT youth, and youth with disabilities. Taking a client-centered, adolescent-friendly sexual history is detailed, as is STI and HIV screening recommendations for adolescents. It also contains handouts on sexual health appropriate for youth.

### III. STD/HIV Screening Recommendations

**CDC: Sexually Transmitted Diseases Treatment Guidelines, 2015.** The most current national guidelines for STD/HIV screening and treatment. The guidelines include specific recommendations for special populations, including: adolescents, men who have sex with men (MSM), women who have sex with women (WSW), and transgender men and women. The guidelines are additionally available as an App for clinical use; available for Apple and Android products.

The **California Department of Public Health STD Control Branch (CDPH)** has published summary tables for current STD screening and treatment guidelines. These can be printed, laminated, and posted in clinical sites.

- [California STD Screening Recommendations, 2015](#)
- [California STD Treatment Guidelines for Adults and Adolescents, 2015](#)

An additional, MSM-specific CDPH STD Control Branch resource includes screening recommendations, sample screening protocols for MSM, and additional guidelines for creating a welcoming environment.

- [MSM Toolkit: A Clinician's Resource for Sexually Transmitted Diseases \(STDs\) in Gay Men and Other Men Who Have Sex with Men \(MSM\)](#)

**Male Training Center for Family Planning and Reproductive Health: Preventive Male Sexual and Reproductive Health Care: Recommendations for Clinical Practice.** The report outlines the reproductive and sexual health screening tests, exams, and interventions that all men, regardless of age, should receive regularly; it also highlights specific recommendations for men who have sex with men (MSM).

**Fenway Institute: Promoting Cervical Cancer Screening Among Lesbians and Bisexual Women.** Lesbian and bisexual women are just as likely as heterosexual women to develop cervical cancer, yet are 10 times less likely to undergo regular screening. This brief provides recommendations for promoting vaccination and screening among lesbian and bisexual women, as well as transgender men.

### IV. Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)

Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) is a biomedical intervention for HIV prevention taken prior to exposure. PrEP is recommended for sexually active adults who are at substantial risk for HIV infection. The resources listed below include basic information, clinical guidelines, and outreach and education materials about PrEP.

**CDC:** The CDC has developed informational materials and clinical guidelines regarding the use of PrEP for HIV prevention.

- [Fact Sheet: Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis for HIV Prevention](#)
- [Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis for the Prevention of HIV Infection in the United States: A Clinical Practice Guideline \(2014\)](#)

**Gilead Sciences:** Gilead manufactures Truvada, which is currently the only FDA-approved medication for use as PrEP.

- [Information for Healthcare Providers](#)
- [Medication Assistance Program](#)

**Project Inform:** PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis). Project Inform provides education and outreach resources on PrEP including videos and handouts.

- [Is taking PrEP the right choice for you?](#) (English)
- [¿Es la PrEP una decisión correcta para usted?](#) (Spanish)
- [How to get PrEP](#) (English)
- [Cómo obtener la PrEP](#) (Spanish)

## V. Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)

Post-exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) is a biomedical intervention for HIV prevention taken after potential exposure. The resources listed below include basic information, clinical guidelines, and outreach and education materials about PEP.

**amfAR:** As part of the GMT (Gay men, MSM, and transgender) Initiative, amfAR provides information about PEP and other interventions that reduce the spread of HIV among disproportionately impacted populations.

- [PEP Factsheet](#) Basic PEP information appropriate for patients.

**Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Division of HIV and STD Programs**

- [PEP Information for Providers](#) contains basic information about PEP as well as resources for additional guidance, including the local and national consultation warmlines.

**Clinical Consultation Center at UCSF:** The Clinical Consultation Center provides advice on management of post-exposure prophylaxis for bloodborne pathogen exposures, including current information on federal and best-practice recommendations for PEP decisions.

- [PEP Clinic Consultation Resources](#)

## VI. Where to access PEP and PrEP in Los Angeles

**Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Division of HIV and STD Programs** has developed a directory of clinics in LA County that provide PrEP and/or PEP. Information regarding subsidized payment programs for PrEP is also provided.

- [L.A. County PEP/PrEP Provider Directory](#)

## VII. Evidence Based Interventions

Several agencies have produced guides to evidence-based interventions that promote healthy behaviors among adolescents and adults. The selected resources below emphasize HIV, STD and pregnancy prevention, and discuss the efficacy of interventions among different populations. These can be used to select or learn more about highly effective interventions.

- **CDC:** [Effective Interventions: HIV Prevention that Works](#)
- **Office of Adolescent Health:** [Evidence-Based Teen Pregnancy Prevention \(TPP\) Programs](#)
- **Advocates for Youth:** [Science and Success: Sex Education and Other Programs that Work to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, HIV, and Sexually Transmitted Infections](#)

# additional resources

These organizations are leaders in LGBTQ health and wellness. Many of the resources included in this toolkit were developed by these organizations; their websites are excellent sources for additional information and technical support.

