

NYS DOH
Health Benefit Exchange
Disparities Panel

Issues impacting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and
Transgender Consumers

Jay Laudato
Executive Director
Callen-Lorde Community Health Center

Overview

- Causes and results of health disparities for LGBT communities
- Callen-Lorde's efforts to address health disparities for LGBT communities
- Recommendations to improve access and care for LGBT communities through the Benefit Exchange

LGBT Health Disparities

- What are health disparities?
 - Greater amount of health problems and poorer outcomes in one group than others
- What are the specific causes of disparities for LGBT people?
 - Discrimination
 - Lack of legal rights
 - Health risks / behaviors

Discrimination

- 74% have experienced discrimination in health care (*Kaiser Family Foundation, 2001*)
- 42% said community fear and dislike prohibited their access to care (*NYS LGBT Network, 2009*)
- 51% have withheld their sexual orientation from their health care provider (*Harris Poll, 2002*)
- 24% have withheld information about their sexual practices, compared with 5% of heterosexuals (*Harris Poll, 2003*)
- 19% of physicians reported being uncomfortable treating LGBT persons (*Smith and Matthews, 2007*)

Lack of Legal Rights

- Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) prohibits federal recognition of civil marriage and also barring access to 1138 rights & privileges including immigration rights, survivor benefits, FMLA and spousal health benefits
- 29 states do not have LGB anti-discrimination protection for employment, 35 do not have protections for transgender persons (*Center for American Progress, 2011*)
- Only 15 states fully recognize same sex partners/spouses for decision making in healthcare (*HRC, 2012*)
- Less insurance coverage for an employee's unmarried domestic partner, or same-sex spouse
 - More strict eligibility rules
 - Benefits for same-sex dependents are taxed
- Most insurance plans specifically exclude transgender care from coverage

Lack of Legal Rights, cont.

- 21% of lesbian and gay people, 24% of bisexual people lack insurance, compared to 15% of heterosexual people (*NYC Community Health Survey, 2007*)
- 29% of LGB people delay or don't seek health care, compared to 17% of heterosexual people (*California Health Interview Survey, 2007*)
- 22% of LGB people delay or don't purchase needed prescriptions, compared to 13% of heterosexual people (*California Health Interview Survey, 2007*)

Health Risks / Behaviors

- 33% of lesbian and gay people, 35% of bisexual people diagnosed with depression, compared to 13% of heterosexual people (*NYC Community Health Survey, 2008*)
- 35% of lesbian and gay people smoke in NYC, compared to 16% of heterosexual people (*NYS DOH 2007*)
- 11% of lesbian and gay people, 8% of bisexual people considered heavy drinkers, compared to 4% of heterosexual people (*NYC Community Health Survey, 2008*)
- 33% of lesbian and gay people, 24% of bisexual people use illegal drugs consistently compared to 8% of heterosexual people (*NYC Community Health Survey, 2004*)
- 28% of lesbians were obese, compared to 18% heterosexual women (*NYC Community Health Survey, 2008*)

Health Disparities

- Lesbian and Bisexual Women
 - Obesity
 - Ovarian and Endometrial Cancer
 - Breast Cancer
 - Cervical Cancer
 - Depression, anxiety
 - Addiction
 - Cardiovascular disease

Health Disparities

- Gay and Bisexual Men
 - HIV/AIDS and STI
 - Anorectal cancer related to HPV
 - Hepatitis A, B, C
 - Eating disorders
 - Mental health conditions
 - Addiction
 - Cardiovascular disease

Health Disparities

- Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Persons
 - HIV/AIDS and STI
 - Depression, anxiety
 - Addiction
 - Cardiovascular disease
 - Long term complications from hormone use and unlicensed medical care

Callen-Lorde History

- In 1983, Callen-Lorde Community Health Center was created by a merger of two groups of volunteer doctors who offered sensitive sexual health services
- In 1985, became one of the first freestanding HIV clinics in the nation
- In 1998, obtained NYS DOH licensure
- In 2002, became one of the first FQHCs with a mission to serve the LGBT communities regardless of ability to pay

Callen-Lorde Services

15,500 patients made 80,000 visits in 2011 – 38% were uninsured

- Primary Care
- Women's Health and Gynecology
- Adolescent Health
- Transgender Health
- HIV Prevention and Care
- Sexual Health
- Mental Health
- Dental
- Pharmacy
- Care Coordination
- Research and Education

Callen-Lorde Services, cont.

■ Training and Education

- A 2011 JAMA study of 132 medical schools found that medical students receive only 5 hours of LGBT specific education – 44 schools provided no training
- Callen-Lorde provides trainings to health providers and educators including medical schools, emergency departments, foster care agencies, homeless shelters, mental health and substance abuse treatment providers
- Residency training – agreements with multiple medical, nursing and social work schools

■ Research

- Transgender health profile
- STI treatment
- Behavioral interventions

Benefits Exchange Recommendations

- Ensure adequate coverage for LGBT health needs (especially for transgender care) in plans offered through the Exchange
- Develop mechanisms to identify competent and sensitive providers and ensure their participation in health plan networks
- Add LGBT identity to surveys on consumer satisfaction and report results
- Support community and health provider LGBT sensitivity and education campaigns