Promoting Health Equity for LGBTQ New Yorkers

Demetre Daskalakis, MD, MPH
Deputy Commissioner, Disease Control
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Objectives

By the end of the presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Define LGBTQ Health Equity (NOTE—this is the Healthy People 2020 definition)
2. Describe LGBTQ-specific, systems-level interventions executed by the Health Department
3. Identify ways in which the Health Department interventions may be adopted by others
LGBTQ Health Equity
Definitions and Scope
Defining LGBTQ Health Equity

▪ The attainment of the highest level of health for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) communities.
▪ Promotes planning, policy, action, and meaningful engagement that ensures that LGBTQ individuals have full and equal access to opportunities that enable them to lead healthy lives.
▪ Focuses on bolstering traditional public health and health care practice by customizing resources to level the playing field to address the social determinants of population health.

Source: Healthy People 2020
LGBTQ Inequities in the Health Care System

Some examples:

- Medical records that do not capture or acknowledge gender identity
- Health insurance policies that exclude coverage for:
  - Gender affirming care
  - Reproductive health services for lesbians and transgender persons
  - Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)
- Framing LGBTQ health exclusively in terms of HIV prevention and control
- Discounting daily trauma faced by transgender and gender non-conforming individuals, such as interpersonal aggressions
- LGBTQ patients prevented from seeing their partners in hospital settings
Advancing LGBTQ Health Equity, The NYC Example

If you can make it there... you can make it anywhere!
Health Equity Paradigm Shift?

The NYC Health Department aims to diminish the roles that racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia play in the health care system, amongst many other systems of oppression.

- One major example of our commitment to health equity is the Race to Justice initiative.

We shift the paradigm by looking beyond the symptoms ...

e.g., anti-LGBTQ violence, HIV incidence, substance use

... to the root causes.

e.g., family acceptance, access to primary care, mental health services
LGBTQ Health Initiatives
at the NYC Health Department
Overview of LGBTQ Health Initiatives at the NYC Health Department

- The Health Department is working to advance health equity for LGBTQ New Yorkers by:
  - Implementing health care systems-level interventions
  - Pursuing meaningful and constructive engagement with LGBTQ communities
  - Enhancing LGBTQ (especially Transgender and Gender Nonconforming) workplace inclusion
  - Launching capacity building and training programs for health care professionals across NYC
  - Providing technical assistance and support to LGBTQ-focused contracted agencies
Without establishing standards for capturing sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (SOGIE) data, we are:

- Unable to determine the true state of LGBTQ Health in NYC
- Restricted in our understanding of health for LGBTQ communities compared to non-LGBTQ communities
- Limiting our analyses of health outcomes to infectious disease burden
Race, Ethnicity, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Data Alignment

- Creating an ideal, standard approach for Disease Control to capture the more informative nuances to better serve all populations in New York City and address the often invisible areas of disparity that impact health outcomes
  - Focus on creating recommendations to ensure that we capture these data in a way that best serves our community and our equity-focused data needs
  - Not preoccupied by funding requirements, though a standard data dictionary/crosswalk with the funders forms/reports will be created
  - Hope to push funders to improve their data requirements
Data Alignment Process

- Kick off: Data Alignment Summit held in August 2018
  - Included representatives from all Disease Control Bureaus, as well as Epi services, Mental Hygiene and Center for Health Equity
  - Examined research behind race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity data collection best practices
  - Bureaus agreed to standardize data collection across division
- September 2018, Task Force and Steering Committee start meeting every other week
  - Task Force—reps from all bureaus with varying expertise (epi, data collection, field services, etc.)
  - Steering Committee—reps from the Division and content experts
- Finalizing recommendations on race and ethnicity; sexual orientation and gender identity up next
- Interest in standardizing sexual orientation data collection across the agency
Systems-level Interventions
Citywide campaign launched during Pride 2017

Two major components:

1. Marketing campaign that encourages LGBTQ patients to have open and honest discussions with their health care provider and promote finding a new provider if they don’t feel comfortable having frank discussions with their current provider;

2. A directory of health care facilities that have experience serving LGBTQ populations (available online and through 311).
HealthMap: NYC LGBTQ Primary Care Finder Survey

- Voluntary SurveyMonkey sent to 200+ NYC providers, clinics, and hospitals Feb/March of 2017
- Qualifying providers asked to opt-in to be on the NYC Health Map as LGBTQ-knowledgeable providers
Tool that allows patients locate LGBTQ-knowledgeable health care providers in NYC

LGBTQ-Knowledgeable Services:
- Gender Affirming Care
- Hormone Therapy
- Puberty Blockers
- Surgical Referral Letters
- Primary Care
- Sexual Health Care
- HIV Services
  - Testing
  - PEP
  - PrEP
  - Treatment
What’s next for the health map

Next iteration will build on existing list of services to include:

- Behavioral health services
- Gynecological care services
- Fertility services
- Social services
The LGBTQ Health Care Bill of Rights articulates current legal rights that LGBTQ patients can use to assert their rights at health care settings within New York City.