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Health:** The CDC's LGBT health website contains data and reports, fact sheets, best practices and resources related to the diverse health needs of LGBT adults and youth.

**The Fenway Institute:** The Fenway Institute at Fenway Health works to make life healthier for those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT), people living with HIV/AIDS, and the larger community, through research and evaluation, education and training, and public health advocacy.

**The National LGBT Health Education Center:** The National LGBT Health Education Center provides 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 (LGBT) people. The Education Center is a part of The Fenway Institute, the research, training, and health policy division of Fenway Health, one of the world's largest LGBT-focused health centers

**YMSM + LGBT Center of Excellence:** The Center of Excellence on Racial and Ethnic Minority Young Men Who Have Sex with Men and Other Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Populations (YMSM+LGBT CoE) was established to help providers develop skills to deliver culturally-responsive and evidence based prevention and treatment services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender populations.

**Center of Excellence for Transgender Health (UCSF):** The Center of Excellence builds capacity among healthcare agencies to provide comprehensive, affirming care to transgender and gender nonconforming patients.

**Straight For Equality:** A project of PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), Straight For Equality works to empower straight allies, particularly in the workplace and healthcare settings.

**Human Rights Campaign:** HRC seeks to improve the lives of LGBT Americans by advocating for equal rights and benefits in the workplace, ensuring families are treated equally under the law and increasing public support among all Americans.

**GLSEN (Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network):** GLSEN is a national organization for students, parents, and teachers that seeks to end discrimination, harassment, and bullying based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression in K-12 schools.

**Los Angeles Unified School District HIV/AIDS Prevention Unit:** The LAUSD HIV/AIDS Prevention Unit develops lessons to educate students and train teachers on the prevention of HIV/AIDS, STDs and teen pregnancy. Resources on this website include an LGBTQ Resource Packet.

**ANSWER:** A project of Rutgers University, ANSWER provides training and capacity building for teachers and other youth-serving professionals. Training subjects include sexuality education, STD and pregnancy prevention, and LGBTQ issues in schools.

# resources for youth

These resources can be used to make referrals or included on handouts for youth.

## I. LGBTQ Centers and Support Groups in Los Angeles County

**Los Angeles LGBT Center:** The LA LGBT Center (formerly known as the Gay & Lesbian Center) provides health and support services to the community of Los Angeles, including specific programs for youth:

- **Youth Services:** Social, education, employment, housing, counseling services available for LGBTQ youth.
- **LifeWorks:** LifeWorks is the youth development and mentoring program of the LA LGBT Center. They offer one-on-one, peer, and group mentoring opportunities for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning youth ages 12-24.

**The LGBTQ Center Long Beach:** The LGBTQ Center provides the Greater Long Beach LGBTQ communities with assistance and education about emotional and physical health, housing, cultural and social activities, and legal and social justice. Youth Programs include:

- **Mentoring Youth Through Empowerment (MYTE):** MYTE is a free afterschool drop-in program for youth ages 13-18. The program provides LGBTQ youth and straight allied friends with workshops, one-on-one mentoring, tutoring, and social activities.

**The Village Family Services:** The Village Family Services is a family wellness agency providing comprehensive services to achieve safety for neglected and abused children and youth.

- **TAY Drop-In Center:** A center for Transition Age Youth (TAY) ages 14-24. Located in North Hollywood, services include counseling, LGBTQ support, supportive services for homeless youth and vocational and educational support.

**Pasadena Pride Center:** The Pasadena Pride Center serves the Pasadena and San Gabriel Valley LGBTQ Community.

**The Center for Transyouth Health and Development:** A center created by Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA) that provides hormonal intervention, mental health, health education, peer support and advocacy services for transgender youth.

**Colors LGBTQ Youth Counseling Center:** An initiative of Antioch University, Colors LGBTQ Youth Counseling Center provides free LGBTQ-affirmative counseling services to youth under 25 and their families in the greater Los Angeles area.

**Reach LA:** A youth driven organization committed to educating, motivating, and mobilizing urban youth to improve their own lives and communities. Initiatives include HIV/STD testing and counseling and youth leadership programs, as well as workshops and outreach targeting young women and LGBTQ youth of color.

**Community Intervention Through Youth (C.I.T.Y.) x1:** C.I.T.Y. x1 offers LGBTQ youth & allies (ages 14-24) in L.A. County an alternative to the club scene by providing free social events that create community, promote diversity, and empower the lives of young people. Social events often include free HIV testing and information about community resources.

