

LOOK TO NORWAY?

PINK COMPETENCY – A NATIONAL COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE NORWEGIAN DIRECTORATE FOR HEALTH AND THE NORWEGIAN LGBT ASSOCIATION

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Pink Competency

Pink Competency provides training for health professionals and raises awareness within the health professions regarding how hetero-normativity affects health care provided to LGBT populations.

- how can health professionals meet their non-heterosexual patients constructively and positively?
- what aspects of sexual orientation need special attention? When is an extra effort important, and is sexual orientation ever irrelevant?

Hetero-normativity in health care

In a society with heteronormative values heterosexuality is looked upon as the normal sexual orientation. It states that sexual and marital relations are most fitting between a man and a woman. As long as we as society apply a hetero-normative view, health and social workers need to be certain that they possess the knowledge, skills and empathy to provide competent care towards the lgbt population.

The aim of the project

is to increase general as well as specific knowledge about the LGBT population, and to increase health care providers' competency to encounter this population in an empathic way. Health professional are often in a possession where they can make a huge difference in peoples life. Pink Competency work to empower the professions, and to make them aware of the unique role they can play.

A public health strategy

Pink Competency was established five years ago, and is one of the ways that the Norwegian government works towards reducing health inequalities. Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people have unique challenges related to health and disease. Sexual minority status influences mental well being, the relation to health care providers, the panorama of STDs, and reproduction. The project cooperates with various professions, such as doctors, midwives, psychologists and nurses, also including their professional organizations. In that way the project is not about gay rights, it's about equality in health care.

Key success factors

The project has been rated a great success amongst our partners and the health professionals them self. We believe that some of the reasons for this are that

- Myths and illusions about the lgbt population are explored with lots of humour, and replaced with knowledge
- We work together with all the health professions and their organizations
- We have a network of professionals within the field, that secures the quality of our work at all times
- We don't preach, we offer some perspectives and teach with respect for the professionals competency and reality
- We try to be very practical in our approach, and address issues as language, awareness, heteronormativity, disclosure etc.

