

SAFER YOU



An SRHR, Safe Abortion & Contraception Handbook for LBQTI
WOMEN and GENDER DIVERSE Persons in Nigeria.

Ipas Partners for
Reproductive Justice
NIGERIA HEALTH
FOUNDATION



**THE INITIATIVE
FOR EQUAL RIGHTS**

Before We Begin...

Who is SRHR really for?

SRHR is meant for everyone, but often focuses on heterosexual, cisgender women.

This leaves LBQTI WOMEN and GENDER DIVERSE people:

- Underrepresented
- Misunderstood
- Excluded
- At risk of stigma

Some LBQTI WOMEN AND GENDER DIVERSE PEOPLE women and gender diverse people may have sexual experiences with men due to a range of circumstances, including personal choice, coercion, which constitutes sexual violence (rape), or pressure from family and societal expectations. These situations reflect complex and often challenging realities.

This includes:

- HIV & STI services
- Contraception
- Mental health
- Violence support
- Inclusive counselling

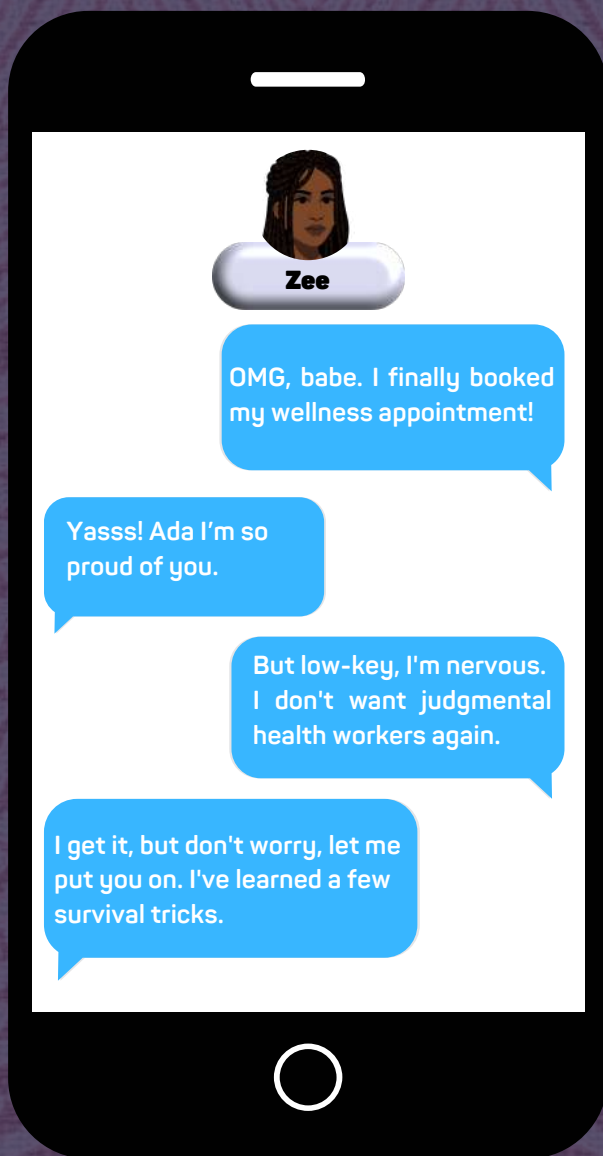
Let's Be Clear

SRHR is not about different rights; it is about equal access, dignity, and inclusion.

That's why this manual matters: to support inclusive, informed, and respectful SRHR for LBQTI women and gender diverse people.

*What would SRHR
look like if no one was
left out?*





Navigating SRHR as LGBTQI women and gender diverse people in Nigeria can feel overwhelming, but preparation puts you in control. This handbook is your guide.

Before You Seek Health Services

If you are planning to access SRHR, contraceptive, or abortion-related care, here are things to consider first:

- Choose queer-friendly facilities whenever possible.
- Ask trusted LGBTQI-GNC friends for referrals.
- Check for privacy: look for separate waiting spaces and discreet staff.
- Go during daylight hours where you can.
- Carry only what you need: ID and a charged phone. Bring a small power bank.
- If you need emotional support, ask a trusted friend to stay on call.
- You do not have to go alone. A trusted person accompanying you is always your right.



Preparation is not fear, it is power. Knowing your options before you arrive means you stay in control of your own healthcare experience.

Knowing Your SRHR Rights

Every LGBTQI woman and gender diverse people deserve healthcare that is:

- Non-judgmental and respectful
- Confidential at all times
- Accurate and complete
- Free from coercion or discrimination
- Dignified, regardless of your identity



When Speaking to a Healthcare Provider

- You do NOT need to disclose your sexual orientation unless it is clinically necessary.
- You can ask for a female provider if that makes you more comfortable.
- You can ask for a chaperone to be present during any examination.
- If you experience discrimination, you can report it, and TIERs can support you in doing so.

