

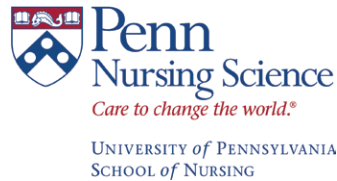


PROGRAM FOR  
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual  
& Transgender Health

2014-2018 STRATEGIC PLAN



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## INTRODUCTION



The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community has made great progress in their attainment of civil and political rights. However, LGBT individuals continue to experience barriers that prevent them from accessing culturally competent health services and achieving the highest possible level of health. Due to these barriers, LGBT individuals experience multiple health disparities. Compared to their heterosexual counterparts, LGBT populations have higher rates of HIV and sexually transmitted infections, obesity, certain forms of cancer, suicide, and tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use. LGBT adults are also more likely to delay or avoid seeking medical care due to decreased access to healthcare and fear of discrimination. Despite the need for improved understanding and care for the LGBT community, medical students receive, on average, less than 5 hours of LGBT health training.

The Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health works to alleviate LGBT disparities and improve the care of LGBT individuals. The program focuses on five specific areas: institutional climate and visibility, health education, research, patient care, and community outreach. The Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health will help advance the wellbeing of the LGBT community and will transform Penn into a local and national leader in LGBT health.

**Baligh R. Yehia, MD, MPP, MSHP**

*Director – Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals face many barriers to high quality patient-centered care, including decreased access to healthcare, lack of awareness and insensitivity to their unique health needs, and inequitable health system policies and practices. To address these health concerns, an interdisciplinary program involving the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) Perelman School of Medicine, School of Nursing, School of Dental Medicine, Center for Public Health Initiatives, and affiliated health systems was established to improve the health and wellbeing of LGBT populations. The vision of the program is to improve the care of LGBT individuals by becoming a local and national leader in LGBT patient care, education, research, and advocacy. The program has five areas: **INSTITUTIONAL CLIMATE AND VISIBILITY**, **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**, **HEALTH EDUCATION**, **RESEARCH**, and **PATIENT CARE**.

The 2014 – 2018 Strategic Plan sets the foundation for the critical work of the Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health. Through a strategic planning process, which engaged over **60 members** of the Penn and Philadelphia community, five key themes were identified:

- 1) INVENTORY:** Identify faculty, students, and staff knowledgeable in the care of LGBT populations, actively engaged in LGBT research and education, and individuals interested in contributing to LGBT patient care, research, and education.
- 2) MEASURE:** Assess LGBT inclusion, climate, and visibility; education activities; access to health services; and quality of patient care.
- 3) COORDINATE:** Use existing infrastructure, services, and resources to promote and improve LGBT climate and visibility, education, research, patient care, and outreach.
- 4) MENTOR:** Mentor and support faculty, students, and staff engaged in LGBT-related activities.
- 5) ENGAGE:** Engage Penn, affiliated health systems, and the Philadelphia community in collaborative activities.

The 2014 – 2018 Strategic Plan is consistent and integrates with numerous initiatives throughout Penn, including Penn Compact 2020, the University of Pennsylvania Health System Blueprint for Quality and Patient Safety, and the diversity plans of the Perelman School of Medicine, School of Nursing, and School of Dental Medicine. The Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health builds upon these initiatives to advance LGBT health.

## WELCOME LETTERS



The Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health is a unique program that focuses the efforts of multiple schools and institutions at the University of Pennsylvania to provide culturally competent and equitable healthcare and to eliminate health disparities. We both trained as Infectious Diseases physicians during the early HIV/AIDS era and witnessed the isolation and

discrimination of the Gay community. We are proud to be a part of this Program that has sprouted from the hopelessness and desolation of those early years, and are now poised to help Penn Medicine become leaders in LGBT health.

The Program advances our strategic plan and commitment to remain a world-leading institution in the three equally valued and inter-related missions of patient care, education and research. The Program for LGBT Health will greatly improve LGBT patient care; foster LGBT health education at the Perelman School of Medicine, and the Schools of Nursing and Dental Medicine; and coordinate and support new and exciting research in LGBT health. Penn Medicine is dedicated to intellectual and cultural diversity and supports equal opportunity and individual creativity. The Program for LGBT Health promotes an equitable LGBT-inclusive climate and culture at Penn, ensuring that the potential of LGBT faculty, students, and staff is fully recognized and supported.

