

Collating LGBTQ+ Friendly Service Providers: Safe Spaces Coalition of the Chippewa Valley Resource Guide

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GRASSROOTS COALITION WORK



- **Mission:** To improve the safety, visibility, health, and well-being of LGBTQ+ people of all ages in the Chippewa Valley.
- **Vision:** Safe Spaces Coalition envisions a Chippewa Valley where LGBTQ+ people are safe, supported, empowered, and celebrated.
- **Values:** Representation of LGBTQ+ voices, inclusivity, collaboration, passion, equity, justice, empowerment, compassion and personal & collective growth.

WHY OUR PROJECT MATTERS

- Data from the US Department of Health and Human Services and the Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey shows that LGBTQ+ people often do not seek services they need due to fear and prior experiences of discriminatory care from service providers .
- The US Department of Health and Human Services recommends service providers become culturally competent in order to encourage regular care.
- State and federal government health agencies have called-in communities to engage in reducing stigma, discrimination, and violence faced by LGBTQ+ people.
- Our Resource Guide links patients and providers in more equitable ways.

BARRIERS TO CARE

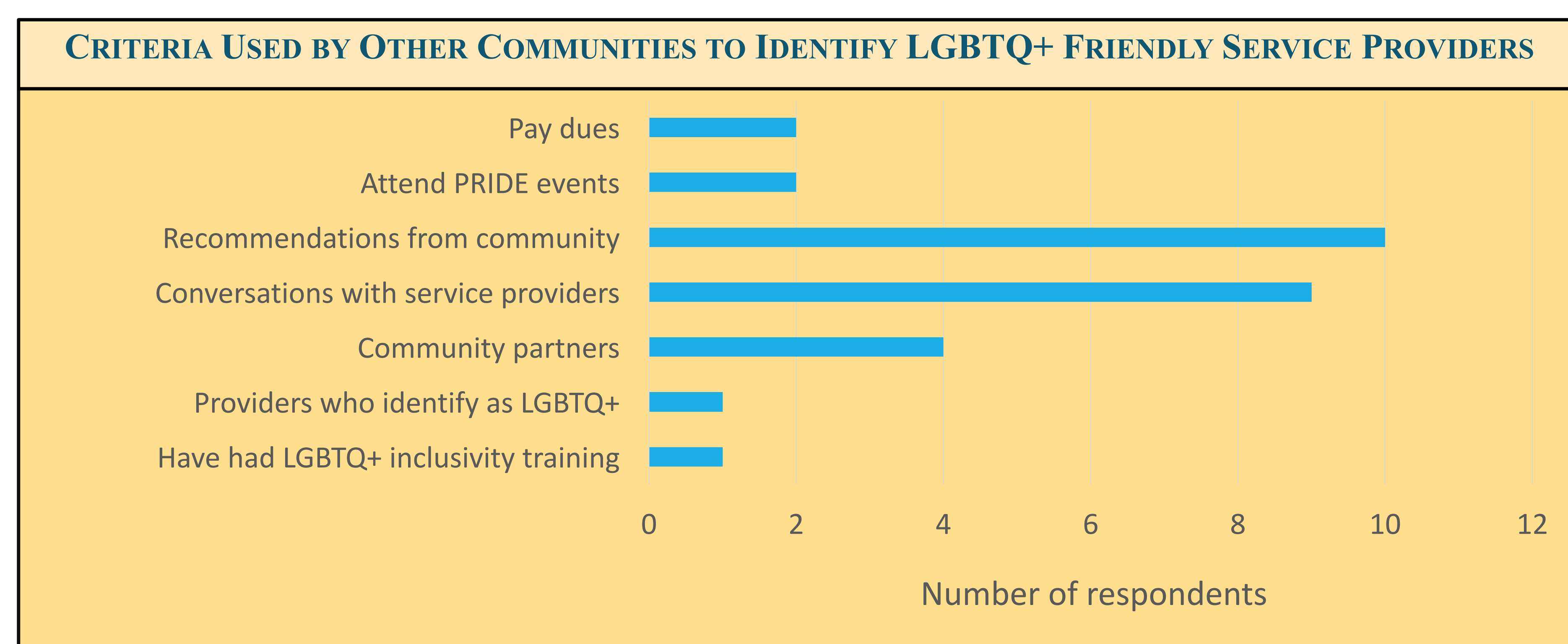
LGBTQ+ people face barriers in accessing care that makes them vulnerable to receiving adequate services-or no services at all. These include barriers that are:

