

Understanding Health in the LGBTQ+ Community



The goal of this training is to equip LHU Allies with basic knowledge of LGBTQ+ health issues

- Some of this information may be new to you, and some of this information you may already know a lot about!
- In any case, if you have any questions, **please do not be afraid to ask!** We want to promote an open forum for discussion.

Throughout this module, we want to stress what steps YOU can take as an Ally to help LGBTQ+ people in need as well as essential health information to be familiar with

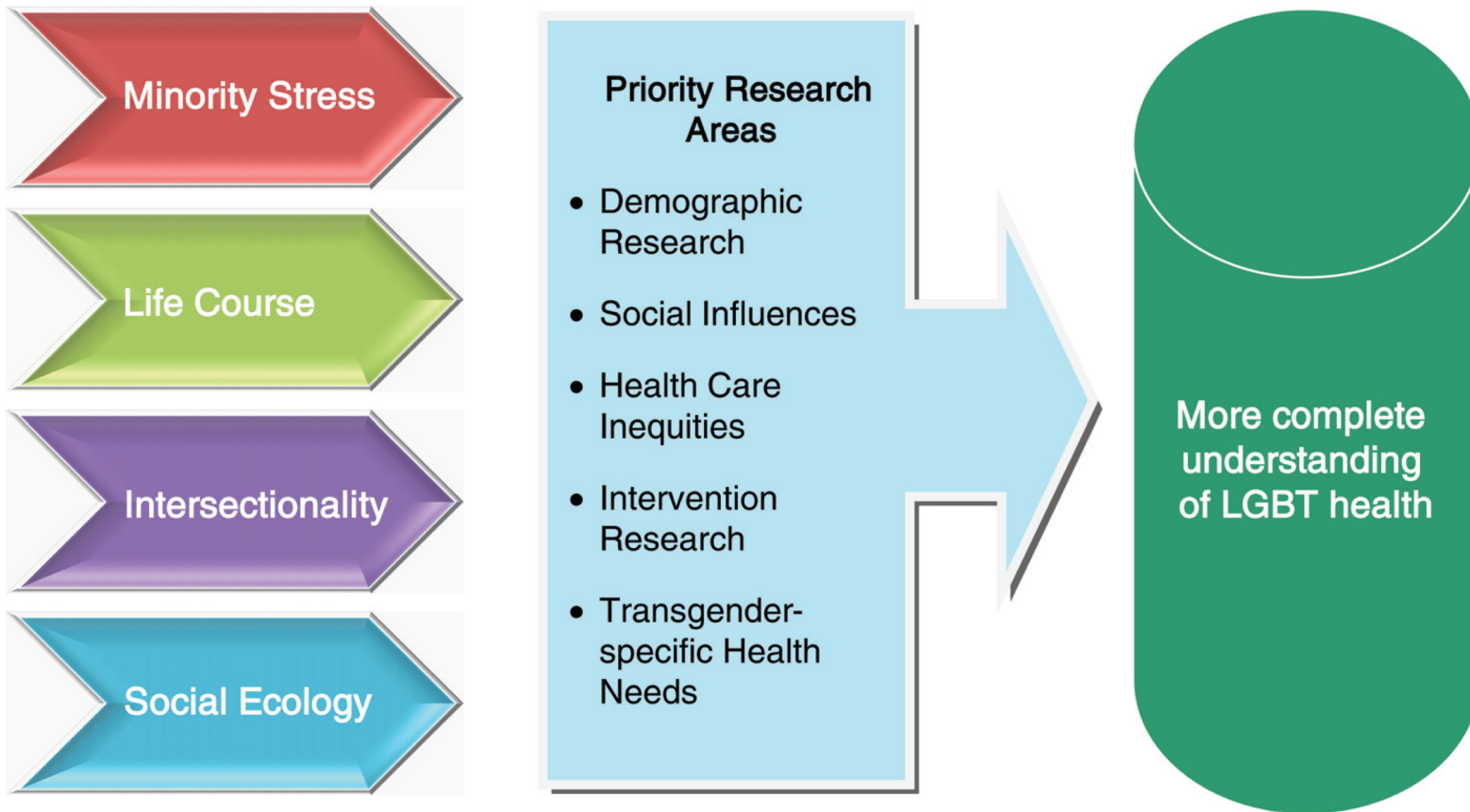
Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) citizens are a diverse community that **share a common need** for culturally competent health care that **recognizes and responds to specific medical risks**.

Members of the LGBTQ+ community face greater health challenges than their heterosexual peers due to a combination of:

- differences in sexual behavior, and
- social and structural inequities, such as stigma and discrimination.

- *Health Resources and Services Administration,
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

Research Approach to Understanding LGBTQ+ Health:



“LGBT individuals have unique health experiences and needs, but as a nation, we do not know exactly what these experiences and needs are.”

National Academy of Sciences, 2011

The three health topics we will focus on this evening:



TRANS HEALTH



**MENTAL
HEALTH**



**SEXUAL HEALTH
& HIV/AIDS**

Our approach:

1. Present a situation you may face as an Ally related to LGBTQ+ health
2. Discuss the situation amongst your group members, and come up with three action items:
 - A. Immediate/short-term response (hours to days)
 - B. Intermediate response (months)
 - C. Long-term response (years)
3. Share your knowledge/resolutions with the group
4. Provide resources at the end to supplement knowledge base

At this time, please break up into 3 separate groups

Scenario #1:

Your classmate from childhood, Kai, is a very close friend, as you grew up in the same neighborhood and attended school together from 1st to 12th grade. However, you go on to attend different colleges in different parts of the country. Despite the distance, you keep in touch and remain very close, though at an arm's length. When you see Kai during breaks, you notice that her appearance changes slightly each time, becoming increasingly gender-neutral in appearance. While you are both home for summer break, Kai comes out to you as transgender, and doesn't feel very welcome at home anymore. Kai expresses both confusion and frustration with this new identity, but does not know what to do in order to get help.