Penn Medicine's strategic plan is to shape the future of medicine through three galvanizing themes — innovation, integration and impact. We value diversity, flexibility and community outreach as priorities to reach our goals. The Penn Program for LGBT Health will be critical to this journey.

**Patrick J. Brennan, MD**

*Chief Medical Officer*

*Senior Vice President*

University of Pennsylvania Health System

**Neil Fishman, MD**

*Associate Chief Medical Officer*

University of Pennsylvania Health System



The Perelman School of Medicine (PSOM) at the University of Pennsylvania embraces inclusion and diversity as core values. We are committed to the recruitment and advancement of students and faculty reflecting a multitude of ethnicities, gender identities,

sexual orientations, historical traditions, ages, religions, disabilities, socioeconomic backgrounds and Veterans. The mission of the Office of Inclusion and Diversity is to strengthen the quality of education, provide innovative research and healthcare delivery by fostering a vibrant inclusive environment and fully embracing diversity. The PSOM fully supports the Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health and its mission to alleviate the health disparities affecting LGBT populations. The strong partnership between PSOM and the Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health will foster a vibrant and dynamic environment of inclusion and will help advance the health of the LGBT community.

**Eve J. Higginbotham, MD**

*Vice Dean for Inclusion and Diversity*

University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine

## WELCOME LETTERS



The School of Nursing is highly committed to advancing LGBTQ health education, research and outreach. These efforts are consistent with Nursing's strategic plan to become the model of diversity among top tier schools of nursing, one component

of which is to provide an inclusive climate supportive of diversity in all forms. Penn Nursing has worked with several adjunct faculty members to increase our curriculum content in the area of sensitive and high quality care for LGBTQ patients. In the past, we held continuing education workshops on topics related to LGBT care. These workshops were well attended and rated very highly by attendees for content that will inform and shape their practice. We are eager to continue our initiatives and to engage in interprofessional work with the Perelman School of Medicine and Penn School of Dental Medicine to advance LGBTQ health at Penn.

**Nancy Tkacs, PhD, RN**

*Assistant Dean for Diversity and Cultural Affairs*  
University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing



Penn Dental Medicine is committed to the inclusion of LGBT issues in our broader diversity and inclusion program. Faculty, staff, students and patients who are part of this community are not as easily identifiable and may be unwittingly subjected to social and structural inequities.

The creation of a support system for our students was of paramount importance as well as the creation of an inclusive environment for our LGBT patients. With this came an awareness of the importance of LGBT health issues. This willingness to support our students, faculty, staff and patients, made it imperative that the school becomes an integral part of the Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health, working to advance LGBT education, patient care, and climate at the School of Dental Medicine.

**Beverley A. Crawford DDS**

*Director of Diversity Affairs*

University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine

# THE PENN MEDICINE PROGRAM FOR LGBT HEALTH

“Our program is unique because of its comprehensive and interprofessional nature, touching on parts of the Penn family that are pivotal to accelerating improvements in LGBT health”

— Baligh R. Yehia, MD, MPP, MSHP  
*Director, Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health*



## Innovation

The Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health is a unique interdisciplinary program, involving the Perelman School of Medicine, School of Nursing, School of Dental Medicine, Center for Public Health Initiatives, and affiliated health systems (University of Pennsylvania Health System, The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia Veteran’s Affairs Medical Center).

## Mission

Improve the care of LGBT populations by becoming a local and national leader in LGBT patient care, education, research, and advocacy.

## Focus Areas

### CLIMATE:

Nurture and support LGBT diversity and inclusion in the workplace, classroom, and healthcare settings.

### OUTREACH:

Increase collaboration between Penn, affiliated health systems, and the Philadelphia LGBT community.

### EDUCATION:

Enhance education of faculty, students, and staff in LGBT health and health disparities.

### RESEARCH:

Foster research on the optimal ways to improve the care for LGBT patients and their families.

### PATIENT CARE:

Provide improved patient and family-centered care to the LGBT community.

CLIMATE

OUTREACH

HEALTH EDUCATION

RESEARCH

PATIENT CARE



## WHY IS LGBT HEALTH IMPORTANT?

LGBT individuals experience multiple health disparities due to harassment, discrimination, and stigma. In addition, the LGBT community face many barriers to high quality patient-centered care, including decreased access to healthcare, lack of awareness and insensitivity to their unique health needs, and inequitable health system policies and practices.

