



NATIONAL LGBTQIA+ HEALTH
EDUCATION CENTER

A PROGRAM OF THE FENWAY INSTITUTE



Supporting LGBTQIA+ Veterans and Connecting to the Veterans Health Administration

May 24, 2022

Jillian C. Shipherd, PhD¹ and Michael R. Kauth, PhD²
LGBTQ+ Health Program, Veterans Health Administration,
Washington DC

¹Boston University School of Medicine, Boston, Massachusetts;

²Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX



VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Our Roots

Fenway Health

- Independent 501(c)(3) FQHC
- Founded 1971
- Mission: To enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQIA+ community as well as people in our neighborhoods and beyond through access to the highest quality health care, education, research, and advocacy
- Integrated primary care model, including HIV and transgender health services

The Fenway Institute

- Research, Education, Policy



NATIONAL LGBTQIA+ HEALTH
EDUCATION CENTER

A PROGRAM OF THE FENWAY INSTITUTE



LGBTQIA+ Education and Training

The National LGBTQIA+ Health Education Center offers educational programs, resources, and consultation to health care organizations with the goal of providing affirmative, high quality, cost-effective health care for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and all sexual and gender minority (LGBTQIA+) people.

- Training and Technical Assistance
- Grand Rounds
- Online Learning
 - Webinars, Learning Modules
 - CE, and HEI Credit
- ECHO Programs
- Resources and Publications

www.lgbtqiahealtheducation.org
education@fenwayhealth.org



Technical Questions?

- Please call Zoom Technical Support: 1.888.799.9666 ext 2
- You can contact the webinar host using the chat function in Zoom. Click the “Chat” icon, and type your question.
- Alternatively, e-mail us at education@fenwayhealth.org for less urgent questions

Sound Issues?

- Ensure your computer speakers are not muted
- If you cannot hear through your computer speakers: Navigate to the bottom toolbar on your screen, go to the far left, and click the arrow next to the phone icon
- Choose “I will call in.”
- Dial the phone number and access code

After the Webinar

- Close the browser, and an evaluation will automatically open for you to complete
- We very much appreciate receiving feedback from all participants
- Completing the evaluation is required to obtain a CME certificate

CME/CEU Information

This activity has been reviewed and is acceptable for up to 1.0 Prescribed credits by the American Academy of Family Physicians. Participants should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in this activity.

Physicians	AAFP Prescribed credit is accepted by the American Medical Association as equivalent to AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™ toward the AMA Physician’s Recognition Award. When applying for the AMA PRA, Prescribed credit earned must be reported as Prescribed, not as Category 1.
Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, Nurses, Medical Assistants	AAFP Prescribed credit is accepted by the following organizations. Please contact them directly about how participants should report the credit they earned. <ul style="list-style-type: none">•American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)•National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)•American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)•American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)•American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Program (AANPCP)•American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA)
Other Health Professionals	Confirm equivalency of credits with relevant licensing body.

Overview

- Definitions and use of Veterans Health Administration (VHA).
- Minority stress (including Department of Defense culture) and impact on LGBTQ+ Veteran health outcomes.
- VHA's approach to addressing LGBTQ+ Veteran health disparities.
 - Promote inclusive assessment.
 - Continuous improvement of national policies.
 - Educate providers and staff.
 - Inform and engage LGBTQ+ Veterans.

Who is a U.S. Veteran?

38 U.S.C. § 101(2): “The term "veteran" means a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable.”

Branches of the U.S. Military include:

The Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force*, and Coast Guard.

13 CFR § 125.11: A Reservist or member of the National Guard called to Federal active duty or disabled from a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in line of duty or while in training status also qualify as a veteran.

<https://www.va.gov/OSDBU/docs/Determining-Veteran-Status.pdf>

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) General Information

Three branches of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) (www.va.gov)

1. Health care (Veterans Health Administration)* www.va.gov/healthbenefits/
1-877-222-VETS (8387)
2. Benefits (Veterans Benefits Administration) www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/
1-800-827-1000
 - E.g., service-connected disability, education benefits, home loans, etc.
3. Cemetery (National Cemetery Administration) www.cem.va.gov
 - E.g., pre-need arrangements with current legal name.

“To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan.”

