

Creating a Welcoming and Inclusive Environment and Services for LGBTQ People

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Molly M. Herrmann
Humble Pie Consulting, LLC

Review of previous webinar

The first webinar covered the following topics:

- A brief LGBTQ history
- Terms and concepts related to LGBTQ identities
- Similarities and differences between IPV in LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ relationships

Objectives

- Understand what areas of your environment and service provision can communicate inclusion
- Address beliefs that inhibit inclusion of LGBTQ people
- Provide solutions to common questions about LGBTQ services
- Name concrete steps to improve services

On paper

- Listing
- Name
- Forms
- Service materials
- Waiting room materials

On phone or on line

- Scripts
- Neutrality
- No assumptions
- Website
- Social media

On site

- First interaction
- Bathrooms
- Waiting room or entryway
- Pronouns and names
- Mixed gender and orientation spaces and services
- Shelter

“We already do that.”

- Many service providers have taken steps to be more inclusive.
- Often steps taken have been an excellent start, yet may still exclude parts of the population.
- Frequent re-evaluation of efforts to be inclusive can only improve service provision.

“We don’t have anybody LGBTQ seeking services.”

- Agencies may be serving LGBTQ people and not be aware that they are.
- LGBTQ people may not feel welcome at an agency.
- LGBTQ people may not know the agency has services for them.

“We treat everybody the same.”

- Any two clients may differ in their needs.
- Treating everybody the same may ignore unique needs of LGBTQ people because:
 - The systems assume heterosexuality.
 - Services were designed for women.
 - Gender binary is presumed.

What do we do if another shelter resident doesn't want to be housed with a male, transgender person, lesbian, etc.?

- Prepare now to include language in your policies.
- Develop normalizing language about all victims.
- Ensure that staff are trained in policies.

How do we make sure we screen out perpetrators?

- Recognize common attitudes and beliefs of abusers and apply that knowledge to the relationships of LGBTQ people.
- Assist other local providers in understanding LGBTQ people and relationships.

Can't bisexual women partnering with men just access services as a heterosexual woman?

- In some cases yes...
- In others, the victim may experience emotional and psychological abuse based on bi identity.
- Failing to acknowledge her identity, may make it invisible...which could further stigmatize her identity.

On paper – Concrete steps

- Neutralize language
 - Relationship status
 - Gender identity
 - Sexual orientation
 - Pronouns
- Revise questions on intakes to include sexual orientation and gender identity

On paper – Concrete steps

- Include images that reflect LGBTQ people
- Indicate any limitations to receiving services whether for men or for transgender people and offer alternatives
- Be inclusive in any lists about anti-discrimination
- Include examples of LGBTQ specific abuse tactics in materials

On phone and on line – Concrete steps

- Script a template for crisis line that uses neutral language
- Train crisis line staff in using neutral language and role play calls from LGBTQ people
- Communicate clearly any services not provided to men or transgender people and offer alternatives

On phone and on line – Concrete steps

- Read your website page by page for language that excludes LGBTQ people
- If using social media like Facebook or twitter, recognize LGBTQ community events, neutralize language, include LGBTQ specific posts and messages, and include LGBTQ events

On site – Concrete steps

- Require LGBTQ 101 for new hires
- Demonstrate inclusive policies
- Make restrooms gender neutral and single stalled if possible
- Develop strategies to house LGBTQ people in shelter or in safe housing of equal quality
- Include images of LGBTQ people in posted materials as well as in any common area media

On site – Concrete steps

- Identify staff to maintain LGBTQ inclusivity policies, materials, and practices
- Use pronouns and names provided by staff and the individuals you serve
- Support on-going professional development on the topic of LGBTQ inclusion

Outreach

- How to find venues
- What messages to communicate
- How to prepare for unique issues
- How to back up your messages

Summary

- Objectives
- Next webinar

Contact

Molly M. Herrmann
Humble Pie Consulting, LLC
mollyhconsult@hotmail.com

Resources

DCF Webinar 2: Creating a Welcoming and Inclusive Environment and Services for LGBTQ People (3.3.15)

- Northwest Network Clearinghouse <http://nwnetwork.org/resources/clearinghouse/>

You may need to copy and paste the following .pdf links into your browser to access.

- Examples of inclusive forms
http://fenwayhealth.org/documents/patient-services/Client_Registration_v4.pdf
<http://www.healthimperatives.org/sites/default/files/spiritweb/GLYS/Tip%20sheet%20-%20intake%20forms.pdf>
- The Network La Red's *Assessing Your Agency* checklist
<http://tnlr.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Assessing-Your-Agency-2010.pdf>
- FORGE's tip sheet on creating a trans-welcoming environment
http://forge-forward.org/wp-content/docs/trans-welcoming-environment_tipsheet.pdf
- FORGE and National Resource Center on Domestic Violence's resource *Sheltering Transgender Women: Providing Welcoming Services*
http://www.vawnet.org/Assoc_Files_VAWnet/NRCDV_TAG-TransWomenShelter-Sept2014.pdf