### Health Disparities

- » LGBT youth are **2-3 times more likely** to attempt suicide than heterosexual youth.
- » **40%** of homeless youth identify as LGBT.
- » **19%** of LGB youth have been assaulted with a weapon at school, compared to **5%** of heterosexual youth.
- » **12%** of LGB youth are overweight compared to **6%** of heterosexual youth.
- » LGBT populations have **higher rates** of tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use than their heterosexual counterparts.
- » Gay men are **disproportionately affected** by HIV and other STDs, especially among communities of color.
- » Lesbians and bisexual females are **more likely** to be overweight or obese compared to heterosexual women.
- » **9%** of LGB adults are diagnosed with cancer, compared to **6%** of heterosexual adults.
- » Transgender individuals have a **high prevalence** of HIV/STDs, victimization, mental health issues, and suicide.

### Barriers to High Quality Patient-Centered Care

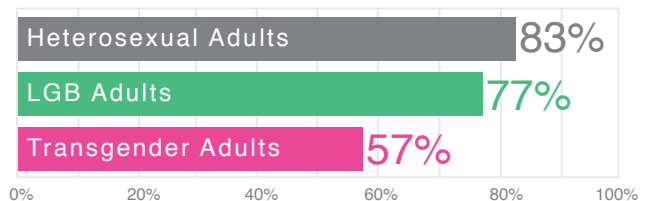
- » Elderly LGBT individuals face barriers to quality healthcare because of **isolation** and **lack of social services**.
- » **13%** of older LGBT adults report being denied healthcare or receiving low quality care because of their LGBT status.
- » **29%** of LGB adults delay or avoid seeking medical care compared to **17%** of heterosexual adults.
- » **22%** of LGB adults delay or do not receive prescription drugs compared to **13%** of heterosexual adults.

### Unmet Needs in LGBT Health Education & Research

- » On average, medical students receive **less than 5** hours of training on LGBT issues during medical school.
- » **Challenges to conducting research** on LGBT health needs include defining sexual orientation and gender identity, the fear of LGBT individuals disclosing their sexuality, and attracting research participation in a relatively small population.

**LGBT adults are less likely to report having excellent or very good overall health than heterosexual adults.**

Percent of adults reporting excellent or very good health.



## Attending Organizations

### Faculty, students, staff & community members from:

- » School of Dental Medicine
- » Perelman School of Medicine
- » School of Nursing
- » University of Pennsylvania Health System
- » The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
- » Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Medical Center
- » Center for Public Health Initiatives
- » Leonard Davis Institute
- » Penn Law
- » Penn LGBT Center
- » Philadelphia Department of Public Health
- » William Way LGBT Community Center
- » LGBT Elder Initiative

The Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health Strategic Planning Retreat convened over **60** Penn faculty, students, and staff, as well as Philadelphia community leaders in the field of LGBT health. The retreat was divided into two sessions. The morning session featured presentations from leaders of successful academic LGBT health programs, followed by a strategic planning workshop in the afternoon session.

In the strategic planning workshop, invited participants divided into five groups coinciding with the five focus areas of the program. Members of each group discussed the strengths, challenges, and opportunities to advancing LGBT health at Penn and recommended specific actions to achieving this goal.

## Five key themes were identified:

- 1) INVENTORY:** Identify faculty, students, and staff knowledgeable in the care of LGBT populations, actively engaged in LGBT research and education, and individuals interested in contributing to LGBT patient care, research, and education.
- 2) MEASURE:** Assess LGBT inclusion, climate, and visibility; education activities; access to health services; and quality of patient care.
- 3) COORDINATE:** Use existing infrastructure, services, and resources to promote and improve LGBT climate and visibility, education, research, patient care, and outreach.



- 4) MENTOR:** Mentor and support faculty, students, and staff engaged in LGBT-related activities.
- 5) ENGAGE:** Engage Penn, affiliated health systems, and the Philadelphia community in collaborative activities.

Specific goals and action tasks, grouped by focus area, for the five key themes were identified. Because of the Program's integrated approach, many goals and actions overlap and relate to multiple focus areas.

## Retreat Feedback

**100%** of participants agreed that the information provided at the retreat was helpful.

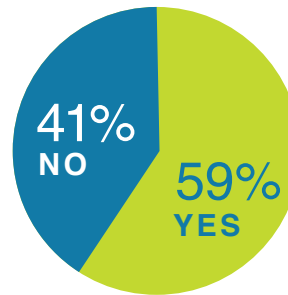
**100%** of the participants agreed that the content provided a good foundation for strategic planning.

