

QUEERING HOME CARE

Findings From Ontario-Based Research

The Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres (OACCAC) has outlined patient values as a way of conveying the rights of people receiving home and community care. These values were developed in accordance with The Home Care and Community Services Act, 1994.

We '*queer*' the values outlined by the OACCAC by integrating key findings of the LGBTQ Home Care Access Project. While the values identified by the OACCAC are important for LGBTQ communities, our project findings offer a queer perspective from which to reframe the values.

As someone receiving home care, you have the right to:

High-quality care.

- Receive care that is safe, effective, considerate ... *care from providers who have received adequate LGBTQ-specific training and understand why information about sexual orientation and gender identity and expression matter to health care ...* and timely.
- Compassionate care *from providers who understand that you have likely had homophobic and/or transphobic health care experiences and that* take your preferences into account *affirming your sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and your chosen relationships, chosen family, chosen names and pronouns.*
- Be part of a care team that works together and makes sure they have the right information *about your relationships, chosen family, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and treat these respectfully.*

Be a partner in making decisions about your care.

- Be an equal partner in planning your care, along with *your chosen* family members, *decision-maker(s), provider organizations and care team.*

- A care plan that addresses your health-care needs as well as your social needs and goals, and also considers *the ability of your support people to help with your care.*
- A care plan that recognizes the need for more predictability and control over when *care providers come to your home.*
- A care plan that does not take into account your ability to pay for privately-funded services.
- A care plan that *does* take into account *your inability to pay for privately funded services.*
- Refuse the care that has been recommended *as well as care from a specific provider(s).*

Be respected.

- Be treated in a manner that is courteous, considerate ... *not be expected to educate care providers about LGBTQ communities and cultures and specific health care needs ...* and respectful of your dignity, privacy ... *not be exposed to intrusive questions about your relationships, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression ...* and independence.
- Be free from discrimination ... *not be denied or exposed to substandard personal care (e.g., bathing) because of care providers' lack of knowledge and/or fear and/or discomfort ...* mental abuse ... *not be exposed to religious materials and/or discussions that denigrate your relationships, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression ...* physical and financial abuse.
- To receive care that respects cultural, ethnic, spiritual, linguistic and regional preferences ... *having your home including chosen art work and photos and partner(s) and friends respected and having your chosen language including pronouns for yourself and your chosen supports respected.*
- Know the process for raising concerns about your service and decisions affecting your care and be able to do so without fear that it may affect your care negatively.

Have the information you need.

- Access information and resources (e.g. on CCAC/agency websites, brochures) that show their commitment to LGBTQ affirming care.
- Receive information (e.g. anti-discrimination statement) and ask questions about the commitment of the CCAC and provider agencies to the provision of non-discriminatory care, so you have all the information about care options available to make decisions about your care that are right for you.
- Know who your primary contact person is at the CCAC, and know how to get in touch with them *and receive information about the process for raising concerns about experiences of non-accepting and non-affirming care (e.g., homophobia, transphobia, discriminatory) and be able to do so without fear that it may negatively affect your access to care.*
- Be informed about the care being provided ... *receive information about LGBTQ-specific programs and resources ...* as well as the people and organizations delivering your care ... *receive information and ask questions about the training that providers receive to support their care of LGBTQ community members.*
- Questions about your sexual orientation, gender identity and expression are asked respectfully and personal and health information treated confidentially ... *honours your choices related to sharing this information ...* and in a way that respects the law.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE LGBTQ HOME CARE ACCESS PROJECT, VISIT:

<http://yorku.ca/lgbthome>

Andrea Daley, School of Social Work, York University, adaley@yorku.ca and Judith MacDonnell, School of Nursing, York University, jmacdonn@yorku.ca.

This project was supported by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research — Institute of Gender and Health.