

Top 10 Tips for Providing Inclusive Healthcare

- 01. Respect** the individuality of lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people – LGB people are as unique and diverse as everyone else.
- 02. Don't make assumptions** about a patient's sexual orientation.
- 03. Be aware of the language** you are using when talking to patients. Does it presume heterosexuality? Try to use gender neutral language (e.g. partner). Listen to how people describe their identity and reflect this.
- 04. Behaviours will not always match labels.** Someone may present as heterosexual but may have same sex partners or visa versa. Be open to this possibility.
- 05. Create a welcoming atmosphere** where lesbian, gay and bisexual people feel comfortable discussing their health concerns. For example, display a statement in your waiting room explicitly demonstrating a commitment to fair treatment for all, irrespective of sexual orientation. And check that the practice environment is representative of all your patients.
- 06. Promote respect of diversity** amongst all staff and encourage an environment where homophobia and heterosexism is unacceptable and can be challenged.
- 07. Be aware of specific health issues** for different groups – you'll find more information later in this booklet.
- 08. Don't forget that families and friends of LGB people** can be affected by the sexual orientation of others and that specific support is available to them.
- 09. Think about confidentiality** – consider discussing with the patient what you record in their notes about their sexual orientation. This information is potentially very sensitive.
- 10. Use and refer to specialist LGB services** – when in doubt contact or refer to the specialist services listed in the back of this booklet.