General Use of VA Among US Veterans

51% of Veterans (10.2M)
do not use VA benefits or
health care or cemetery

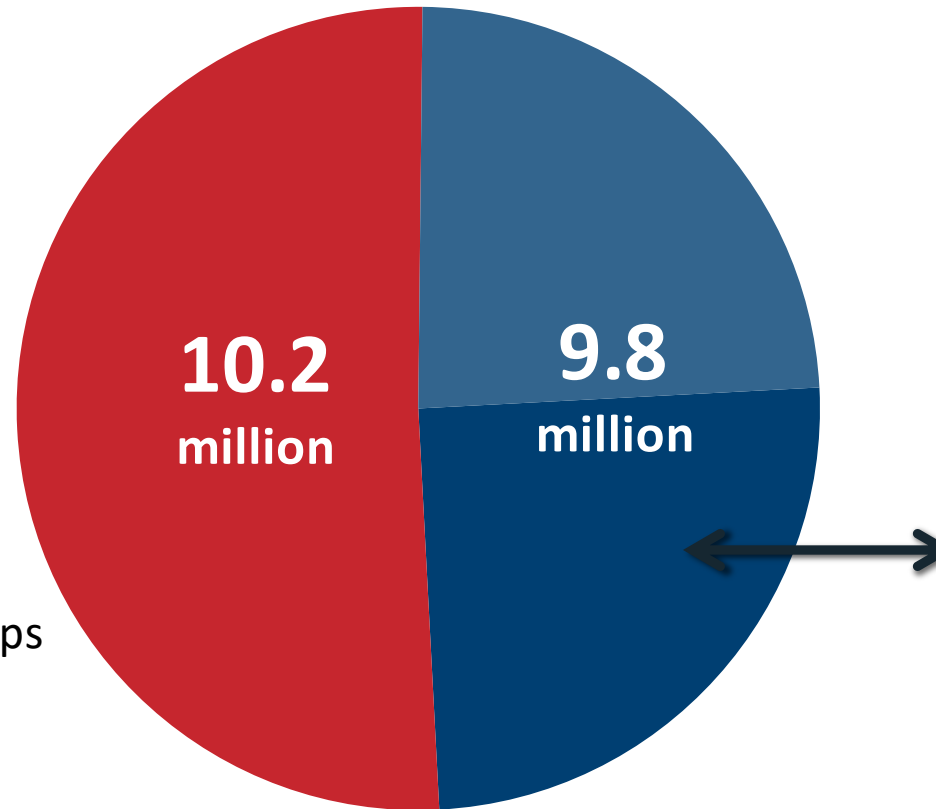
More likely¹⁻³:

- Caucasian
- Private health insurance
- Higher education
- Fewer health issues
- Less likely to get routine checkups

¹Ashton et al., 1998

²Long, Polsky, & Metlay, 2005

³Nelson, Starkebaum, Reiber, 2007



49% of Veterans
(9.8M) use at
least one VA branch.

About **5 million Veterans**
use VHA health care
(**about 25% of all
Veterans**)

https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/Quickfacts/VA_Utilization_Profile_2017.pdf

What LGBTQIA+ Means

LGBTQIA+ = Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual identities. VA uses LGBTQ+.

- The '+' sign captures identities beyond LGBTQ; e.g., two-spirit, pansexual, asexual, nonbinary identities. Inclusive of people who are questioning.
- Acronym for diverse groups of people with minoritized sexual and gender identities, with similar experiences of social stigma, victimization, and discrimination.

7.1% of American adults (23.6M) identify as LGBTQ+.
Percentage is rising, mostly among younger people.
Bisexual is most common identity (57%), especially in women.

US Gallup Poll, 2022

Everyone Has...

Gender Identity

An internal sense of self.
E.g., man, woman, cisgender, transgender, non-binary.

Birth Sex

Or Sex assigned at birth often based on external genitalia. Not always consistent with gender identity.
E.g., male, female, intersex.

Gender Expression

Ways that gender is manifest through speech, mannerism, gestures and movement, style of hair and clothes, makeup, name, and pronouns. Not always consistent with identity.

Pronouns

Words used to refer to someone without using their name. E.g., he/him/his, she/her/hers, they/them/theirs, ze/zir/zirs. Some people use their name instead.

Everyone Also Has...

Name Used

Name a person goes by. For some this is different than their legal name.
E.g., nickname, middle name, different name.

Sexual Orientation

Emotional and sexual attraction to others. Labels people use to describe their sexuality. Sometimes is consistent with sexual behavior.
E.g., straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, asexual.