The Bill of Rights:

- Informs patients of their legal rights in a health care setting
- Reiterates that health care providers and staff cannot legally provide LGBTQ people with a lower quality of care because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.
- Empowers patients to file a complaint about health care discrimination with the New York City Commission on Human Rights if they feel they are being mistreated or denied the care they need.
"In New York City, it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of a person’s sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression in public accommodations, including in health care settings."
LGBT HealthLink’s Healthcare Bill of Rights

- LGBT HealthLink, a program of CenterLink, is a community-driven network of experts and professionals enhancing LGBT health by reducing tobacco, cancer, and other health disparities within our communities.
- 2014: created document summarizing LGBT rights in healthcare
- 2015: launched website: healthcarebillofrights.org
Your personal life and relationships affect your health more than you realize, so your doctor and other providers need to know your story. We should all feel safe talking about our sexual partners, sex lives, sexual orientation, HIV status and gender identity.

RIGHT TO BE TREATED WITH EQUALITY AND RESPECT
RIGHT TO AFFIRMATION OF YOUR TRUE GENDER IDENTITY
RIGHT TO HELP DESIGNATING WHO WILL MAKE DECISIONS FOR YOU
RIGHT TO VISITATION BY ANYONE YOU CHOOSE
RIGHT TO YOUR PRIVACY
RIGHT TO PROTECTIONS IF YOU ARE DISCHARGED DUE TO DISCRIMINATION

LEARN MORE AT HealthCareBillOfRights.ORG
954-765-6024
A group of nonprofit, private, and governmental organizations, individual community members and allies that is committed to advancing the health of LGBTQ New Yorkers through the collective impact of novel partnerships.

The mission of the LGBTQ Health Equity Coalition is to:

- **Advance education** of LGBTQ-related issues unique to NYC and best practices for serving LGBTQ communities to health care and human service providers
- **Advocate** for legislation, policies, and practices that affect the health, wellness, and livelihood of LGBTQ New Yorkers
- **Mobilize** an efficient and cohesive member base to respond to social, political, and regulatory actions that affect LGBTQ individuals and communities
Who can join the Coalition?

- Community members, allies, and nonprofit, governmental, and private organizations that:
  - Work directly with NYC’s diverse LGBTQ communities
  - Are committed to advancing the health and human rights of LGBTQ New Yorkers
  - Are willing to adopt the best practices developed by the Coalition
LIVING SURE
March 2018
CON EL TRATAMIENTO, ESToy ¡listO!
Workplace Inclusion Initiative

- Expanded recruitment resources to attract candidates from Transgender and Gender Nonconforming (TGNC) communities
- Updated Diversity & Inclusion Statement for job postings
- Update Policies and Forms
- Inclusive Signage in DOHMH Locations
- Updated Visitor Registration System

The NYC Health Department is committed to recruiting and retaining a diverse and culturally responsive workforce. We strongly encourage people of color, people with disabilities, veterans, women, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender and gender non conforming persons to apply.
Internal Capacity Building Efforts

▪ Sexual Health Clinic Trainings:
  ▪ Delivered two days of training for 325 BSTI staff on how to be welcoming & affirming of LGBTQ patients in the clinic
  ▪ Delivered Practice Patient training for 87 clinical staff
    ▪ T-CAB (Transgender Community Advisory Board) was consulted throughout the process
▪ Agency-wide Trainings:
  ▪ “Gender Identity and Expression Awareness” training completed by over 5,000 employees in 2017
## Support for Grassroots LGBTQ-Led and Focused Organizations

**2016-2018**

- Transgender Organizational Support
  - Destination Tomorrow, Inc.
  - New York Transgender Advocacy Group
  - Princess Janae Place
  - TransLatina Network

- Transgender Organizational Capacity Building Assistance
  - Latino Commission on AIDS, Inc.

**2017-2019**

- Black MSM Organizational Support
  - Gay Men of African Descent
  - Get it, Get it
  - Black LGBT Alliance of NY

- Black MSM Organizational Capacity Building Assistance
  - Pipeline Project

- Events to Promote the Health and Wellness of Black MSM
  - New York Blood Center
Crystal Meth Use among Men who Have Sex with Men (MSM) in New York City (NYC)

Self-reported crystal meth use in the 12 mo. among men who reported having sex with another man in the past 12 mo.
Source: National HIV Behavioral Surveillance study (CDC)
Self-reported crystal meth use in the 12 mo. among men who reported having sex with another man in the past 12 mo.

