



# Manager's Tip Sheet

## Creating a Safer and Welcoming Care Environment for Sexual and Gender Diverse Clients

Continuing Care providers endeavor to offer inclusive care environments and value client diversity, which includes sexual and gender diverse clients.

This resource was developed in collaboration with Carewest to support managers to have a conversation with their staff to create a safer and more welcoming care environment for sexual gender diverse clients and it includes a:

- summary of awareness resources and education that are available for staff, and
- process to implement the awareness resources within your care home.

It is important to implement these resources to support sexual and gender diverse clients to feel safer and more welcome to live their life authentically.

Key messages for you to consider when talking with your team:

- We want all residents, families, visitors and staff to feel safer and more welcome when accessing continuing care services and this includes those people that identify as sexually and gender diverse.
- We want everyone to be treated with respect and equity. Equity means that every person needs different things to be successful. This means that they might receive different treatment at times in order to have the same opportunities for success as everyone else.

*Working together for your health*

# Strategies to make your care home more inclusive

## 1 Starting with leadership

Managers have an important role to play in encouraging their team to create safer and more welcoming care environments. We have prepared the following resources to support your foundational knowledge.

### Education

Available at [ahs.ca/lgbtq2s](https://ahs.ca/lgbtq2s) and on My Learning Link

1. [LGBTQ2S+ Education Video \(see Resources\)](#)
2. [Continuing Care LGBTQ2S+ Education Presentation](#)

## 2 Healthcare provider awareness resources

We have also prepared resources that can be shared with your team. It is important that all team members who interact with clients (i.e., housekeeping, maintenance, healthcare aides) receive resources on how to create safer and more welcoming care environments for sexual and gender diverse clients. Your leadership team can determine which resources would best benefit your healthcare providers.

### Accessing online resources

We encourage your team to review the following web pages to support their learning.

LGBTQ2S+/Sexual and Gender Diversity

1. [Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity & Expression: Safer Places Toolkit](#)
2. [Seniors and Continuing Care-LGBTQ2S+ Resources for Providers](#)

### Education

Available at [ahs.ca/lgbtq2s](https://ahs.ca/lgbtq2s) and on My Learning Link

We encourage your team to participate in the following online education to support their learning.

1. [LGBTQ2S+ Education Video \(see Resources\)](#)
2. [Continuing Care LGBTQ2S+ Education Presentation](#)

## 3 Establishing a Site Champion

To help drive positive change, you may wish to appoint or ask a staff member to volunteer to be a site champion. A LGBTQ2S+ site champion is a member of the healthcare team who demonstrates allyship by actively implementing, using and supporting the tips and strategies identified in the resources. We have developed the [Tips for Establishing a LGBTQ2S+ Site Champion](#) to support you with establishing a Site Champion.

## 4 Creating a Commitment Statement

Creating a commitment statement clearly informs clients, residents, families, visitors and staff about your intent to create safer and more inclusive care environments. This statement is similar to a mission statement but is focused on diversity and inclusion. The type of commitment statement will also depend on your care home needs and how you plan to use it. You may post the statement in common areas and include it in printed materials such as the Resident Admission Package. We have provided examples of commitment statements for you to reference.

*We value diversity and embrace a welcoming, safer and inclusive environment for everyone.*

*Our care home offers inclusive care environments and values the diversity of our clients, families, visitors and staff.*

*We value diverse and inclusive care spaces.*

*Our care home upholds values of respecting diversity and providing an inclusive space for everyone, including those who identify as sexually and gender diverse.*

# 5 Elements to highlight

## Welcoming Spaces

Residents, clients, family members, guests and others who enter your care home should be made to feel that they are in a space that is respectful, safer and welcoming. By fostering this type of approach, you will set the foundation to help reduce fear and promote trust. This includes using rainbow symbols, offering resource materials with diverse images and having inclusive washroom signage. Your site champion can implement these and other ideas by using the [Site Champion resource](#). We have also included a link to the Safer and Inclusive Physical Spaces and Checklist for Creating Safer Spaces. (Use this checklist to assess your care home for inclusive spaces. See pages 25–28).

## Resident Admission Handbook

We have developed [Diversity and Inclusion in Continuing Care: a resource for clients, families, visitors and healthcare providers](#). This resource provides an overview of diversity, inclusion, Canadian and Alberta Human Rights Acts, roles, resources and concerns resolution. This resource can be included in the Resident Admission Handbook and provided in waiting rooms, quiet areas and staff lounges.

## Inclusive Language

Staff should be encouraged to use inclusive language in their greetings, assessments and everyday communication with residents, families, visitors and staff. It is considered best practice to update existing governance documents with inclusive language. We have include two links to support staff to use inclusive language.

1. [Inclusive Communication](#) See pages 18–24.
2. [Inclusive Language, Communication & Information Records Management](#)

## Recreation Programs

A resident who identifies as sexually and gender diverse may or may not share this personal information about themselves, and this is also true for their chosen family members, friends and visitors. It's important that all activity and recreation therapy programs promote inclusion and welcome diversity. The [Tips to Support LGBTQ2S+ Friendly Activity Programming in Continuing Care](#) is a resource developed to support your care home to provide inclusive programs.

## For more information

For more information, email [continuingcare@ahs.ca](mailto:continuingcare@ahs.ca)