Sexual Behavior

Sexual activities and practices. Does not always align with Sexual Orientation.
E.g., Straight man who has sex with men.

LGBTQ+ Health at VHA

- LGBTQ+ identities have been marginalized and stigmatized in the U.S. and elsewhere. Stress, stigma and discrimination have been shown to negatively impact health and well-being.
- **VHA LGBTQ+ Health Vision:** Veterans will choose VA and receive affirming care and services to achieve optimal health and well-being.
- Policies, trainings, fact sheets and other resources can be found:
 - Public website: <http://www.patientcare.va.gov/LGBT>
 - Contact us by email: LGBTQProgram@va.gov
 - SharePoint (internal to VA): <https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/vhava-lgbt-resources>

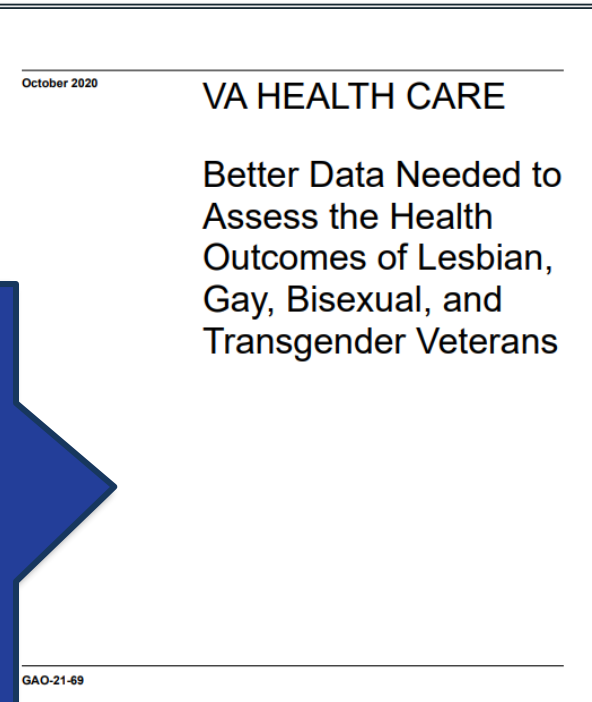
How Many LGBTQ+ Veterans?



Lack of routine data collection prevents us from knowing how many LGBTQ+ Veterans are using VHA.

Government Accountability Office (GAO) Report 21-69, 2020

- Collect gender identity data
- Collect sexual orientation data
- Use these data to assess/address Veteran health outcomes



(more later in the presentation)

Unique Context of LGBTQ+ Veterans: DoD Policy

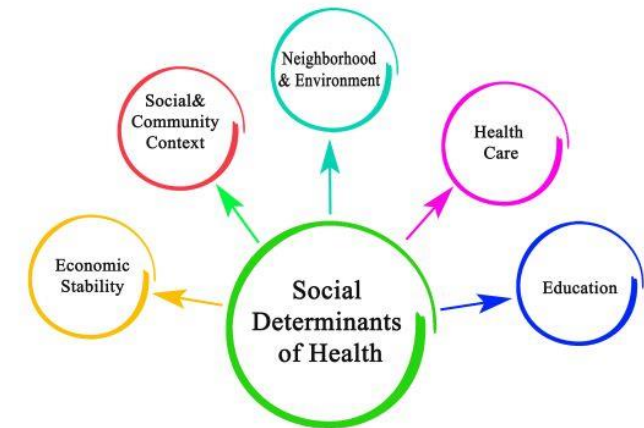
- Department of Defense (DoD) history of excluding LGB people.
 - Bans on LGB service dating to 1942.
 - “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” (1993-2011) eliminated enlistment questions about sexuality; allowed service in secret.
 - At least 14,000 discharged for sexual orientation.
- DoD has historically excluded open transgender service.
 - Open service from June 2016 – April 2019. Thereafter, new enlistees must serve under their birth sex.
 - 2021 DoD reverses policy again and allows open service.
- History of discrimination explains concerns of LGBTQ+ Veterans in trusting VA and disclosing identities to health care providers.



Social Determinants of Health

- Gender identity and sexual orientation identity are social determinants of health, like sex assigned at birth, age, race/ethnicity, education, socioeconomic status, where you live (urban/rural), service in the military, etc. . .
- **Minority Stress Theory**^{1, 2} can explain elevated rates of most health conditions in LGBTQ+ people (e.g., PTSD, depression, drug abuse, drinking, smoking, heart disease, cancer, etc.).
 - Also explains health care access concerns (both expecting and experiencing discrimination).
 - Less professional training available about LGBTQ+ needs.

