

# Finding An LGBT-Affirmative Healthcare Provider That Works For You

## What does it mean to be LGBT Affirming?

Affirmative therapy for LGBTQ individuals is based on the premise that LGBTQ and heterosexual identities are equally valid. An LGBTQ affirmative healthcare provider has particular knowledge, awareness (specifically self-awareness), and skills specific to competent counseling for LGBTQ individuals. While maintaining a broad view of acceptable lifestyles, LGBTQ-affirmative healthcare challenges oppressive stereotypes and systems of thought, and celebrates and advocates for LGBTQ people and their relationships.

(Morrow, S. L., & Beckstead, A. L. (2004). Conversion therapies for same-sex attracted clients in religious conflict: Context, predisposing factors, experiences, and implications for therapy. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 32, 641 – 650.)

## How Do I Find a Provider Who is Right For Me?

Choosing the right healthcare provider can seem difficult enough, but choosing someone who is LGBT-Affirmative may seem even more difficult. It doesn't have to be. Keep in mind that the best provider for you is one with whom you feel comfortable. When it comes to both your medical and mental healthcare it is important that you find a professional with whom you can develop a trusting relationship.

Talking with a prospective provider for a few minutes on the phone should give you a feel for whether or not this person will be a good match for you. It is likely that you already have some questions that you would want to know about their practice. Or, you might choose some questions from the following:



[www.lgbtguild.com](http://www.lgbtguild.com)

- What is your view of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender people and their relationships?
- How do you generally work with LGBT people?
- Do you see individuals? Couples? Families? Groups?
- What's your experience with treating other people with problems similar to mine?
- What type of professional education do you have in working with LGBT clients?
- What kind of training have you had in working with the LGBT population?
- How do you describe your professional orientation to therapy?
- How long have you been in practice?
- Where is your office located?
- What are your usual office hours?
- What are your fees?
- Are you able to accept my insurance?
- Do you have a sliding fee scale? How does it work?
- How soon would you be able to see me?

Finding the right provider does not have to be difficult. Making a few phone calls and asking questions can help you with this process. Remember, the right therapist for you is the one with whom you feel comfortable. Good luck.

## **What is the LGBT-Affirmative Therapists Guild of Greater Kansas City?**

The Guild serves to educate both consumers and providers about what to look for when seeking LGBT-Affirming healthcare. The Providers listed in our on-line directory at [lgbtguild.com](http://lgbtguild.com) share a collaborative commitment to make affirming culturally competent healthcare available for all sexual minorities based on the premise that LGBT and heterosexual identities are equally valid. Our website also serves as a local and national clearinghouse for LGBT-related resources, including information about marriage, parenting, alternative relationships, spirituality, gender-identity, families of LGBT, youth, aging, community resources, assault, drugs/alcohol, tobacco/gambling, STDS/AIDS, and more.... At [lgbtguild.com](http://lgbtguild.com)



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