## II. Websites

**The Trevor Project:** Crisis intervention and suicide prevention for LGBTQ youth.

**TEENLINE:** Teen-to-teen helpline with community outreach services.

**ACLU of Southern California LGBTQ Student Rights Project:** The ACLU of Southern California is working to stop unlawful bullying and harassment in California schools and to create school communities that promote safety and respect for all students. Specific resources for LGBTQ youth include:

- [LGBTQ Students Know Your Rights](#)
- [Trans Students Know Your Rights](#)
- [Your Health Your Rights](#)

**Love is Respect:** A project of the [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#) and [Break the Cycle](#), Love is Respect provides LGBTQ inclusive messages about healthy relationships and dating violence, and offers a live chat service and other resources for youth seeking assistance.

**TeenSource:** A project of [Essential Access Health](#), TeenSource provides medically accurate, youth-friendly information about STDs, birth control, and healthy relationships. Resources include a [Clinic Locator](#); the [Condom Access Project](#); and [the Hookup](#), a sexual health text-message education service.

**Project U:** A project of Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), Project U provides information about what teens need to make healthy choices for themselves and their relationships.

**Scarleteen:** A sexuality education and support organization website for teens and young adults. Offers information about sexual identity, gender, relationships, sex & sexuality, and many other topics.

**Sex.Etc.:** Sex education by teens, for teens. Find information on birth control, condoms, HIV/AIDS & STDs, pregnancy and LGBTQ topics.

**Stay Teen:** Created by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. Stay Teen provides information about sex, relationships, contraception and dating abuse.

**Youth Resource:** A project of [Advocates for Youth](#), Youth Resource is created by and for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (GLBTQ) young people. The site provides information and offers support on sexual and reproductive health issues through education and advocacy.



# self-assessment tool

This self-assessment tool can be used to evaluate whether the services provided in your clinical setting are LGBTQ-inclusive. Please refer to the resources listed in this toolkit for guidance in addressing any identified gaps or barriers. For more information please contact Essential Access Health's STD Prevention Program.

## APPENDIX A: Clinic Self-Assessment Checklist: LGBTQ Inclusiveness in Your Clinical Setting



# Clinic Self-Assessment Checklist: LGBTQ Inclusiveness in Your Clinical Setting

Please consider each statement as it applies to your clinic setting. Check off all statements that accurately describe your agency/clinic. Technical assistance is available to support your agency/site in implementing LGBTQ-inclusive policies and practices.

**Agency:**

**Email:**

**Employee Name:**

**Position:**

## I. Agency Protocols + Procedures

- Agency has a Patient Non-Discrimination Policy
- “Sexual Orientation” and “Gender Identity” are included in Patient Non-Discrimination Policy (or Bill of Rights) ★
- Non-Discrimination Policies are posted publicly (e.g. on website, in printed patient materials, in patient waiting areas)
- Agency has a policy/protocol related to Minor Consent & Confidentiality ★

## II. Staff Training

- At least one key staff person(s) have received training in LGBTQ cultural competency/sensitivity ★
- A key staff person is designated as an LGBTQ-health point-person for the clinic/agency
- Key staff persons have received training on Minor Consent & Confidentiality
- Staff training emphasizes that LGBTQ identity/status is confidential patient information
- Patient satisfaction surveys (or other evaluation materials) allow patients to identify as LGBTQ

## III. Information + Education Materials

- LGBTQ-inclusive materials are posted in the clinic setting (Safe Space posters/stickers, Posters featuring same-sex couples, transgender individuals, etc) ★
- Inclusive educational materials (fact sheets, brochures) about LGBTQ health concerns (Safer Sex/STDs, Mental Health, Substance Abuse) are available to patients ★
- Information about LGBTQ services and/or health concerns are available on the agency website

#### IV. Intake Forms + EMR

- Intake forms contain inclusive, gender neutral terms regarding relationships status (i.e. relationship, partner & spouse)
- Intake form designations for gender identity include options for transgender patients (e.g. check all that apply: male, female, transgender, FTM, MTF)
- EMR allows option to indicate if a patient's current gender identity differs from the sex shown on their birth certificate, identification and/or insurance ★
- EMR allows indicating a patient's sexual orientation, if they volunteer this information ★
- If your agency records information about patient's parents, intake forms and EMR allow for options other than "mother" and "father" to be inclusive of same-sex parents and other diverse families (e.g. parent/guardian 1, parent/guardian 2, parent/guardian 3)

#### V. Clinical Practices

- All providers conduct comprehensive sexual histories of all patients, which includes asking questions related to sex of partners ★
- All providers document sexual histories, including information regarding sex of partners, in EMR ★
- All providers are familiar with current screening recommendations for LGBTQ patients, particularly sexual health screening recommendations for MSM ★
- Facility includes one or more single-stall bathroom designated as a unisex bathroom, to assist transgender patients, patients accompanied by a different-sex child or attendant, and others

#### VI. Community Engagement

- Your agency/clinic has participated in or supported LGBT-related events or initiatives in its service area
- Your agency/clinic has participated in/commemorated an "LGBTQ holiday" (e.g. Pride, National Coming Out Day, National LGBT Health Awareness Week)

★ = Critical Recommendation

# endnotes

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