

## Texas Transgender/Non-Binary Health Program

There are an estimated 125,000 transgender individuals in Texas. The Human Rights Campaign's Healthcare Equity Index 2017 reports 17 Texas hospitals and 2 clinics took part in the survey. Three organizations scored 100% with the balance scoring between 35 and 95 on HEI's five criteria scorecard. There are 654 hospitals in Texas.

The U.S. 2015 Transgender Survey, conducted by the National Center for Transgender Equality, reports fear of being mistreated by a provider resulted in 22% of Texas respondents not seeing a medical professional when necessary. Access to health care remains a severe issue with 38% of respondents not seeing a doctor due to cost. At least one negative experience when seeing a health provider was experienced by 30% of Texans. Alarming, 14% of respondents reported that a professional, such as a psychologist, counselor, or religious advisor, tried to stop them from being transgender. The study also revealed that 40% of Transgender Americans attempt suicide at some point in their life, 48% seriously thought of killing themselves in the past year, and 82% have had serious thoughts about killing themselves at some point in their life. This vastly exceeds the 4.6% of the overall U.S. population who report a lifetime suicide attempt. The Texas transgender population lacks access to health care at an affordable cost and has disproportionately poorer health outcomes compared to the broader population today, especially among youth and people of color. This consumer advocacy project can jumpstart our goal in transforming healthcare to meet the goals of Triple Aim: improving the experience of care, improving the health of populations, and reducing per capita costs of health care as it relates to transgender people.

Texas Transgender/Non-Binary Health builds upon a 14-month collaborative program organized by Texas Health Institute (THI) and Equality Texas Foundation (EQTXF). The impetus was creation of a six course *Transgender People and Public Health Learning Series* for Region 6 South Central Public Health Training Center funded by HRSA. This project's strategic goal is to develop a statewide transgender learning collaborative enabling trans consumers, their families, and allies to advocate for individual, organization, community, and state policy implementation leading towards a transgender competent healthcare system. The project will employ similar activities to THI's highly successful 16 state Southern Obesity Summit (SOS) but adding consumer advocacy for healthcare transformation.

### Current Work

THI and Equality Texas Foundation are developing a series of six online courses specific to the transgender/nb community for Region 6 South Central Public Health Training Center funded by a grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

THI and Equality Texas Foundation:

- Presented a session entitled *Culturally Competent Healthcare for Trans/GF Folks* at the 8th Annual Transgender Nondiscrimination Summit. The results of this session surfaced the need for Transgender/GF Listening Sessions on creating a

John Oeffinger, Lou Weaver, Anna Stelter, Justine Price, Yoonhwi Cho

Culturally Competent Health Care and Public Health Environment for the Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Population across Texas.

- Identified the need for additional research to focus on a key outcome - taking the initial steps to reduce the number of suicide and suicide attempts by trans/nb people in Texas. *Reducing Transgender Suicide Listening Sessions Across Texas* is one vehicle for attaining this objective.
- Initiated the first research program design to *Improve Clinical Treatment and Outcomes for Transgender Persons Through Longitudinal Research Studies*. The initial purpose is to collect and analyze data to inform evidenced-based clinical decision-making with regard to transgender/nb individuals choosing to medically transition.
- Initiated planning for a *Services* (consulting) framework to assist hospitals, local health departments, long term care facilities, physician and other health care providers to create a trans/nb culturally competent workforce.
- Hosted the first trans/nb listening session at The Montrose Center (February 16, 2017, Houston) to inform the course authors on the first five trans/nb courses. The session included four trans men, four trans women, two people living with Intersex conditions, and three parents of trans youth. Ethnicities included African-American, Hispanic, and Caucasian.
- Published the first trans/nb article in *Elevate* the Public Health Learning Network's quarterly publication. *Elevate* is a resource for lifelong learning in public health practice and population health improvement. The audience includes schools of public health, public health institutes, and national/state/local public health organizations. The February issue includes *Transgender health equity is a pressing issue, and public health is paying attention. Can stories and training help?* written by John Oeffinger, Lou Weaver, Justine Price, Danielle M. Skidmore, Yoonhwi Cho.
- Presenting *What is competent health care for the trans community* workshop/ listening session at the 6th Anniversary National Black Trans Advocacy Conference, April 27, 2017.
- Presenting *Lessons Learned & Best Practices: 2 States' Experience in Developing a Culturally Competent Workforce for Transgender People* to National Network of Public Health Institutes annual conference, May 19, 2017.
- Presenting *Developing A Culturally Competent Workforce for Transgender People*, 2017 National Association of Social Workers Texas Conference (NASW-TX), October 5, 2017.