Out: The LGBTQ Cancer Survey

A new survey aims to help train providers to make care safer and more welcoming for LGBTQ patients.

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“We have a history of our health care providers not respecting who we are,” says Scout, MA, PhD, executive director of the National LGBT Cancer Network.

The combination of ignorance and an unwelcoming attitude can lead to negative outcomes for LGBTQ people with cancer, who have lower rates of screening; higher rates of risk factors, such as smoking; and higher rates of certain cancers.

“A trans guy still needs breast cancer screening because even with top surgery, they may still have some breast tissue,” explains Scout, a trans father of three, who goes by one name. Another example: Rates of anal cancer, primarily caused by HPV, are rising rapidly in the United States. Men who have sex with men, especially those living with HIV, are at higher risk for anal cancer, but many providers may not be aware that men can undergo anal Pap smears to catch cancer early.

Scout’s pleas to providers: “Learn about the additional risks in our population so that we don’t have to educate you. And show that your office or hospital is welcoming—don’t presume we realize you are because you’re thinking it quietly in your head.”

To help train providers to make care safer and more welcoming, the network launched OUT: The National Cancer Survey. To take it, aim your phone’s camera at the QR code (right)and follow the prompts. To find an LGBTQ-friendly provider, go to Cancer-Network.org.

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http://beta.docker.cancerhealth.com/article/lgbtq-cancer-survey