Safe Abortion Information

In Nigeria, abortion is legally restricted except to preserve the life of the woman. However, every LBTQI woman and gender diverse people still has the right to accurate information, compassionate care, and access to post-abortion services.

Every LBTQI-GNC person has the right to:

- Understand all available options, including medical information about safe methods.
- Access post-abortion care (PAC) without fear; this is legal and required at all hospitals.
- Receive dignified treatment, regardless of how or why care is sought.
- Be free from coercion in any healthcare decision



MYTH

Only straight women need abortion information.

Post-abortion care is illegal.

Hospitals can refuse PAC if they suspect you induced an abortion.

Abortion is always dangerous.

FACT

LBTQI-GNC people also experience pregnancy through assault, coercion, or personal choice.

Post-abortion care is legal and must be provided at all government and private hospitals.

This is false. PAC is a protected medical service. Any refusal can be reported.

Safe methods under medical supervision significantly reduce risk.

**For non-judgemental care, or referrals to safe, affirming health services
: 08146832042**

Contraception and STI Protection for LGBTQI Women and Gender Diverse People

Contraception is relevant to LGBTQI Women and Gender Diverse people for many reasons:

- To prevent pregnancy
- To prevent pregnancy resulting from corrective rape or sexual violence
- For hormonal regulation
- For managing periods and menstrual symptoms
- For other reproductive and general health reasons

Protecting Yourself from STIs

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can affect anyone regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or the type of sex they have. While some sexual activities may not lead to pregnancy, STI prevention is still an important part of sexual and reproductive health.

- STIs can be passed through:
 - Oral sex
 - Vaginal/frontal sex
 - Anal sex
 - Skin-to-skin sexual contact
 - Sharing unclean sex toys or objects without proper cleaning or protection

Some STIs may not show symptoms immediately, which is why regular testing and preventive care are important.



Common STIs

- **HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus):** HIV affects the immune system and can weaken the body's ability to fight infections if untreated. HIV can be managed effectively with treatment, and people living with HIV can live long and healthy lives.
- **Gonorrhoea:** A bacterial infection that may affect the genitals, throat, or rectum. Symptoms may include unusual discharge, pain while urinating, or pelvic discomfort, though some people may have no symptoms.
- **Chlamydia:** A common bacterial STI that may not cause symptoms but can lead to complications if untreated. It can affect the cervix, throat, rectum, or urethra.
- **Syphilis:** A bacterial infection that develops in stages and may begin with painless sores or rashes. Early testing and treatment are important.
- **Human Papillomavirus (HPV):** HPV is very common, and some types can cause genital warts or increase the risk of certain cancers. Vaccination can help prevent some strains.
- **Herpes (HSV):** A viral infection that can cause painful blisters or sores around the mouth or genitals. Symptoms may come and go over time.
- **Hepatitis B:** A viral infection that affects the liver and can be sexually transmitted. Vaccination is available and strongly recommended.

Important Reminder!

Protecting your sexual health is not only about preventing pregnancy. Regular testing, safer sex practices, access to accurate information, and stigma-free healthcare all play an important role in overall well-being. You deserve access to respectful, confidential, and inclusive healthcare services.



Ways to Reduce STI Risk

- Using external condoms during penetrative sex
- Using internal condoms where preferred or accessible
- Using dental dams during oral sex
- Cleaning sex toys properly before and after use
- Avoiding sharing unclean sex toys
- Regular HIV and STI testing
- Open conversations with partners about testing and protection
- Accessing treatment early if symptoms occur
- Seeking medical support after a possible exposure or sexual assault



Contraceptive and Protection Options

- **External Condoms:** Help prevent both pregnancy and STIs. They are one of the most accessible dual-protection methods.
- **Internal Condoms:** Offer protection against pregnancy and STIs and can be inserted before sex.
- **Dental Dams:** Thin protective barriers used during oral sex to reduce STI transmission.
- **Emergency contraception:** Can be used up to 120 hours after unprotected sex. Most effective within 72 hours.
- **IUD (Intrauterine Device):** Long-term, highly effective, reversible. Also available as emergency contraception if inserted within 5 days.
- **Implant:** Inserted under the skin. Discreet, effective for up to 3–5 years.
- **Pills (combined or progestogen-only):** Taken daily. It can also help regulate cycles and manage period pain.