¹ Meyer, 2003; ² Hendricks & Testa, 2012



Health Disparities for U.S. LGBTQ Women Veterans

- Generally, higher rates of –
 - Depression (2x)
 - Anxiety / stress
 - Heart disease / hypertension
 - Adult sexual assault
 - Suicidal ideation / attempts (2x)
 - Problem drinking
 - Childhood sexual abuse
 - Intimate partner violence
 - Smoking
 - Obesity
 - Low Self Esteem

- For LGBTQ women **Veterans** –
 - Higher rates of drinking and ETOH-attributable deaths
 - Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
 - Military sexual assault (MST)
 - Higher intimate partner violence (IPV)
 - Increased rates of suicidal ideation
 - Smoking; Stroke; COPD; kidney disease; asthma
 - More likely to delay VHA care due to fear of harassment

**Higher risks for bisexuals and ethnic minorities*



Blosnich, Mays & Cochran, 2014; Boehmer, Bowen & Bauer, 2007; Butkus, D. for Health and Public Policy Committee of the ACP, 2015; Dardis, Shipherd & Iverson, 2017; Institute of Medicine, 2011; Lehavot & Simpson, 2014; Lucas, et al., 2018; Lynch et al., 2022a; 2022b; Makadon, et al., 2007; Mattocks et al., 2013; Shipherd et al., 2018; 2022; Simoni, et al., 2017; Medley, et al., 2016; Webermann et al, 2022

Health Disparities for U.S. GBQ Men Veterans

- Generally, higher rates of –
 - Depression (3x)
 - Anxiety / stress
 - Low self esteem
 - Problem drinking
 - Suicidal ideation / attempts (2-3x)
 - Eating disorders (3x)
 - Smoking
 - STIs/HIV
 - Substance abuse
 - Exposure to violence
- For GBQ men **Veterans** –
 - Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
 - Military sexual assault (MST; 16%)
 - Higher intimate partner violence (IPV)
 - Increased rates of suicidal ideation
 - Smoking; Stroke; COPD; Asthma; kidney disease
 - LESS likely to be obese

**Higher risks for bisexuals and ethnic minorities*



Blosnich, Mays & Cochran, 2014; Butkus for the ACP, 2015; Feldman & Meyer, 2007; Frost, Lehavot & Meyer, 2015; Institute of Medicine, 2011; Lucas, et al., 2018; Lynch et al., 2022; Makadon, Mayer, Goldhammer & Potter, 2007; Medley, Lipari, Bose, Cribb, Kroutil & McHenry, 2016; Shipherd et al., 2021

Health Disparities for U.S. Transgender Veterans

- Generally, higher rates of –
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
 - HIV
 - Suicide ideation/attempts
 - Trauma and violence against them
 - Smoking
 - Homelessness
 - Alcohol and substance abuse
 - Low social support

**Higher risks for ethnic minorities*

- For transgender **Veterans** –
 - Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
 - Military sexual assault (MST)
 - 20x higher rate of suicidal behavior; younger deaths
 - Worse mental and physical health outcomes on nearly every measure



Beckman, Shipherd, Simpson & Lehavot, 2018; Blosnich, et al, 2013; 2021; Brown & Jones, 2016; Boyer et al., 2021; Brown & Jones, 2014; Butkus, D. for Health and Public Policy Committee of the ACP, 2015; Institute of Medicine, 2011; James, et al., 2016; Lindsay et al., 2016; Livingston et al., 2022; Makadon, et al., 2007; Shipherd et al., 2021; Valentine & Shipherd, 2019

Commonalities of LGBTQIA+ Health Guidelines









- Common elements of professional and national LGBTQIA+ guidelines:
 - Create a welcoming environment (e.g., visible signs that LGBTQIA+ people are expected and safe here).
 - Promote staff sensitivity and training.
 - Use respectful, inclusive language (e.g., name used, pronouns, mirror the patient's language).
 - Assess sexual orientation identity, gender identity, and sexual health and do appropriate follow up.
 - Do not ask the patient to educate you about LGBTQIA+ health disparities.
 - Become knowledgeable about LGBTQIA+ health disparities.
 - Assess for social stressors and resilience factors.
 - Assess for exposure to violence, including intimate partner violence.
 - Provide individually tailored, person-centered care.

