Actions for Health and Social Service Providers

- Two-Spirit people need accessible, informed providers who can provide practical assistance in non-judgmental and supportive ways.
- Two-Spirit people may experience stigma, homophobia, racial discrimination, and the effects of colonization when accessing services. Negative experiences, fear of rejection, and feeling unsafe with providers deters accessing services and leads to isolation of Two-Spirit people.
- Service providers can create positive experiences for Two-Spirit people to offset effects of historical and ongoing trauma that they face.

Gender and Sex Sensitive Practice

- Raise awareness in occupational, educational, and personal spaces of the need for gender and sexuality sensitivity.
- Advocate for inclusive policies and procedures in your practice. This includes gender-neutral washrooms, options to select "other" as gender and sex on health care forms, educational materials showing gender-diverse families, and representation in public media.
- Include an Elder (preferably one who identifies as Two-Spirit) in your practice.
- Be aware charts may use old and/or legal names not in current use. Some charts may acknowledge preferred names.
- Avoid dead-naming. When you reject the chosen name/pronoun that people prefer, they feel invalidated and disrespected.
- Ask and use preferred names and pronouns (including they). This creates a sense of safety and buffers stigmatizing assumptions.
- Be aware that Two-Spirit people may feel safer with homosexual service providers and with Indigenous service providers. Do not interpret their preference as an insult.
- Develop a resilience and strengths-based approach, providing opportunities for Two-Spirit people to develop their capabilities and resources.
- Help Two-Spirit people to come out safely so that they are proud of their Indigenous identity.
- Promote Two-Spirit role models and connect Two-Spirit youth with Two-Spirit Elders.
- Support Two-Spirit parents.
- Support contemporary and traditional activities that reconnect Indigenous people with their culture and help Two-Spirit people develop friendships.
- Be an Ally! Learn about Two-Spirited People of Manitoba https://twospiritmanitoba.ca/

The Foundations of Relationship

- Practice culturally-safe care.
- Learn about colonization and the history of the Two-Spirit people.
- Critically reflect upon your personal biases about Indigenous and Two-Spirit people.
- Avoid assumptions. Everyone you meet in practice is unique. Not all Indigenous people have the same customs.
- Acknowledge power differentials related to race and occupation.
- Acknowledge historical trauma and current sociopolitical circumstances of Two-Spirit people.
- Build trust through awareness, understanding, compassion and empathy.
- Take part in opportunities that increase your knowledge of Two-Spirit people. Many Two-Spirit people feel responsible, and open, to educate health care professionals about their identity and needs.
- Adopt a decolonizing view; learn.

Service providers can make a difference! Sharing her life story of trauma and resilience, Ma-Nee Chacaby, a Two-Spirit Ojibwa-Cree Elder credits “all the good people ... strangers, professionals and Good Samaritans” who aided and sustained her on her personal journey.

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References available on back

The purpose of this project is to raise awareness and increase knowledge of Two-Spirit people. This bulletin provides a historical to contemporary overview of Two-Spirit people. Funded by Winnipeg Suicide Prevention Network.
References:


Photos:


Silhouettes [image]. Cited 1 April 2019. Available from: https://cdn.pixabay.com/photo/2014/05/05/19/34/girlfriends-338449_960_720

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