

LGBTQ+ Inclusive Hospice Readiness Checklist

A Guide for Patients, Families, and Care Partners



1. First Impressions & Visibility

- Website and printed materials explicitly welcome LGBTQ+ patients and families.
- Non-discrimination statements include sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.
- Photos and educational materials reflect LGBTQ+ people, people of color, and diverse families.
- Pride symbols or inclusive signage are visible in offices or community education spaces.
- Intake staff and care teams demonstrate comfort discussing LGBTQ+ identities and relationships.

2. Respectful Language & Documentation

- Care team asks for and consistently uses your name and pronouns.
- Staff ask about important people in your life without assuming marital status or gender of partners.
- Advance directives and documentation allow you to clearly designate your decision-makers.
- Confidentiality regarding sexual orientation and gender identity is clearly explained.
- Staff respond respectfully if you share LGBTQ+ identity information.

3. Safety, Comfort & Belonging

- Staff are trained to recognize and interrupt bias, disrespect, or harassment.
- Leadership communicates a commitment to LGBTQ+ affirmation and inclusive end-of-life care.
- LGBTQ+ patients, families, and staff are welcomed and supported openly.

- Hospice partners with LGBTQ+ organizations or participates in inclusive community events.
- Patients can choose caregivers with whom they feel most comfortable.

4. Care Experience, Activities & Family Support

- Hospice honors chosen family, including visitation, decision-making, and preferences.
- Bereavement services include support for LGBTQ+ partners, chosen family, and caregivers.
- Social workers, chaplains and grief counselors are trained to understand and validate LGBTQ+ relationships, including when legal recognition is limited.
- Hospice maintains up-to-date referrals to LGBTQ+-affirming resources (legal, spiritual, medical).
- LGBTQ+ patients and families are invited to share feedback that informs care planning.

5. Staff Competency & Ongoing Training

- All care team members receive regular, required LGBTQ+ cultural competency training.
- Staff can explain why asking about pronouns, relationship status, or family structure helps them provide better care.
- Transgender and nonbinary patients can receive gender-affirming personal care (e.g., grooming, clothing, privacy).
- LGBTQ+ staff feel safe and supported being “out” if they choose.
- Training includes spiritual care, bereavement, and family systems relevant to LGBTQ+ communities.

6. Accountability, Feedback & Continuous Improvement

- Patients and families can provide anonymous feedback about their care experiences.
- LGBTQ+ patients and caregivers are invited to participate in advisory groups or focus discussions.
- Evaluations measure whether patients feel safe, respected, and affirmed.
- Clear procedures exist for addressing discrimination, disrespect, or privacy concerns.
- Hospice leadership reviews and updates policies to address LGBTQ+ needs.

7. Tools for Finding LGBTQ+-Affirming Hospices

- Hospice provides patients/families with tools to identify LGBTQ+-affirming providers.
- Hospice provides resources and search tools to find an affirming hospice.

About SAGE

At SAGE, we envision a world where LGBTQ+ elders are valued, have limitless opportunities, and thrive. Since 1978, we have led the way in advocating for policies, services, and resources that empower LGBTQ+ elders to live openly and authentically. Our dedicated team members work nationally and globally to protect our rights, build health and longevity, and preserve the vibrancy of our community as we age. Each one of us has a place to create a bright and vibrant future for the LGBTQ+ community as each one of us lights the way for the next generation to follow. Learn more at www.sageusa.org

About SAGECare

SAGECare is SAGE's training and credentialing program that helps aging services, healthcare providers, and long-term care organizations create more welcoming and culturally responsive environments for LGBTQ+ older adults. With expert-led trainings, ongoing support, and a nationally recognized credentialing system, SAGECare equips professionals and organizations with the tools they need to deliver inclusive, person-centered care. Organizations partner with SAGECare to strengthen staff competency, reduce disparities, and demonstrate their commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion. Learn more at www.sagecare.org

LGBTQ+ Inclusive Hospice Readiness Checklist

Downloadable checklist

- Website and materials explicitly welcome LGBTQ+
- LGBTQ+ inclusive photos and décor
- Staff respectful and affirming
- Staff ask for name and pronouns
- Inclusive questions about family/support system
- Confidentiality explained clearly
- Staff trained to address bias or harassment
- Community partners with LGBTQ+ organizations
- LGBTQ+-friendly referrals available
- Ongoing LGBTQ+ staff training
- Anonymous feedback process available
- Clear process for discrimination concerns
- Non-discrimination statement includes sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression
- Respectful response to sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) disclosure
- Advance directives and documentation allow you to clearly designate your decision-makers.
- Training includes spiritual care, bereavement, and family systems relevant to LGBTQ+ communities.