What VHA is Doing for LGBTQ+ Veterans

Strategic approaches to addressing LGBTQ+ health disparities:

1. Promote inclusive assessment
 - e.g., Fields in medical records, satisfaction surveys
2. Continuous improvement of national policies
 - e.g., nondiscrimination policies; health care policies
3. Educate providers and staff
 - e.g., trainings and clinical support resources
4. Inform and engage LGBTQ+ Veterans
 - e.g., welcoming signage / posters, fact sheets, etc.

The Data Fields

Fields	VistA/CPRS	Cerner
Name Used		
Gender Identity		
Sexual Orientation		
Pronouns		

Trainings for VA staff and providers available internally

What VHA is Doing for LGBTQ+ Veterans

Strategic approaches to addressing LGBTQ+ health disparities:

1. Promote inclusive assessment
 - e.g., Fields in medical records, satisfaction surveys
2. Continuous improvement of national policies
 - e.g., nondiscrimination policies; health care policies
3. Educate providers and staff
 - e.g., trainings and clinical support resources
4. Inform and engage LGBTQ+ Veterans
 - e.g., welcoming signage / posters, fact sheets, etc.

Policies Matter: Federal Order for Review

PUBLISHED DOCUMENT

Start Printed Page 7023

Executive Order 13988 of January 20, 2021

Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Policy. Every person should be treated with respect and dignity and should be able to live without fear, no matter who they are or whom they love. Children should be able to learn without worrying about whether they will be denied access to the restroom, the locker room, or school sports. Adults should be able to earn a living and pursue a vocation knowing that they will not be fired, demoted, or mistreated because of whom they go home to or because how they dress does not conform to sex-based stereotypes. People should be able to access healthcare and secure a roof over their heads without being subjected to sex discrimination. All persons should receive equal treatment under the law, no matter their gender identity or sexual orientation.

VA Response: February 23, 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) welcomes all Veteran, family, caregiver and survivor beneficiaries and employees, inclusive of diverse gender identities and sexual orientation. VA is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and equitable environment for all the Veterans we serve and the workforce that makes it possible for us to accomplish our mission.

Pursuant to President Biden's recently signed Executive Orders (*Enabling All Qualified Americans to Serve Their Country in Uniform*, signed on January 25, 2021, and *Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation*, signed on January 20, 2021), I will be issuing a memo to all Administrations and Staff Offices to:

- Conduct a policy review to determine whether any regulations, directives, policies and procedures require revision to promote equity for and inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) Veterans, families, caregivers, survivors or employees. Design and implement a remediation plan if the review identifies discriminatory policies towards LGBT beneficiaries and employees.
- Perform an assessment of the necessary steps to eliminate the exclusion of "gender alteration" (gender affirmation surgery) in the medical benefits package to include assessment of statutory and regulatory requirements as well as funding, staffing, technology and other resources required to provide all medically necessary services.
- Develop means to measure the experience of LGBT beneficiaries and employees and to include their perspectives in the development of future guidance, and identify and address any barriers that LGBT beneficiaries and employees may face in accessing the full range of VA care, benefits and services.
- Develop a plan to ensure that employees are trained on inclusive, respectful and welcoming interaction with LGBT beneficiaries, and implement an enterprise plan to enhance data and information systems with respect to sexual orientation and gender identity, such that beneficiaries and employees may independently and securely self-identify and be addressed by their preferred name and pronouns.

Information regarding LGBT-specific care that VA currently provides can be found at the following link: <https://www.patientcare.va.gov/LGBT/#~:text=Veterans%20may%20have%20other%20ways%20of%20describing%20themselves,,who%20identify%20as%20a%20sexual%20or%20gender%20minority>.

Every person at VA, whether a customer or member of our workforce team, should be treated with respect and dignity. Our success as a team—our ability to deliver world-class care for our Veterans—depends on our respect for our fellow VA employees and the Veterans we serve is critical to everything we do.

Denis McDonough

PLEASE PRODUCE LOCALLY FOR ALL THOSE WHO DO NOT ROUTINELY ACCESS EMAIL DUE TO THEIR SPECIALTIES.

