



LGBTQ+ SELF-ADVOCACY IN CARE

ASK QUESTIONS - PROTECT PRIVACY - EXPECT RESPECT

Healthcare and therapy should support informed choice, dignity, accessibility, and accurate care without requiring you to educate every provider.

BEFORE THE VISIT

- Write down your goals, medications, questions, access needs, and what information is relevant to the visit.
- Decide what you are comfortable discussing and whether you want a support person present.
- Ask about accessibility, interpretation, telehealth, privacy, or forms when needed.

DURING THE VISIT

- Ask: 'Why are you recommending this?' 'What are the benefits, risks, and alternatives?' 'What happens if I wait?'
- Correct inaccurate assumptions about partners, bodies, identity, pregnancy potential, disability, or family structure when relevant.
- You can ask a provider to explain unfamiliar terms.

PRIVACY MATTERS

- Ask who can see your record and how portal messages, billing, pharmacy information, or insurance communications may be shared.
- For minors or people on another person's insurance, privacy rules can be complicated; ask the provider or insurer what is confidential before sensitive disclosures when possible.

THERAPY SHOULD NOT PATHOLOGIZE IDENTITY

- A clinician can explore distress, relationships, trauma, values, and identity without treating LGBTQ+ identity itself as a disorder.
- You can ask how a clinician approaches LGBTQ+ clients, trauma, disability, culture, and spirituality.
- You can seek another provider when the relationship is not safe or useful, subject to access realities.

ACCESS & DISABILITY

- Request communication and physical-access accommodations you need.
- Accessible care may include interpreters, captions, written information, large print, screen-reader-compatible materials, sensory accommodations, mobility access, or extra processing time.
- Needing accommodation does not reduce your right to informed choice.

IF SOMETHING FEELS WRONG

- Ask for clarification and document concerns.
- Use patient relations, grievance processes, licensing or civil-rights resources when appropriate.
- For immediate medical danger, seek emergency care.
- Bring an advocate or trusted support person when that increases safety and access.

Good care makes room for your identity, body, culture, disability, privacy, questions, and informed choices.

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Sources: CDC, Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth (2024); CDC, LGBTQ+ Youth Health Disparities (2024); general informed-consent and accessibility principles.