Scenario #2:

Your friend Cecil has recently come out to you as gay. Although you accept him for himself, his parents may not. Cecil has not told his parents yet, but he knows their feelings based on their reactions to stories in the media and their religious beliefs. At school, Cecil is mocked by his fellow students, including being called a “faggot” and pushed around. While Cecil typically displays a happy attitude and has a wonderful sense of humor, he suddenly exhibits a strange change in his behaviors towards you and others. Cecil becomes much quieter and he makes jokes that are darker than usual; he even tells you what outfit he wants to be buried in. When class ends one day, Cecil gives you something special that he owns. You learn that he plans to kill himself that night.

Scenario #3:

Your friend Tyler identifies as gay but is not out to his family or friends from home. Tyler engages in anonymous sex but does not adhere to safer sex practices, and has multiple sex partners within a given week. Upon your encouragement, he attends a sexual health clinic with you and you are both screened for multiple STIs, including HIV. You both receive your results from your screenings on the same day, and Tyler immediately comes to you to let you know that he has tested positive for gonorrhea. While he knows that gonorrhea is treatable with antibiotics, the diagnosis opens his mind to the dangers of unsafe sex especially with respect to HIV. However, he is afraid to ask his family doctor for more information about HIV prevention as he does not want to out himself at home.

Discuss the situation amongst your group members, and come up with three action items:

- A. Immediate/short-term response (hours to days)
- B. Intermediate response (months)
- C. Long-term response (years)

Scenario #1:

Your classmate from childhood, Kai, is a very close friend, as you grew up in the same neighborhood and attended school together from 1st to 12th grade. However, you go on to attend different colleges in different parts of the country. Despite the distance, you keep in touch and remain very close, though at an arm's length. When you see Kai during breaks, you notice that her appearance changes slightly each time, becoming increasingly more masculine in appearance. While you are both home for summer break, Kai comes out to you as transgender, and doesn't feel very welcome at home anymore. Kai expresses both confusion and frustration with this new identity, but does not know what to do in order to get help.



TRANS HEALTH

Helpful topics to be familiar with:

1. Be familiar with local laws, particularly with respect to discrimination

As of Feb 2017, 18 states and D.C. have adopted anti-discrimination laws that include protections for transgender individuals (New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/24/us/transgender-bathroom-law.html? r=0>

2. Cross-gender Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)
 - May be self-administered
 - Support of family & friends is a MAJOR issue
 - Long-term effects include decreased fertility rates

Scenario #2:

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Helpful topics to be familiar with:

1. If necessary, dial 911 in any emergency
2. Reassurance & comfort – remind your friends that they are not alone
3. Suicide hotlines & resources for LGBTQ populations

It Gets Better <http://www.itgetsbetter.org/pages/get-help/>

The Trevor Project <http://www.thetrevorproject.org/pages/warning-signs/>
www.suicide.org/hotlines/pennsylvania-suicide-hotlines.html

4. For religious-related support:

Finding a local church: www.gaychurch.org
www.ucc.org/find

Online communities for introverts: www.gaychristian.net

5. At LHU/local institutions:

LHU offers FREE counseling to ALL students

Hope Center

Lycoming/Clinton County MH/MR 24-hour Crisis Intervention: 570-748-2262



MENTAL
HEALTH

Scenario #3:

Your friend Tyler identifies as gay but is not out to his family or friends from home. Tyler engages in anonymous sex but does not adhere to safer sex practices, and has multiple sex partners within a given week. Upon your encouragement, he attends a sexually-transmitted infection clinic with you and you are both screened for multiple STIs, including HIV. You both receive your results from your screenings on the same day, and Tyler immediately comes to you to let you know that he has tested positive for gonorrhea. While he knows that gonorrhea is treatable with antibiotics, the diagnosis opens his mind to the dangers of unsafe sex especially with respect to HIV. However, he is afraid to ask his family doctor for more information about HIV prevention as he does not want to out himself at home.

Helpful topics to be familiar with:

1. Sexually-active HIV-negative men who have sex with men (MSM) should consult their doctor to discuss **pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)**

PrEP is **one pill** (Truvada) that is taken daily by an HIV-negative individual. When taken **everyday**, it is 99% effective at preventing HIV transmission.

PrEP **requires a prescription** – AIDS Resource Center in Williamsport has a doctor that will write prescriptions for LHU students.

PrEP has a coupon assistance program that makes it **totally free**
www.truvada.com/truvada-patient-assistance

PrEP does **exhibit side effects** in some individuals, including:

- elevated liver enzymes
- decreased kidney function

Individuals on PrEP should be tested every 3 months for HIV and kidney/liver function



Helpful topics to be familiar with:

2. The Centers for Disease Control recommends testing every 3-6 months for the following STIs in sexually-active individuals ***regardless of sexual orientation***:
 - HIV/AIDS
 - Syphilis
 - Gonorrhea/Chlamydia
 - Hepatitis B & C
 - Herpes Simplex, Type 1 and 2
 - HPV
3. Glennon Student Health Services at LHU **only** screens for gonorrhea and chlamydia; ***HIV tests require an appointment***
4. Full STI screening must be sought by other providers; the closest Planned Parenthood Health Center is in Corning, NY (60 miles away)
5. IF you or someone you know thinks they may have been exposed to HIV....seek Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) IMMEDIATELY....there is a 72 hour window from exposure for treatment...contact Aids Resource Center as **local hospitals may refuse treatment**



SEXUAL HEALTH
& HIV/AIDS