

# Creating Safer Healthcare Spaces

*Tips for making your environment safer for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, questioning and ally (GLBTQA) youth and young adults*

This handout shares recommendations and “how tos” for creating safer environments for GLBTQ youth within healthcare settings. Creating safe spaces for LBBTQ youth is up to all of us and makes our communities safer, kinder places to be.

**Train and sensitize staff to be culturally competent and comfortable discussing gender and sexual orientation with clients and patients. Use correct terms and keep your language free of heterosexual bias.**



- Check this out: <http://www.glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=534>  
Click on *Provider Guidelines for Creating a Welcoming Environment*, page 13 on staff training
- Check this out: <http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/library/record/1278.html>
- Check this out (in Maine): Contact the Maine Youth Action Network (MYAN) [www.myan.org](http://www.myan.org) for staff training information.

**Have signs that explain all clients are to receive equal treatment regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Hate free zone signs as well as other no tolerance policies should be prominently displayed.**



- Check this out: <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/RG-posters.html>
- Check this out: <http://www.glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=534>  
click on *Provider Guidelines*, see page 3 of *Create a Welcoming Environment*

**Encourage and practice GLBTQ friendly policies including specifics related to confidentiality. Make sure confidential information about sexual orientation or gender identity is not left on answering machines.**



- Check this out: <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/glb/providers.htm> see *Patient Interview*
- Check this out: <http://www.pimamedicalsociety.org/gender.php>
- Check this out: <http://www.glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=534>  
click on *Provider Guidelines*, see page 8 on *Confidentiality*

**Include a space for information about sexual orientation & gender identity on intake forms and surveys.**



- Check this out: <http://www.glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=534>  
click on *Provider Guidelines*, see pages 4 & 15-19
- Check this out: <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/glb/providers.htm> see *Intake form & link*

**Incorporate gender neutral bathroom access (e.g. dual use or single stall facilities)**



- Check this out: <http://www.compliancesigns.com> search: *restrooms, unisex*

**Ask people what pronouns they prefer for themselves, please do not assume.**



- Check this out: <http://www.oregonsafeschools.org/resources.html#trans>

**Have materials that reflect the experience of GLBTQ youth in waiting rooms and other office spaces.**



- Check this out: <http://www.glma.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageID=534>  
click on *Provider Guidelines*, see *Media (for Waiting Room)* pages 54-55
- Check this out (for Maine-based providers): contact the Maine HIV, STD, Viral Hepatitis Program at (207) 287-3747 for informational materials on HIV and STDs

These “how tos” are brought to you by the **Mt. Ararat High School Gay-Straight Alliance** in partnership with **Maine Youth Action Network (MYAN)** [www.myan.org](http://www.myan.org) a program of PROP’s Youth Resiliency Project, with funding provided by **Maine Youth Suicide Prevention Program (MYSPP)** [www.maine.gov/suicide/youth](http://www.maine.gov/suicide/youth) led by the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Maine Department of Health and Human Services. They consist of recommendations collected at GLBTQ discussion groups conducted in Maine by MYAN during January and February 2007 (funded by MYSPP.) These recommendations also include suggestions from previous studies (*Youth Alternatives Project Reach Out Dissemination of Findings September 2005* funded by the Maine Health Access Foundation, and *Needs and Resources: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, & Questioning Young Adults Age 18-25 in Maine, Spring 2006* funded by Maine DHHS Office of Substance Abuse SPF-SIG).