

Guide for Tobacco Control Service Providers: How to be INCLUSIVE of LGBTQI CLIENTS

1. Check assumptions.

- Don't assume all clients are heterosexual—even if they have been married, have children, or have been in an opposite-sex relationship.
- Don't assume anyone's gender identity or sexual orientation based on appearance.
- The language we use can imply certain assumptions – checking your language is a good way to check your assumptions.

“Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, queer, questioning and intersex (LGBTQI) people have often faced lifelong stigma, harassment and discrimination. “

2. Use inclusive language during cessation classes, conversations, and in materials & hand-outs.

- Use gender-neutral language when discussing a client's significant other. Include terms such as "partner," in place of "spouse" or "husband/wife."
- When facilitating, use examples that are inclusive of diverse family situations.
- Use open-ended questions: "Who can support you in your effort to quit?" rather than, "Can your husband/wife/mother/sister support you in your effort to quit?"

“Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual New Mexicans smoke at nearly twice the rate of the general population, 37% vs. 19%.”

3. Create a friendly space and an atmosphere of openness and affirmation for *all* clients.

- Display promotional materials that contain "We do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, gender, sexual

orientation, gender identity, religion, language, or disability.”

- The office or meeting space will be more friendly and safe if it contains posters or pictures depicting LGBT-specific imagery such as pink triangles, rainbow symbols, pictures of transgender people or pictures of same-sex couples.
- Be aware that some LGBT people may prefer to keep their gender identity or sexual orientation private.
- Respect a person's desire to withhold answers to sensitive questions.

4. Reach out to LGBTQI people.

- If you don't know local LGBT resources, find out. Ask for help or look on-line.
- Place advertisements in LGBT and LGBT-friendly periodicals and local service directories.
- Go to where LGBT people use tobacco such as educational outreach at LGBT churches, community events, bars and clubs.
- Send speakers to meetings of LGBT organizations to announce your services.
- Participate in the Gay American Smokeout or local Pride events.
- Promotional literature about your services should specifically state that services are provided without discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Promotional materials can include LGBT-specific imagery.

5. Be willing to learn and grow.

- Educate yourself on histories and current realities of LGBT people.
- Working to be inclusive makes you an ally, and you may experience growing pains along the way.
- Learn from errors, apologize, and move on.

“Members of the LGBTQI community may avoid medical care because of real or perceived homophobia from health care providers – *you can help by being inclusive of all clients.*”

6. Ask for help.

- New Mexico Department of Health Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Program at 505-841-5845
- New Mexico Stop Tobacco On My People (STOMP) 505-988-3473
- Equality New Mexico (EQNM) 505-224-2766

This Rainbow Paper is brought to you courtesy of the LGBTQI Committee of STOMP