**96%** of participants believed their voice was heard at the retreat.

### How satisfied are you with the retreat?



### Did the retreat provide any new information about LGBT health?



## “ Quotes from Retreat Participants

“It is very encouraging that Penn Medicine is doing this work. It is extremely meaningful for my **community**.”

“Kudos to all of you who helped make the retreat a **success!** Impressive that you had the community (i.e. not UPHS-related) voices at the table. This will be very helpful in obtaining buy-in from the Philadelphia community at large. Fabulous day!”

“I am honored to be a part of the retreat which has been an edifying experience. It has been a **great opportunity** to build stronger relationships between the different institutions at Penn.”



### Speakers

**J. Larry Jameson, MD, PhD**  
Dean, Perelman School of Medicine

**Anita Allen, JD, PhD**  
Vice Provost for Faculty

**Patrick J. Brennan, MD**  
Chief Medical Officer and Senior Vice President, UPHS

**Jesse M. Ehrenfeld, MD, MPH**  
Co-Director, Program for LGBTI Health  
Vanderbilt University School of Medicine

**John Paul Sanchez, MD, MPH**  
Chairperson, LGBT Steering Committee  
Albert Einstein College of Medicine

**Shane Snowdon, MA**  
Director, Health & Aging Program  
Human Rights Campaign

STRATEGIC GOALS & ACTIONS



CLIMATE & VISIBILITY



COMMUNITY OUTREACH



HEALTH EDUCATION



RESEARCH



PATIENT CARE



## CLIMATE & VISIBILITY



LGBT individuals face many challenges in healthcare settings. According to a Lambda Legal Study, 73% of transgender patients and 29% of LGB patients believed medical personnel would treat them differently if they disclosed their LGBT status. LGBT students, staff, and employees in health professional schools may also be fearful of biased treatment. In a survey by the Association of American Medical Colleges, approximately 17% of LGBT medical students have reported hostile environments and 15% reported being aware of the mistreatment of LGBT students. Fear and stress caused by a hostile environment negatively impacts patient care and the quality of work and education. Penn respects the rights of LGBT individuals and embraces work, training, and healthcare environments free from abuse, harassment, and discrimination.

The Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health supports LGBT individuals in the workplace, classroom, and healthcare settings by promoting an LGBT-inclusive climate and culture. Fostering institutional climate and visibility will ensure that LGBT faculty, students, staff, and patients feel fully welcomed and accepted at Penn.

### Goals & Actions

1

#### NURTURE & SUPPORT

LGBT diversity and inclusion in the workplace, classroom and healthcare settings

- » Work with diversity officers across the university and affiliated health systems to expand existing and develop new programs that support and nurture LGBT diversity and inclusion.

2

**SUPPORT** the professional development of LGBT faculty, students, and staff

- » Support the professional development of faculty, students, and staff through education, research, and mentorship programs.

3

**ASSESS** the workplace and classroom climate

- » Distribute a survey among faculty, students, and staff to assess the climate in the workplace and classroom.

4

**RAISE** awareness about LGBT culture and history

- » Hold events celebrating LGBT holidays (e.g. LGBT History Month, National Coming Out Day, Pride, and Transgender Day of Remembrance).



## COMMUNITY OUTREACH



The City of Philadelphia is home to a vibrant LGBT community. Numerous organizations work to promote LGBT health and wellness in Philadelphia, including the Mazzone Center, William Way LGBT Community Center, the Attic Youth Center, and the LGBT Elder Initiative.

The Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health will partner with community organizations to improve access to high quality care and address LGBT health disparities.

### Goals & Actions

1

**ASSESS** the health needs of the Philadelphia LGBT community

- » Work with interested groups to identify gaps in care for LGBT individuals living in Philadelphia.

2

**PARTNER** with community organizations to promote LGBT health

- » Partner with community organizations to promote LGBT health by hosting educational conferences and trainings.

3

**ENGAGE** LGBT community organizations and individuals

- » Establish an advisory committee that includes LGBT community members.

4

**INCREASE** involvement in the Philadelphia LGBT community

- » Participate in Philadelphia Pride, Philadelphia Outfest, and other local LGBT events.



