

The Q Card: Empowering Queer Youth in Healthcare



At the Q Card Project, we believe that all queer youth deserve quality, sensitive healthcare that meets their needs, recognizes their agency, and empowers them to be active participants in their health. And we think the Q Card can help make this happen.

Background:

The Q Card is a simple and easy-to-use communication tool designed to empower queer youth and educate healthcare providers. Designed with input from queer youth, healthcare providers, youth advocates, and community organizers, the Q Card is a tri-fold business card that allows youth to fill in their sexual orientation, gender identity, preferred gender pronouns, and any specific concerns. It also offers tips on how to provide more sensitive care to queer youth, and lists a number of documented health disparities in the queer (LGBTQ) community.

Where to Find Q Cards:

In focus groups, queer youth suggested a number of distribution points including schools, clinics, libraries, shelters, community centers, and drop-in sites. These locations remain primary targets. The first round of printing yielded 35,000 cards, which we hope to distribute throughout the Seattle metropolitan area. If you would like to request copies, please email genya@qcardproject.com.

How The Q Card Works:

We imagine youth picking up a Q Card out in the world, filling it out (if that feels safe), and bringing it to an appointment with a healthcare provider (physician, nurse, naturopath, therapist, etc.). Then we hope that youth can use the Q Card to start (or continue) an open and honest conversation with their provider about privacy, confidentiality, and their healthcare needs. Youth can do this by handing the Q Card to a provider in the exam room, by reading through it with a provider, or simply by having a blank Q Card and talking about their answers to the different questions printed inside. The bottom panel of the Q Card is a tear-off, and is meant to be left with the healthcare provider. This panel has tips for providers on delivering more sensitive care to queer youth. Of course, it is totally up to youth to decide what happens to the Q Card after the visit. They may decide to keep the whole thing, hand it over to a provider, or just tear off the bottom section and leave that after the visit.

If you have used a Q Card, please let us know how it went at: www.qcardproject.com/feedback