**5 major obstacles LGBT people in obtaining adequate healthcare**

One of the biggest obstacles that LGBTQ people face when attempting to obtain adequate healthcare is the issue of finding a medical provider who is willing to take on a patient whose sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression conflict with their religious or moral beliefs. While there are many organizations out there that can help you find an appropriate doctor, it can be a long process with numerous hoops one must jump through. But, if you follow this guide, you can have a more positive experience and find doctors who will accept your insurance, provide positive care and treat you with compassion and respect.

**Confusion during doctor visits**

As a transgender person, it can be difficult to understand what questions your doctor will ask you. Some doctors may ask personal questions about your gender history or identity, and that can be awkward. If the doctor doesn't seem like they understand your needs, find another doctor who can.

Inability to find a doctor willing to treat LGBT patients

One of the biggest obstacles for most LGBT people is finding a doctor willing to treat them. It's not uncommon for doctors to refuse to see transgender patients because they don't feel comfortable working with them. Thankfully, this is changing as more and more medical professionals recognize the importance of treating LGBT patients with respect and dignity.

Lack of support from medical staff

Another obstacle transgender people face when seeking medical care is lack of support from their medical team. Doctors are often unaware of the unique needs and challenges faced by transgender people when it comes to health care — which means there's no one around who understands how important it is for them to get regular checkups, screenings and treatment from their doctors. This can make life very difficult for transgender individuals who are struggling with mental health issues or substance abuse problems that need ongoing treatment in order to get better

**Lack of insurance for essential care**

The majority of LGBTQ people are not covered by health insurance. According to a study published in the Journal of General Internal Medicine, 45 percent of transgender Americans and 59 percent of bisexual Americans are uninsured. Additionally, 42 percent of transgender people report being forced to choose between paying rent and buying medicine. In addition, 27 percent have had to choose between paying their rent and buying food.

This lack of insurance can lead to serious consequences for LGBTQ people. For example, many are unable to visit a doctor when they are sick or injured because they don’t have insurance that covers visits with doctors or prescription medications. Additionally, if a person does not have adequate health care coverage, they may be unable to afford other services like therapy or counseling from someone trained in helping someone cope with their gender identity or sexual orientation. If a person doesn’t have access to affordable health care services, it could lead them into a cycle of poor health that could result in longer hospital stays or even death.

**Prejudice and provider bias against LGBT people**

The reality is that LGBT people face significant health challenges. These include discrimination and harassment, social isolation, lack of access to medical care and health insurance, a lack of education about LGBT health issues and limited family support. For example, transgender people are more likely to live in poverty than the general population.

In addition to these obstacles, some LGBT people may be hesitant to seek medical care because they fear being discriminated against by providers or encountering negative reactions from colleagues or other patients. A recent study found that when LGBT individuals were asked if they would seek medical care for an illness or injury, only half said yes.

A study published in the Journal of General Internal Medicine found that LGBT patients with chronic conditions such as depression or anxiety were less likely than heterosexual patients to receive medications prescribed by their provider because of concerns about discrimination from providers who are not knowledgeable about LGBT issues or because of fears that they will be harassed by other patients.

Research shows that there is a high rate of non-discriminatory attitudes among physicians who specialize in obstetrics and gynecology (OB-GYNs), but few OB-GYNs have received training in how to provide respectful care for transgender patients.

**Fear of discrimination when seeking health care services**

Discrimination or in some cases the potential for discrimination deters LGBTQ people from seeking adequate care in the initial place. A recent survey noted that discrimination has played a distinctive role in preventing a huge number of LGBTQ people from accessing health care. Currently, around 8 percent to 14 percent of LGBTQ people who have experienced discrimination of some kind on the basis of their sexual orientation have avoided or opted out of wanting to access medical care. This is due to the disrespect from the health care staff that work in the health care facilities.

Takeaway: Hospitals can do much to improve the healthcare provided to LGBT people if they were willing to make some changes