## HEALTH EDUCATION



The Association of American Medical Colleges reports large gaps in LGBT health education. On average, medical students receive less than 5 hours of training on LGBT issues during medical school. Similarly, the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA) recognizes the challenges faced by LGBT health professional students and the need to broaden education in the field of LGBT health. In a 2013 report, GLMA recommends that health professional schools provide professional development workshops for LGBT students, raise awareness about LGBT discrimination, and give presentations on LGBT health disparities.

The Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health promotes LGBT health education and provides mentorship and professional development for LGBT students, trainees, and faculty.

### Goals & Actions

- 1 **IDENTIFY** gaps in LGBT health education at the Perelman School of Medicine, School of Nursing, School of Dental Medicine, and in postgraduate training programs.
  - » Inventory curriculum and resources related to LGBT health and identify gaps in education and training.
- 2 **ADVANCE** the education of students, trainees, and faculty in relation to LGBT health and health disparities
  - » Collaborate with education and training programs to develop an LGBT health curriculum.
- 3 **SUPPORT** students, trainees, and faculty in their care for LGBT patients
  - » Identify and submit grants in areas of high relevance to LGBT health.

**LGBT training  
in medical school < 5 Hours**





## RESEARCH



Challenges to conducting LGBT research include defining sexual orientation and gender identity, the fear of LGBT individuals disclosing their sexuality, and attracting research participation in a relatively small population. In response to these challenges, the Institute of Medicine has called for more extensive research to promote further understanding of LGBT health.

The Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health engages in research on the optimal ways to improve care for LGBT patients and their families. The program aims to increase LGBT participation in Penn research initiatives and support new areas of research in LGBT health. Through research, the program will advance knowledge and understanding of LGBT health needs.

### Goals & Actions

**1 IDENTIFY & ORGANIZE** faculty and students interested in LGBT research

- » Establish a working group of researchers interested in LGBT health.

**2 INCREASE & COORDINATE** LGBT research

- » Work with centers, institutes, and researchers to embed LGBT-specific research into existing programs.

**3 INCREASE** LGBT research funding

- » Identify and submit grants in areas of high relevance to LGBT health.
- » Secure funding to create a pilot research grant program.

**4 ENHANCE** the collection of sexual orientation and gender identity data in studies and surveys

- » Develop standardized questions and language to identify the sexual orientation and gender identity of study participants.
- » Encourage investigators to include sexual orientation and gender identity questions in research studies and surveys.





## PATIENT CARE



LGBT individuals, and in particular transgender people, face provider and health system barriers to care. Provider level barriers include negative beliefs and actions toward LGBT patients and gaps in knowledge about the health concerns facing the LGBT population. Health system barriers include inequitable health insurance plans and hospital/clinic policies and practices. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Healthy People 2020 have identified specific objectives to addressing health inequity and barriers to care for the LGBT community.

Penn believes that LGBT patients have the right to high quality care, free from abuse, harassment, and discrimination. In addition, Penn provides domestic partnership benefits and health insurance to ensure that the families of LGBT employees have access to healthcare. The Penn Medicine Program for LGBT health continues to improve patient and family-centered care for LGBT individuals by connecting LGBT individuals with caring, compassionate, and skilled providers.

### Goals & Actions

- 1 INTEGRATE** LGBT Health into Patient Care Services
  - » Provide clinical programs with specific guidance for delivering equitable, inclusive care to the LGBT community
  - » Participate in the Human Rights Campaign Health Equality Index and earn the status as a Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality.
- 2 ASSESS** Provider Knowledge of LGBT health
  - » Survey providers to measure their level of knowledge of LGBT health issues, best practices, and comfort in caring for LGBT patients.
- 3 CONNECT** LGBT Patients with Caring, Compassionate, and Skilled Providers
  - » Collaborate with clinical departments to identify providers with expertise in LGBT health.
  - » Update the Penn Medicine provider directory to include providers identified as experts in LGBT health.
  - » Generate and distribute a list of LGBT health experts at Penn to LGBT primary care clinics and community organizations.
- 4 MEASURE** LGBT Patient Satisfaction
  - » Survey LGBT patients to evaluate their satisfaction with health care and the health care environment.

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## SUPPORT THE PROGRAM

For additional information on ways to support the Penn Medicine Program for LGBT Health, please contact Karen Cope-Scarfo, Assistant Development Officer, at 215.898.0832 or [karenc@upenn.edu](mailto:karenc@upenn.edu).



Penn Medicine  
Program *for* LGBT Health



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