National VA Non-Discrimination Policies

[Rights and Responsibilities of VA Patients and Residents of Community Living Centers.](#) Veterans won't be discriminated against for any reason, including sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

[Rights and Responsibilities of Family Members of VA Patients and Residents of Community Living Centers.](#) The VA uses a broad understanding of family, including anyone whom the patient or resident considers to be family.

National VA Policy: LGBTQ+ Care

- *VHA Directive 1340: Provision of Health Care for Veterans Who Identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Queer:* https://www.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=5438
 - Inclusive definition of family.
 - Access to a LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinator.
 - Inputting the Veteran's sexual orientation in the health record.
 - Annual sexual health assessment of all Veterans.
 - Attempts to change sexual orientation (formal or informal) are harmful to health.
 - VHA employees must create an affirming environment.

National VA Policy: Transgender and Intersex Vets

- VHA Directive 1341: Providing Health Care for Transgender and Intersex Veterans:
https://www.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=6431
- All VHA employees will create an affirming environment for transgender and intersex Veterans. **Use of Veteran's name used and pronoun is required.**
 - Room assignment and restroom use
 - Hormone therapy
 - Fertility evaluations (gamete storage up to 5 years)
 - Mental health care
 - Vocal coaching
 - Gender affirming prosthetics
 - Pre-operative evaluations and treatments including hair removal
 - Medically necessary post-operative and long-term care following gender confirming/affirming surgery
 - VA does not provide or fund gender affirming/confirming surgeries.*

Transgender Care Policy at VA

- Per the VA Secretary, VA has begun a rule change process to allow surgical procedures.
 - Removal of the “gender alteration” exclusion to align with current Administration priorities, best medical practice, research, health insurers, DoD and professional health organizations.
 - **VA is not able to provide or pay for gender affirming surgical procedures until the final rule is published.**
 - The entire rulemaking process **may take two years** and includes a period of public comment.
 - This will allow VA to develop the framework to provide the full continuum of care in a way that is consistent with VA’s rigorous standards for quality health care.
- Currently, VA provides or pays for corrective procedures after gender-affirming surgeries obtained by a Veteran outside VA, hormone therapy, and other gender-affirming care.