Source: National HIV Behavioral Surveillance study (CDC)
Resource Investigation: Methods

Aim: Preliminary assessment of resources for Crystal Meth Treatment and Support in NYC

- **Step 1: Identify preliminary agencies (n=22)**
  - Google search; NYC Comptroller’s Guide to LGBT services; Suggestions from SBH providers and BHIV/BADUPC colleagues

- **Step 2: Interview preliminary agencies (n=20)**
  - Crystal meth and MSM-specific programming; Treatment approach and modalities; Capacity/wait list; Payment options

- **Step 3: Make recommendations (n=8)**
  - Has expertise and experience in serving crystal meth users
  - Has MSM-specific programming

**Criteria:** Is agency equipped to provide quality crystal meth treatment or support to MSM?
Needs Assessment Recommendations

Criteria: Is an agency equipped to provide quality crystal meth treatment or support to MSM?

- Only 8 of 22 agencies met criteria—majority in Manhattan
- Limited range of treatment approaches
- Community interest in crystal meth treatment
- Need for resource guide
Address Gaps in Methamphetamine Services

**DO YOU NEED A RE-CHARGE?**

**WANT TO LEARN HOW TO USE CRYSTAL METH SAFELY?**

Recharge is an open, sex-positive, safe space. Come in and learn about safer crystal meth use and explore a strategy that works for you.

Re-Charge occurs every Tuesday and Thursday.

**TUESDAYS 5-8pm**
GMHC
446 West 33rd Street
New York, NY 10001

**THURSDAYS 4-7pm**
PHP / Housing Works
301 West 37th St #3,
New York, NY 10018

Visit [http://recharge.support](http://recharge.support) for more info.

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**Number of Meth users enrolled**

- **117** enrollees receiving clinical/support
- **87** enrollees who are linked to PrEP

Data from the beginning of the program through 2017

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[ADVANCING EXCELLENCE IN SEXUAL AND GENDER MINORITY HEALTH]
Health Care and Public Health Partnership
Leveraging DOHMH Resources
What can you do…?

▪ **Bare it All**

▪ Learn more about respectful treatment of LGBTQ individuals by reviewing NYC Health Department’s *City Health Information* publications:
  ▪ [Making the Sexual History a Routine Part of Primary Care](#)
  ▪ [Providing Primary Care to Transgender Adults](#)
  ▪ [Providing Comprehensive Health Care to Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM)](#)

▪ Encourage your Administration to consider providing additional services for LGBTQ individuals, starting with referral letters for gender affirming surgical treatment
Shifting the Paradigm

Enhance LGBTQ (especially Transgender and Gender Nonconforming) workplace inclusion

- Advocate to Human Resources, Compliance, or Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) offices to create affirming policies and practices for workplace inclusion

Pursue meaningful engagement with LGBTQ communities

- Hire and support LGBTQ employees
- Build or enhance an LGBTQ Community Advisory Group/Board to respond to the needs of community members
Shifting the Paradigm

Launch capacity building programs for public health and health care workforce

• Develop a plan to provide initial and ongoing LGBTQ-related training for ALL staff (from security and reception to nursing and administration)
• Foster a collaborative learning environment & build accountability structures

Enhance SOGIE data collection, analysis, and reporting

• Promote and establish research priorities for LGBTQ populations
• Advocate for affirming and appropriate questions in routine data collection and medical records
• Encourage providers to take a comprehensive sexual history
Resources Recap

- LGBTQ Health webpage
  - Electronic copies of the LGBTQ Health Care Bill of Rights
  - Access to the NYC Health Map
- City Health Information:
  - Making the Sexual History a Routine Part of Primary Care
  - Providing Primary Care to Transgender Adults
  - Providing Comprehensive Health Care to Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM)
- Other LGBTQ-related Publications:
  - Health Tips for Trans Men and People of Trans-Masculine Experience
  - Take Pride, Take Care: Tips for Transgender Women’s Health
  - Health Alert Network Advisory: Preventative Services for Men and Transgender Individuals Who Have Sex with Men
  - Epi Data Brief: Stressors, Mental Health, and Sources of Support among LGBTQ Public High School Students in NYC
  - Epi Data Brief: Drug Use among Youth in NYC Public High Schools, by Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, 2015
“Inequities in health are unfair, unnecessary and avoidable. New York City is one of the most unequal cities in the United States and one of the most segregated. It is no surprise that these everyday realities are reflected in our health. A more deliberate effort to name and address these disparities will frame all that we do.”

- Former NYC Health Commissioner, Mary T. Bassett, MD, MPH, 2014
Thank you!

ddaskalakis@health.nyc.gov