Tips for Providing Quality Care

- Insure that your printed materials reflect heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and easily identified transgender individuals.
- Implement and post a sexual orientation and gender identity non-discrimination policy in service provision and hiring practices.
- Review your intake and medical forms to insure they are inclusive of all relationships, sexual orientations and gender identities.
- Work to educate LGBT patients on the importance of advanced legal, financial and healthcare planning.

**DO**

- accept the life partner of a client just as you would a married spouse.

**DON’T**

- assume that every client is heterosexual (even if he or she is married).
- treat information about your client/resident’s sexual orientation as CONFIDENTIAL.
- assume that everyone in your client’s life knows about his or her sexual orientation.
- ask your client who the contact person should be in case of an emergency.
- respond differently if you find two same gender residents showing affection or engaged in a sexual act than you would for two opposite gender residents.
- be aware that a client has faced discrimination or abuse in his or her past for being homosexual.
- assume that because a person no longer has sexual relations that he or she no longer has sexual feelings.
- discuss concerns with co-workers and/or your supervisor if you feel that a colleague’s feelings about homosexuality are resulting in inadequate care.

Call today to register for Mautner Project’s Removing the Barriers ElderHealth Initiative (RTB-EI)  
202-332-5536 or 1-866-MAUTNER

Removing the Barriers: ElderHealth Initiative
Providing Culturally Competent Care to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Seniors
A RESOURCE FOR PROVIDERS

It is estimated that one to three million Americans over 65 are LGBT....

What kind of care

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Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) elders are often an “invisible” minority, however, they have unique concerns affecting their health and aging process.

There is an LGBT specific, though varied, culture that necessitates cultural competency skills when working with LGBT persons. Understanding the key issues facing LGBT individuals as they age is essential in the effort to work to alleviate these concerns. Learning culturally competent skills for working with LGBT elders creates a more welcoming and inclusive environment for all clients in your care.

Alice is 75 years old. Her partner of 48 years, Mary, was diagnosed three years ago with Alzheimer’s disease at the age of 79. Alice became the fulltime caregiver of her partner, resisting even the assistance of an in-home caregiver assistant out of fear that their relationship would not be understood. Last fall, when Mary’s health took a significant turn, the responsibility grew too difficult for Alice who had begun to have her own failing health concerns, so she was forced to admit Mary into a nursing home. It was tremendously difficult for Alice that Mary no longer was in their home. Many nights, including the night that Mary died, Alice desperately wanted to stay with her. Unfortunately, the nursing staff told Alice that she was not family and was not allowed to remain with her partner past visiting hours.

Virtually all LGBT persons in any situation or social setting are confronted by homophobia and heterosexism that create large barriers to care.