

It is essential to be aware of all the direct and indirect messages your agency, organization, office, or health center projects about sexual orientation and gender identity. In order to take stock of what images and messages are a part of your environment, it's helpful to change your perspective. If you're a nurse or a therapist, check out the waiting room; if you're an outreach worker, sit down and review your pamphlets and handouts while specifically imagining an LGBT person reading it. Ask yourself, is what I am seeing and reading congruent with messages of pluralism, acceptance, diversity and respect of LGBT people, families and allies what I want to send out? Alignment is key.

This inventory is similar to one that would be used to review messages and images regarding cultural diversity. Although the discrimination and bias can be different, the pain is often similar for those who are both consciously and subconsciously marginalized. This inventory is meant to assist you in looking at your professional and educational environments to examine the messages they send. You may want to look at the following areas:

WALLS: What pictures do you see as you look around? Are there a variety of positively represented couples or individuals? Do images portray people who challenge gender roles and expectations? Will the people looking at your walls see themselves represented?

MAGAZINES: What messages are being sent to your clients via your magazine selection? Whether they're fashion, sports, teen magazines or news journals, are there a variety of people represented on the pages? Magazines or newsletters from LGBT friendly organizations can be a great way to show your inclusion of LGBT people.

PROMOTIONAL & EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS: Review all promotional materials including print and radio ads, brochures, posters, and flyers. Do the photos you use show a diverse group of people? Your efforts to visually include diverse images will have a positive impact. Do you directly state on promotional materials that you include all people regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity? In addition to looking at what you're saying, look at where you are placing ads or focusing your marketing efforts. Are your ads reaching a diverse population? Do you need to add new places to the list of where you already advertise? Do you hand out pamphlets, articles or have a resource center? Do the materials you make available on health and wellness have positive and inclusive messages about sexual orientation and gender identity?

FORMS: What information do you need from your clients to provide exceptional care? If you need to know about their relationship status, do you provide options that include same-sex relationships? If you are asking a client to check a box to indicate their gender, do you provide space for transgender people? You may want to consider asking for preferred pronouns and preferred name as well to allow for people to have the opportunity to self-identify.

PERSONNEL: Are the people working in your program aware of the positive impact of respect and appreciation for all people? Consider giving your staff an opportunity (perhaps through new staff orientation sessions or continuing education workshops) to evaluate their personal beliefs and values about sexual orientation and gender identity so they can be

prepared to work effectively with diverse populations. Prepare and train your staff and yourself to be sensitive to issues LGBT people may face. Tell staff up-front about the challenges that some LGBT people may be experiencing and be clear about your organization's expectations for inclusion and acceptance of all people. Where do you advertise to hire staff? Are you recruiting staff of diverse backgrounds as well?

Your Resource List:

Finding what you need to create
a welcoming health care
environment for LGBT people



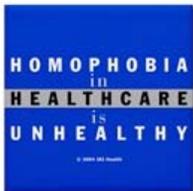
Syracuse Cultural Workers

www.syracuseculturalworkers.com

Northern Sun Products

www.northersun.com

Both companies carry a large variety of posters, stickers, buttons, & books



GLBT Health Access Project

www.cafepress.com/glbthap

Buttons, stickers and other items with LGBT health messages



American Medical Student Association

LGBT welcoming rainbow caduceus pins
www.amsa.org/resource/amsarc/bs.cfm

Magazines:

The Advocate

www.advocate.com

Transgender Tapestry

www.ifge.org/tgmag/tgmagtop.htm



Out for Health

a Project of Planned Parenthood

Planned Parenthood's grant-funded Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Health & Wellness project, **Out for Health**, provides outreach, education and information to LGBT people, their health care providers and the community at-large about the importance of inclusive, welcoming and respectful care for LGBT people.

We're here to help!

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And...

ask you patients for suggestions!