

Landry & Kensler (2019) write about the struggles facing gender nonconforming or sexual minority women in healthcare settings. These people report feeling invisible and disrespected by providers. As a result, these individuals are less likely to receive screenings and treatments than women who are heterosexual (Landry & Kensler, 2019). “Women in sexual minorities have greater rates of obesity, smoking, and drug and alcohol abuse than other populations, which contributes to greater rates of cardiovascular disease, diabetes mellitus, and cancer” (Landry & Kensler, 2019, p. 168). Stress, internal responses, and external factors lead to mental health issues, increased depression, and fear. In addition, Landry & Kensler (2019) report cases of physical and emotional violence are higher overall in this population.

Nurses have an opportunity and responsibility to recognize these problems and actively advocate for these patients. The first step in this process is self-reflection (Landry & Kensler, 2019). Once a nurse is aware of internal feelings, they can work toward earning trust and building positive relationships. Asking the right questions proactively is an essential step in cultural competence. After these steps, a nurse also has a responsibility to educate others to improve healthcare experiences for these individuals.

Reference

Landry, J., & Kensler, P. (2019). Providing culturally sensitive care to women who are in the sexual minority or are gender nonconforming. *Nursing for Women's Health*, 23(2), 162-171. <https://ezproxy.lakeviewcol.edu:2212/science/article/pii/S175148511930039X>