



## I9: Interrupting heterosexism in health care

**Type of Exercise:** discussion question, written assignment

**Level:** intermediate

**Length of time it takes:** 30-45 minutes

**Resources needed:** handout

**Instructions:** Distribute the handout that lists examples of LGBTQ health care concerns. Ask participants to discuss these concerns at the time an LGBT or Q person encounters the health care system. Ask them to give an example of each, and suggest ways that the unit or agency where they work could address these concerns. Explore why each of these concerns might be a problem for an LGBTQ person and why it is stressful for LGBTQ people when patients are always assumed to be heterosexual?

### **Examples of LGBTQ health care concerns:**

- Fear of poor quality treatment or refusal of treatment
- Patient is assumed to be straight/heterosexual
- For women in relationships with other women: enduring contraception lectures
- For men who have sex with men: health care providers interpreting every symptom in terms of HIV or STIs
- Invisibility of partners
- Legal concerns about health care decision-making and hospital visitation
- Rights of the non biological parent—legal concerns/issues
- Coming out concerns—determining if it is safe to disclose one’s sexuality or gender identity in a health care setting



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