

# Sexual Health Considerations for the LGBTQIA Survivor

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## Background

- ≈ 500,000-1 million adults cancer survivors identify as sexual minority<sup>1</sup>
- 2-3% of US population would identify as gay or lesbian<sup>2</sup>
- Distrust in healthcare providers due to perceived stigma
- Sexual minority less likely to seek cancer screenings or health care due to barriers<sup>3</sup>

## The Problem

- Healthcare providers have inherent personal bias<sup>1</sup>
  - Implicit- unconscious beliefs and attitudes
  - Explicit- attitudes and beliefs on a conscious level
- Heterosexism- perception of world through lens of heterosexuality<sup>2</sup>
- Lack of knowledge/training regarding health, sexual culture, sexuality issues faced by LGBTQIA population
- ↑ risk of cancer<sup>3</sup>
  - Tobacco and alcohol use
  - HPV risk
  - Obesity

## Literature Review

- No studies address LGBTQIA survivor population's sexual health
- Lack of formalized education for providers to provide culturally competent care for LGBTQIA population
- Existing literature- address health disparities, barriers to screening, provider attitudes
- Validates lack of cancer screening by those in the LGBTQIA community

## PLISSIT

PLISSIT model offers a way to introduce sexuality in a clinical conversation.<sup>4</sup>

### Level 1

- Create a safe space for patient to discuss sexual concerns

### Level 2

- Offer reasons behind their symptoms

### Level 3

- Let patient know that we will keep addressing the issue until it is resolved

### Level 4

- A referral to a sexual health specialist

## Nursing Considerations

- Inquire about patients' sexual orientation
  - Document in EMR
  - Gender neutral forms
  - Education material using inclusive language
- Provide culturally sensitive education regarding sexual and gender minorities and their needs
- Create welcoming environment throughout the health system
- Reconcile personal beliefs and attitudes from professional reasonability<sup>5</sup>

## Future Directions

- Further research needed related to LGBTQIA sexual concerns and cancer
- Healthcare system creating welcoming environments

### References:

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5. Dorsen, C. (2012). An integrative review of nurse attitudes towards lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender patients. *Canada Journal Nursing Research*. 44(3), 18-43.