

Total Health Includes Mental Health

The LGBTQ community has specific mental and behavioral health needs that service providers should be aware of. Most mainstream behavioral health services are not currently providing LGBTQ clients with culturally responsive and affirming care.

We are urging mental and behavioral health providers to evaluate their services and approaches, in order to address LGBTQ individuals in a way that is affirming, non-judgmental, and compassionate.

LGBTQ COMPETENT AND AFFIRMING CARE IS CRITICAL

We surveyed Network member organizations to ask about their clients' experiences in behavioral health facilities.

53% of organizations reported that **more than half of their clients had negative experiences** in mainstream behavioral health facilities (51-100%), due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.

More specifically, organizations report that their clients face:

84%
A lack of culturally responsive care

76%
Misgendering (name, pronouns, housing assignment, etc.)

57%
Intake forms that are not inclusive

31%
Denial of care, due to sexual orientation or gender identity



The New York State LGBT Health and Human Services Network (The Network) is a coalition of LGBTQ+ non-profit organizations that provide holistic health care, education, legal and social services to LGBTQ+ communities in New York, beyond HIV/AIDS. Our mission is to eliminate physical and mental health disparities across the LGBTQ and TGNCNB communities and to dismantle systems of oppression that limit access to care.

To help combat this, The Network has created a video series featuring the members of our coalition, speaking to how service providers can improve their cultural sensitivity.

The videos discuss the following key messages:

- The need for cultural sensitivity training
- The impact of historical racism and trauma
- The cost of not understanding the needs of your LGBTQ clients
- The importance of accessing and destigmatizing mental health care
- The value of conducting early mental health screening
- The ways to align providers' perceptions of quality of services with clients' experience

To view the videos, visit [gaycenter.org/mentalhealth](https://www.gaycenter.org/mentalhealth).



“LGBTQ people need safe and affirming care, especially when it comes to mental health...”

Karen Naimool (all pronouns)
Director at National LGBT Cancer Network

“...We’re really pushing and urging care that will respond to communities.”



Vijou Bryant (she/her, they/them, siya)
Coordinator at Apicha Community Health Center



“...It’s not [clients’] responsibility to educate you or take on the emotional labor that’s needed to fill in the gap in your knowledge base.”

Yi Zhou (she/her)
Psychotherapist at Rainbow Access Initiative

“It’s important to recognize that addressing mental health needs are equivalent to on-going physical health care routine.”



Furness Norton (he/him)
Therapist at Institute for Human Identity



“It’s very important that we screen...all patients 12 years and older for depression [...] This is especially true for our LGBTQ patients.”

Chris Wolf-Gould (he/him)
Family Physician at Bassett Gender Wellness Center

“It’s crucial that these trainings are provided [...] by people who have the lived experiences as members of the populations they’re delivering the trainings on.”



Lyndon Cudlitz (he/him, they/them)
LGBTQ Trainer & Consultant