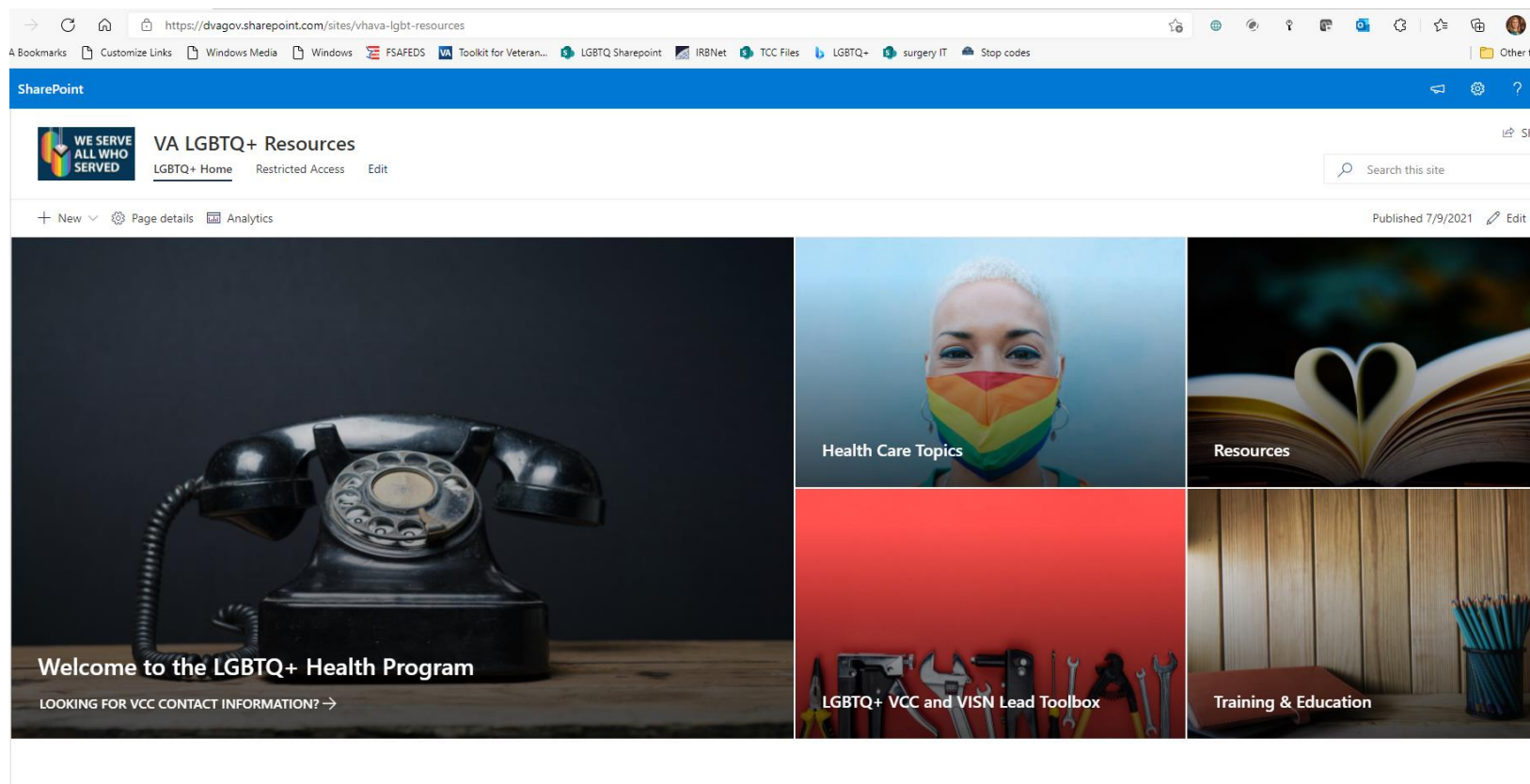
What VHA is Doing for LGBTQ+ Veterans

Strategic approaches to addressing LGBTQ+ health disparities:

1. Promote inclusive assessment
 - e.g., Fields in medical records, satisfaction surveys
2. Continuous improvement of national policies
 - e.g., nondiscrimination policies; health care policies
3. Educate providers and staff
 - e.g., trainings and clinical support resources
4. Inform and engage LGBTQ+ Veterans
 - e.g., welcoming signage / posters, fact sheets, etc.

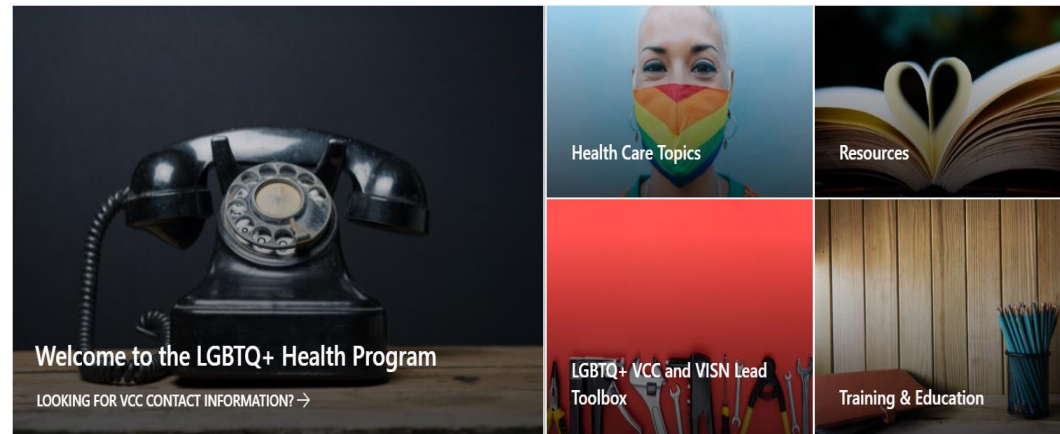
LGBTQ+ Health SharePoint

[VA LGBTQ+ Resources - Home \(SharePoint.com\)](https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/vhava-lgbt-resources) (internal link)



Training: Not Just for Providers!

- Training for Clerical and other non-clinical staff
 - Training for clerks / eligibility too: Birth Sex and Self-Identified Gender Identity Course #28564 (< 20 minutes).
 - Communications with front line staff.
 - (internal link) [Self-Identified Gender Identity in CPRS \(SharePoint.com\)](#)
 - (internal link) [SIGI: Self Identified Gender Identity \(SharePoint.com\)](#)



24/7 Online Education Resources

- **Care for Transgender and Gender Diverse Veterans in VHA:**
 - Includes 12 brief topic-focused trainings
- **LGB Veteran care online trainings:**
 - Includes 9 brief (< 20 min) topic-focused trainings
 - Do Ask, Do Tell: 5 Awkward Minutes to Better Patient Care
- **VHA TRAIN Education System:** <https://vha.train.org/vha/home>
 - Free! Public Health Foundation - continuing education credits

Transgender Clinical E-Consultation

- Nationwide interdisciplinary provider-to-provider Transgender E-consultation through the electronic medical record system.

