

Gender, Sexuality and Diversity

LGBTIQAP+ Sistergirl & Brotherboy Inclusive Clinical Spaces

This factsheet is an introductory tool for clinics and health workers understanding LGBTIQAP+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy inclusive clinical environments. Creating affirming clinical environments provide opportunities to better meet the health needs of people with diverse bodies, genders, sexualities, and identities.

Health services strive to build inclusive and safe clinical spaces for all patients including LGBTIQAP+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy populations. This requires approaches to health care that is respectful and affirming of diverse identities, genders, bodies, sexualities and relationships. Patients can assume that health services are not safe or inclusive based on perceptions of past experiences. Those past experiences may have occurred at other clinical services, in other countries, and may include vicarious experiences of friends or peers.

Impacts of non-affirming experiences within health services can be lifelong. Impacts include disengagement with both primary and allied health services which reduces help-seeking behaviour creating poor physical, mental and emotional health outcomes. When re-engaging with health services patients may either intentionally withhold or unintentionally omit and/or reduce the volume of information they share with a clinician.

Enhancing health outcomes for LGBTIQAP+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy patients therefore requires affirming clinical practice. This involves health workers understanding specific population health needs and having capacity and confidence to provide an adequate level of patient safety. Health services and their workers need to be actively and visibly inclusive to mitigate some of the existing negative perceptions which will reduce interpersonal and structural barriers. All staff in clinical settings who have patient contact are ideally placed to participate in training pathways, to maintain and create affirming clinical environments, and to provide intersectional and tailored care.

Tips

When engaging with a health service LGBTIQAP+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy people look for signs that the clinic is LGBTIQAP+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy informed and capable. These opportunities may be useful for your health service to consider:

- Explore opportunities to consult with local LGBTIQAP+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy individuals or groups for advice or feedback
- Conduct an audit of external websites, publications and promotional materials to consider representation of diversity in imaging and inclusive language in text
- Consider local identity markers such as particular colours, artists or flags and make these visible on the clinic door and reception area
- Ensure LGBTIQAP+ Sistergirl and Brotherboys bodies, genders, relationships and identities are reflected in the available resources such as health information, posters, brochures and magazines
- Use existing communication pathways such as newsletters, signage or conversation to reassure patients that your service values and respects patient privacy & confidentiality
- Ensure that facilities including bathrooms are fully accessible and a/gender, which may be as simple as adapting signage or planning longer term for individual cubicles

- Have visible inclusive practice statements expressing that diversity is valued and each client's care will be tailored to their individual identities, experiences and needs
- Ensure that all administrative staff are trained and understand specific key terminologies, communication needs and form requirements unique to this population
- Ensure that nurses and clinicians are trained and understand specific clinical needs, health risks and cultural practices unique to this population
- Conduct an audit of internal forms, databases and health information resources to review and update language
- Develop an internal policy to ensure that respectful, non-discriminatory language is used when talking about bodies, genders, relationships and identities

Taking proactive steps towards inclusive and affirming clinical environments will mitigate existing health inequities and lead to enhanced clinical and health outcomes for all patients, including those who may be LGBTIQAP+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy.

Visit www.true.org.au or contact info@true.org.au for training opportunities or further information.

LGBTIQAP+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy is often viewed as a single category which can be spoken about in broad generalisations. True acknowledges that within the acronym "LGBTIQAP+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy" there are several distinct, sometimes overlapping, demographics each with their own histories, experiences, social, education and health needs. Not all identities are captured. Sexual and gender identities can change individually and culturally throughout the lifetime of a person and across cultures. Some languages and cultures may have their own language or no language for diverse sexual and gender identities and expressions.