If You Face Hostility at a Clinic

You have the right to respectful care. If a provider is hostile, dismissive, or discriminatory:

- Stay calm. Take a breath.
- Speak clearly: "I am here for a health service. I expect to be treated with respect."
- Ask to see a different provider.
- Request that your information be kept confidential.
- If you feel unsafe at any point, leave. Your safety comes first. Document what happened (date, facility, provider name if known) and report to TIERS.



You are not required to tolerate abuse or discrimination in a healthcare setting. Help is available.

Emergency & Support

TIERS Helpline for medical support: **08146832042**

Helpline and Legal: **08134357704**

All calls are confidential.

Digital Safety & Your SRHR

Protecting your privacy online is part of protecting your health. Here is how:

- Use incognito or private browsing mode when searching for SRHR information.
- Clear your browser history regularly on shared devices.
- Password-protect all health apps on your phone.
- Do not share sensitive health questions or experiences in public online spaces.
- Save clinic numbers and helplines under neutral contact names.
- If you use WhatsApp to access resources, enable disappearing messages.



Your digital safety is your physical safety. Small habits protect big things.



Talking with a Partner About SRHR



Healthy SRHR conversations with a partner include:

- Discussing STI testing together and regularly.
- Understanding pregnancy risk and your preferred approach to it.
- Talking openly about abortion: what you would do, what you would need.
- Setting clear boundaries and checking in on consent, every time.
- Agreeing on contraception choices and who manages what.



Remember!

Consent is ongoing. It can be withdrawn at any time. A partner who respects you will respect your boundaries, including around reproductive choices.

Post-Abortion Care (PAC)

Post-abortion care is a legally protected health service in Nigeria. Any hospital be it government or private, is required to provide it. You cannot legally be turned away.

If you need PAC:

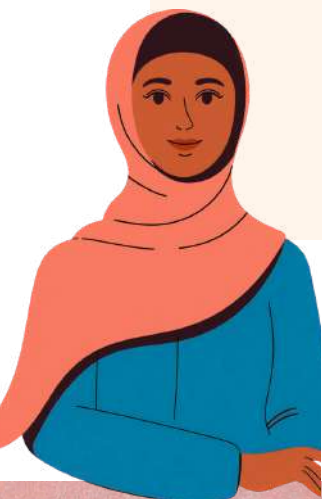
- Go to a government or registered private hospital.
- Tell the provider your symptoms. You are not required to explain how the pregnancy ended.
- If a provider refuses, ask for a supervisor or leave and go to the next facility.
- Do not self-medicate excessively or delay care if you are in pain.

Seek Urgent Medical Attention If You Experience:

Heavy or prolonged bleeding

Fever or chills

Severe abdominal pain or cramping

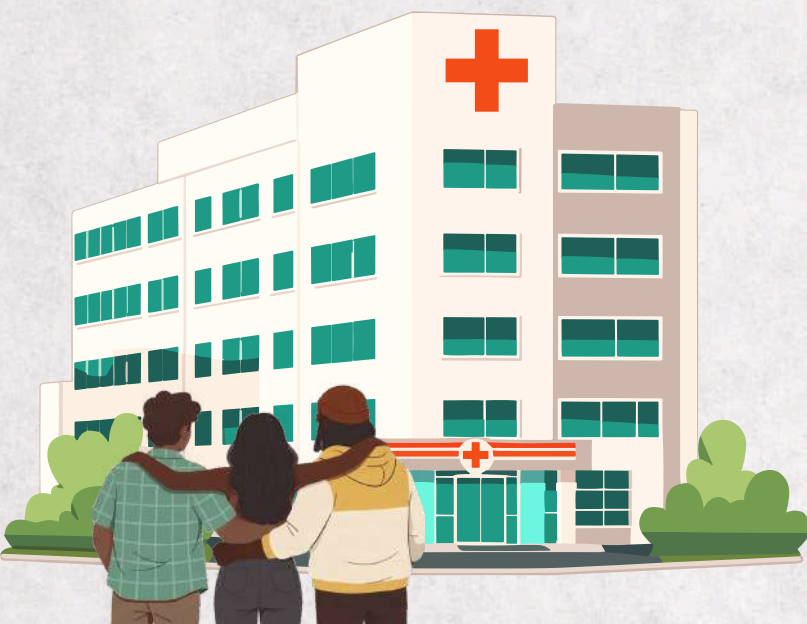


You are not alone. TIERs and partner organisations can support you in finding affirming PAC services.

Finding Queer-Friendly SRHR Spaces

Accessing affirming care starts with knowing where to look:

- Ask within your LBQI-GNC community network: peer referrals are often the most reliable.
- Contact TIERS, WHER, ISHRAI, ICARH, or AHRDI for verified referrals.
- Visit community safe spaces where health workers are already known to the network.
- Prefer daytime appointments and well-trafficked locations where you feel secure.
- When calling a new clinic, you can ask general questions first, without giving your name, to gauge the environment.