- **Structural:** for example, lack of inclusive intake forms
- **Personal:** for example, fear of unwanted disclosure and fear of discrimination
- **Financial:** for example, lack of job security, higher rates of unemployment, and less likely to have insurance

METHODOLOGY

CONVERSATIONS WITH OTHER COMMUNITIES

Many metropolitan cities across the country have resource guides like the one we wanted to create. We consulted with community centers outside of the Chippewa Valley who already have established resource guides to learn about how they were created.



REFERRAL QUESTIONNAIRE: PRIORITIZING LGBTQ+ VOICES

- From these conversations, the research team learned that most centers prioritized LGBTQ+ voices in developing their list of recommended service providers.
- Therefore we distributed a referral questionnaire to LGBTQ+ people in the Chippewa Valley asking them to recommend LGBTQ+ friendly service providers.

LGBTQ+ Friendly Referrals	Mental Health (counselor, therapist)
<p>The Safe Spaces Coalition of the Chippewa Valley is working on creating a resource guide of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer friendly and competent service providers in Chippewa, Dunn, and Eau Claire counties. For this first round of surveys we are looking for providers in: mental health, medicine, alternative medicine, social services, and legal services. We are asking people who identify on the LGBTQ+ spectrum to take a few minutes to fill out this survey to help us locate such service providers. Please know that your answers will remain anonymous.</p> <p>Q1 My gender is: _____</p> <p>Q2 My sexuality is: _____</p> <p>Q3 Below please list service providers within Chippewa, Dunn, or Eau Claire counties that you:</p> <p>a.) are 'out' to.</p> <p>b.) feel comfortable discussing your sexuality and/or gender with.</p> <p>c.) feel are knowledgeable on issues regarding sexuality and/or gender.</p> <p>d.) would recommend to other LGBTQ+ people.</p>	Medicine (family doctor, pediatrician)
	Alternative Medicine (chiropractor, massage therapist)
	Social Services (social worker, case manager)
	Legal Services (lawyer, paralegal)

OUTREACH

- Hyperlink to survey was distributed electronically through email, social media, and websites.
- Paper copies of the survey were distributed at local community events (e.g., drags shows, HIV testing events, community advocacy events, etc.) and in waiting rooms of local service providers.

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW WITH RECOMMENDED SERVICE PROVIDERS

We contacted recommended providers by phone to confirm their desire to be included and to obtain information about what makes them an LGBTQ+ friendly provider. Questions included information regarding office climate (e.g., gender inclusive/expansive/neutral intake forms; diversity of images if décor includes human images; etc.), experiences working with people who identify along LGBTQ+ spectrums, and experiences with LGBTQ+ inclusivity training.

RESULTS AS OF APRIL, 2017...

- 11 mental health providers
- 8 medical providers
- 1 alternative medicine provider
- 7 social service providers
- 2 legal services providers
- 14 additional providers who have not yet been given a follow-up interviews and/or their information compiled.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE STEPS

By enabling LGBTQ+ members of the Chippewa Valley to share recommendations of service providers, this resource assists people in seeking needed services by avoiding negative experiences with providers who are openly prejudiced and/or ignorant regarding sexuality and/or gender identity. By prioritizing LGBTQ+ voices, the project helps reduce health disparities in the Chippewa Valley. The Resource Guide also reminds service providers of important criteria for quality care.

Our conclusions for this project are just a beginning...As a coalition, Safe Spaces of the Chippewa Valley continues its work on the guide by adding additional types of community service recommendations to its survey (e.g., educational, faith-based, etc.). The Coalition is also developing a FAQ section for its Resource Guide (e.g., how to make updates or changes to legal identity documents, questions to consider when choosing a healthcare provider, how to tell if an insurance plan covers hormone therapy, etc.).

The Power of **AND**

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