The extent of substance abuse disorders among the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) population is not well known, although a variety of research studies suggest that the rates may be 20 to 30 percent—rates which are higher than in the general population. Further, the clinical issues associated with LGBT clients may vary substantially within this population and in comparison with other clients.1

The National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment Services (N-SSATS) provides information on the extent to which special programs for LGBT clients are available through the Nation’s treatment network. Two characteristics of facilities—type of ownership and primary focus of the facility—are often associated with the available mix of services. In 2008, 777 of 13,688 (or 6 percent) of surveyed facilities offered these specialized programs. Figure 1 shows that facilities whose primary focus is a mix of substance abuse and mental health were more likely than other types of facilities to offer special groups for LGBT clients. Similarly, Figure 2 shows that facilities operated by private-for-profit entities were more likely to offer such programs.