Have you heard about E-consultation?

Coming out to your provider is an important step to better healthcare.

.....

Through E- consultation your provider gets advice about your treatment through your medical record and a second opinion on your treatment at your request.

- Learn about the resources and support available to you.
- Find your local facility's LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinator.
- Access policies, research, & training.
- Subscribe to LGBTQ+ email updates.
- Bookmark our website:
www.patientcare.va.gov/LGBT

TRANSGENDER & GENDER DIVERSE VETERANS

“Office Hours” for VA Employees

**Every Friday
2-3 PM EST**





ASK LGBTQ+ HEALTH

Facilitated by the VA LGBTQ+ Health Program.
Weekly Drop-In Question & Answer session.

Do you have questions about health
care for LGBTQ+ Veterans?

Join our weekly Q&A Call by joining through:
MS Teams: 469.551.3381, Code: 861 328 287#
[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Open to all VHA staff.
Get personalized responses to your training, policy,
and education queries by experts in the field.



Alexis (Lexi) Matza, PhD Billy Hipp, APRN Susan Mejia, DBA Dana Brunson, LCSW

What VHA is Doing for LGBTQ+ Veterans

Strategic approaches to addressing LGBTQ+ health disparities:

1. Promote inclusive assessment
 - e.g., Fields in medical records, satisfaction surveys
2. Continuous improvement of national policies
 - e.g., nondiscrimination policies; health care policies
3. Educate providers and staff
 - e.g., trainings and clinical support resources
4. Inform and engage LGBTQ+ Veterans
 - e.g., welcoming signage / posters, fact sheets, etc.

GAPS: Voice and Communication

- Gender Affirming Program with Speech (GAPS)
 - Available nationally via a request in the medical record by provider.
 - Treatment via VA Video Connect (VVC) to Veteran in home.
 - Providers are trained speech-language pathologists.
 - Flexible module-driven content for both masculinizing and feminizing spectrum training.



LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinator

- At least one at every hospital.
- Local **LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinator** is a resource.
- Every VA region has an **LGBTQ+ VISN Lead**.
- Find a LGBT VCC outside VA:
<http://www.patientcare.va.gov/LGBT>
- Or contact us by email: VALGBTQ+program@va.gov



VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

MEET YOUR LGBTQ+ VETERAN CARE COORDINATOR

CONNECT WITH YOUR LGBTQ+ VCC BY PHONE, VIDEO, OR IN-PERSON. FIND YOUR LOCAL LGBTQ+ VCC BY SCANNING **HERE**.



SCAN ME

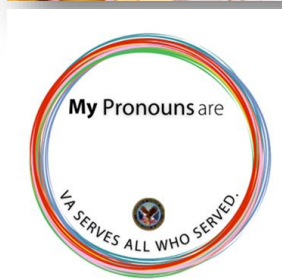
LGBTQ+ VCC's are here to help you get the care you need. We promote a safe and welcoming environment for Veterans with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning and other identities (LGBTQ+) to access personalized, high-quality care.

LET US KNOW HOW WE CAN HELP YOU!

LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinators:

- Improve services at your facility
- Advocate for your needs
- Promote a safe and welcoming space
- Provide training and education to VA employees

Signs and Symbols of LGBTQ+ Veteran Awareness



LGBTQ+ Veteran Health Fact Sheets and Posters



Take Home Messages

- LGBTQ+ Veterans have unique health care needs.
- LGBTQ+ people deserve respectful, culturally appropriate health care.
- Non-discrimination policies help to support LGBTQ+ patients and staff.
- Staff / provider education and assessment of sexual orientation identity and gender identity are critical.
- Resource materials and signage inform and engage LGBTQ+ patients.
- We're not finished in VHA! There is more to do.



Questions and Comments

- Email: VHA LGBTQ+ Program VALGBTQprogram@va.gov
- VA employees (internal link): [VA LGBTQ+ Resources - Home \(SharePoint.com\)](#)
- Public Website: <https://www.patientcare.va.gov/LGBT/>

