The Impact of the Affordable Care Act on LGBT New Yorkers

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Introduction

The Empire State Pride Agenda is New York’s statewide civil rights and advocacy organization for LGBT New Yorkers and their families.

The Empire State Pride Agenda is currently serving on the LGBT Task Force of the Health Care For All New Yorkers coalition which is charged with ensuring LGBT New Yorkers are included in the implementation of the Affordable Care Act.
Basic Benefits of the Affordable Care Act

- Expand Medicaid to allow more people at the lowest income levels to qualify for coverage
- Provide credits to purchase private health insurance coverage to moderate income Americans who do not qualify for Medicaid
- Streamline the purchase of health insurance through the establishment of the Health Insurance Exchange
- Encourage primary and preventative care
- Strengthen consumer protections and require transparency
Why Does This Matter to LGBT New Yorkers?

Because LGBT New Yorkers have poor access to healthcare because of lower rates of insurance and utilization of primary care.
LGBT People Experience Lower Rates of Health Insurance Than Non-LGBT People

- Only 14.9% of heterosexual people in the NYC Community Survey were uninsured while 20.6% of gay and lesbian people and 23.5% of bisexual people had no health insurance.

- NYS Tobacco Survey data indicates 18.5% of LGB people lacked insurance in comparison to 14.8% of heterosexual people and 32.9% of transgender people.
Access to Primary Care is Also Limited

- NYC Community Health Survey data show that 28.3% of lesbian and gay people did not have a primary care provider compared to 17.4% of heterosexual people.

- According to the Pride Agenda’s needs assessment, 43.2% stated personal financial resources as a barrier for accessing healthcare.

- 41.7% stated community fear or dislike of LGBT people as a barrier.
LGBT People Are Disproportionately Impacted By Health Disparities

- More likely to suffer from depressive disorders
- Adult LGB people are more likely to smoke and binge drink
- LGB youth are more likely to smoke, drink and binge drink
How Can The Affordable Care Act Help LGBT People?

- Data Collection
- Cultural Competency
- Diverse Family Structures
Data Collection

• Collect information on sexual orientation and gender identity in order to gain a better understanding of the health disparities impacting LGBT New Yorkers and then use that understanding to develop tailored programming to address those disparities.

• Data collection must be done in a culturally competent and confidential manner.
Both providers and Navigators need to be more culturally competent about the needs of LGBT people.

39.8% of respondents to the Pride Agenda’s needs assessment stated that there were not enough health professionals who were adequately trained and culturally competent to deliver health care to LGBT people.

10.1% stated that healthcare workers had refused to provide services to LGBT people.
Diverse Family Structures

In order to be responsive and inclusive to the diversity of the “American family” terms such as family, child, spouse, parent, dependent and other terms meant to connote a familial relationship should be broadly defined in order to ensure health care reform truly reaches all families including families headed by same-sex couples.
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