



National Coalition *for* LGBT Health

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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MEMBERS

AIDS Action of Massachusetts
AIDS Institute
AIDS Project Los Angeles
American Psychological Association
Atlanta Lesbian Cancer Initiative
Boston Public Health Commission
Callen-Lorde Health Center
Cambridge Cares about AIDS
Chase Brexton Health Services, Inc.
Chicago Department of Health
Compass, Inc.
Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Project
(CHAMP)
Diverse & Resilient
Fenway Community Health Center
Gay and Gender Research
Gay and Lesbian Medical Association
GLBT Health Access Project, JRI
Gay Men's Health Crisis
Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective
HIV/AIDS Disability Services, Inc.
Howard Brown Health Center
Human Rights Campaign
JSI Research and Training Institute
Legacy Community Health Services
Lesbian Community Cancer Project
Liberty Education Foundation
Log Cabin Republicans
L. A. Gay & Lesbian Center
Mass. Asian AIDS Prevention Project
Mazzoni Center
The Mautner Project
Multnomah County Health Department
National Alliance of State and
Territorial AIDS Directors
National Association of Lesbian and
Gay Addiction Professionals, Inc.
National Association of
LGBT Community Centers
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
National Lesbian and
Feminist Health Coalition
National Stonewall Democrats
National Youth Advocacy Coalition
NYC DOHMH: Office of LGBT Health
New York LGBT Community Center
New York State Department of Health—
AIDS Institute
Philadelphia Health Department, AACO
OutHealth- A Program of Healthcare of
Southeastern Massachusetts
The Praxis Project
Rainbow Access Initiative
The SafeGuards Project
St. Cloud State University- GLBT Services
Tapestry Health
University of California, San Francisco
UMHS-Comprehensive Gender Services Program
Verbena Health
Whitman-Walker Clinic
Woodhull Freedom Foundation

Healthcare Reform and the LGBT Community

As Congress and the Obama Administration undertake reform of the American healthcare system to ensure that all Americans have equitable access to the full continuum of health promotion, prevention, and treatment services, we must be sure to effectively address the needs of distinct populations, especially those with demonstrated health disparities. For lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people, stigma and systemic discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and expression have led to decades of obstructed access to adequate LGBT-affirmative and culturally competent healthcare and have had significant negative impacts on the overall health of LGBT individuals. As the healthcare reform debate has evolved, these issues have emerged as key areas of concern for the LGBT community:

- ***Creation of a Public Option:*** Enacting healthcare coverage for everyone in the United States is a particularly important step in eliminating healthcare disparities for the LGBT population. The current system of employer-based coverage is a barrier to many, since so few employers extend coverage eligibility to same-sex partners. In addition, the lack of employment protections based on gender identity and expression results in a high rate of unemployment in the transgender community and further reduces access to insurance coverage.
- ***Do Not Exclude Based on Diagnoses of Pre-Existing Conditions:*** Due to widespread employment discrimination and lack of relationship recognition, LGBT people are more likely to be without prior insurance coverage and are thus disproportionately affected by practices that preclude or limit coverage based on pre-existing conditions. As we move to reform our healthcare system, we must ensure that pre-existing conditions do not continue to negatively impact the ability of LGBT individuals to secure or retain healthcare coverage for necessary medical services.
- ***Create Appropriate Data Collection Tools for All Populations to Facilitate Proper Planning, Clinical Care, and Program Evaluation:*** Historically, health data collection efforts have not included LGBT populations or gathered information regarding the specific healthcare needs of LGBT people. As a result, research exploring LGBT health disparities is often forced to rely on anecdotal data and convenience samples that are too small to be fully representative of the experiences of LGBT people. This omission of sexual orientation and gender identity measures from surveys leaves LGBT people with a lack of tools to assess and improve their health. In order to ensure that LGBT health disparities are recognized and addressed, all new or updated national forms or data collection tools must be inclusive of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

