

Chapter:	Client Services General	Policy Number	CG1601
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References:			
Policy references:	Board Code of Conduct – B0901 Reporting Inappropriate Activity – B0101 Non-Discrimination – K0402 Workplace Violence – S1001 Workplace Harassment – S1001		
Approved by:	Tara Groves-Taylor, Chief Executive Officer		

## Right to Primary Health Care

### Policy

People who identify as part of the LGBTQ2S+ community have the right to full and equal access to primary health care services (health care, health promotion and community development). Community Healthcaring Kitchener-Waterloo (the Health Centre) will provide a supportive environment where LGBTQ2S+ clients have access to respectful, medically appropriate, and culturally competent treatments and care, and programs and services. Furthermore, the client has the right to considerate and respectful care in a safe setting that fosters the patient’s comfort and dignity and is free from all forms of abuse and harassment, including abuse or harassment based on gender identity or gender expression.

In order to ensure access to quality health care, LGBTQ2S+ individuals have the right:

1. To a discrimination-free zone at the Health Centre based on gender identity and gender expression (see the non-discrimination policy);
2. To privacy and confidentiality during medical treatment or other rendering of care;
3. To have their self-defined families recognized, acknowledged and respected by all staff;

It is important for Health Centre staff to recognize that some clients have families that are headed by same-sex partners, have same-sex parents, or may define family in different ways, such as chosen family rather than blood relatives.

4. To have case management and treatment plans that include and address sexual orientation and gender identity where it is a necessary and appropriate issue in the client’s care;
5. To be included and have their needs addressed in prevention and other health promotion programs.

The Health Centre will ensure that program promotion, content, and delivery are developed with consideration to the unique health risks of LGBTQ2S+ people.

6. To be treated in a health care environment that uses culturally appropriate language, including culturally appropriate intake and other written forms;
7. To be treated professionally and with courtesy and respect;
8. To have safe and equal access to restrooms in accordance with their gender identity and expression.

### Procedures

9. To ensure the use of culturally appropriate language, including intake and other written forms:
  - a. Preferred pronouns should be determined, recorded and used.
  - b. The client's gender should be recorded as the client specifies.
  - c. In addition to the 'Legal Name', forms will include an option for a client's 'Chosen Name' and 'Chosen Pronoun'. All clients should be asked if they have a 'Chosen Name' and 'Chosen Pronoun' that they would like to include in their record.
  - d. Health Centre staff should not attempt to guess the client's gender identity or expression.
10. To ensure that Health Centre staff interact with LGBTQ2S+ clients with professionalism, courtesy, and respect:
  - a. LGBTQ2S+ individuals that come for health care at the Health Centre will be addressed and referred to on the basis of their self-identified gender, using their preferred pronoun and name, regardless of the client's appearance, surgical history, legal name, or sex assigned at birth.
  - b. Health Centre staff will not ask questions or make statements about LGBTQ2S+ client's genitalia, breast, other physical characteristics, or surgical status except for professional reasons that can be clearly articulated.
  - c. At intake, Health Centre clients will be asked about their gender identity and sex assigned at birth since it may be relevant to the client's care and health outcomes. When inquiring about this information the health care provider should explain to the client: i) why the requested information is relevant to the client's care, ii) that the information will be kept confidential, but some disclosure of the information may be permitted or required, and iii) that the client should consult the Health Centre's policy for details concerning permitted disclosure of clients' information. The client has the right not to disclose any personal information that will not interfere with their health.
  - d. Information about a client's transgender status or any transition-related services that the client is seeking and /or has obtained is sensitive medical information, and Health Centre staff members will treat it as such.
11. To ensure that LGBTQ2S+ clients have safe and equal access to restrooms in accordance with their gender identity and expression;
  - a. The Health Centre will maintain gender-neutral washrooms, which are accessible to all genders.

- b. All clients at the Health Centre may use restrooms that they choose.
  - c. Harassment of LGBTQ2S+ clients for using restrooms in accordance with their gender identity will not be tolerated. LGBTQ2S+ clients who are harassed in this manner may contact the Chief Executive Officer or Designate.
12. To ensure that Health Centre personnel have the knowledge necessary to implement this policy, all staff, volunteers and students must complete LGBTQ2S+ Positive Space training as part of their orientation.