Your Mental Health Matters

Accessing affirming care starts with knowing where to look:

Being an LBQTI and Gender diverse person in Nigeria means carrying a weight that most people do not see.

Stigma, discrimination, family rejection, and healthcare hostility all take a toll. Seeking support for your mental health is not a weakness; it is wisdom.

You may need support if you are experiencing:

- Persistent sadness, anxiety, or numbness.
- Difficulty eating, sleeping, or leaving the house.
- Feeling unsafe with others or with yourself.
- Traumatic memories related to violence, assault, or medical experiences.
- Isolation or a sense that no one understands what you are going through.

What Affirming Mental Health Support Looks Like

A good counsellor will not pressure you to change who you are. They will not pathologise your identity. They will listen without judgment and help you build tools for resilience.

TIERs can connect you with LGBTQ-affirming counsellors and trauma-informed practitioners in Nigeria. Both free and low-cost options exist.

Online check-ins are also available for those who cannot safely access in-person support.



Where to Get Help

The following organisations provide affirming SRHR, legal, and psychosocial support in Nigeria.

ORGANISATION	CONTACT / SERVICE	SERVICE
TIERs	+2348134357704 <i>Alade street, off Atiba Osborne street, Maryland, Lagos</i>	<i>Health, Rights and Emergency</i>
MIRABEL CENTER,LAGOS	0815 577 0000, 0818 724 3468, 0701 349 1769 Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH), Ikeja General Hospital Road, Ikeja, Lagos.	Free medical care, forensic exams, psychosocial support, legal referrals
WARIF	08092100009 6 Turton street, off Thorburn Avenue, Yaba, Lagos	Survivor Care, Prevention and Advocacy
CECE YARA CHILD ADVOCACY	08008008001, 07007007001 2A, Akin Ogunmade-Davies close, Gbagada phase II estate, Gbagada, Lagos. House D2, 2nd Avenue, Salatu Royale Esate, Wuse 2, Abuja.	Child sexual abuse services
WHER	2349092845190	<i>mental health support</i>
ISHRAI	2349021162700	<i>Safe housing,mental health support</i>
ICARH	23480225542274	<i>Heath, Rights, mental health support</i>
Heartland Alliance	+2349087338160 Plot 459, L Close, Off 1st Avenue, Gwarinpa. FCT-Abuja. Nigeria	<i>Health and Rights</i>
AHRDI	2348089808483	<i>Health and Rights</i>

Organisation	Contact / Service	SERVICE
IDERA SARC	General hospital, Alimosho	<i>Provides forensic care, counselling and referrals</i>
The Spring Centre	08113931752 <i>Oke-Mosan, Abeokuta</i>	Sexual Assault Response Centre
Agape Centre	09077777433, 09090000648 Immanuel General Hospital, Eket	Sexual assault/Rape – medical, counselling, transport allowance for some survivors, feeding and provision of necessities for hospitalised survivors.
Vivian Centre	<i>GRA, Benin City</i> 07046055026, 08054461139, 08002002020 (Toll-free)	<i>Sexual assault referral centre</i>
WARAKA SARC	08032443721, 0802 379 5533, 08065340578 Murtala Muhammad Specialist Hospital, Kano	Clinical/ medical services, Counselling/ psychosocial support, Case management, Mediation & arbitration, GBV sensitization & awareness, Legal aid services, Protection services, Referral services.
Nana Khadija Centre	07042274748, 09041625256 <i>Sokoto Specialist Hospital</i>	<i>Sexual assault referral centre</i>
Rayuwa Centre	070330735333, 07038991160 <i>Police clinic, Minna</i>	<i>Sexual assault referral centre</i>
Ntasi Centre	0906 691 6915, 0904 922 4086, 0806 630 6402 General Hospital Enugwu-Ukwu Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra.	Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

Glossary of Terms

- **SRHR – Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights**
- **LBTQI WOMEN AND GENDER DIVERSE PEOPLE –**
Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex
- **GNC – Gender non-conforming**
- **HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus**
- **STI – Sexually Transmitted Infection**
- **PAC – Post-Abortion Care**
- **IUD – Intrauterine Device**
- **SARC – Sexual Assault Referral Centre**
- **TIERs – The Initiative for Equal Rights**
- **WHER – Women’s Health and Equal Rights Initiative**
- **ISHRAI – Initiative for Sexual Health and Rights
Awareness Initiative**
- **ICARH – International Centre for Advocacy on Right to
Health**
- **AHRDI – Access to Health and Rights Development
Initiative**

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