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Trans Healthcare: A community journey from (almost) nothing to something

Presented by Janet Foliano

Have Questions? Find the contact information below for leads on this project:

Jamie Bowman	Human Dignity Coalition	https://www.facebook.com/pg/HumanDignityCo/
Erin Rook	Allyship In Action	https://allyshipinaction.com/
Rebecca Scrafford, PsyD	St Charles Health System	rjscrafford@stcharleshealthcare.org
Frances Waldrop, EPIC Analyst	St Charles Health System	fkwaldrop@stcharleshealthcare.org

Community action plan to increase affirming care in your area

1. Connect with local trans advocates / community members
2. Identify providers across the region who can serve as champions
3. Connect with the CCO and get them on board
4. Identify front office and back office staff at different health clinics who can serve as advocates
5. Establish formal task forces at individual health systems, through proper channels. Recommend someone with strong working knowledge of procedures to do this – we found EPIC analyst to be incredibly effective. Include trans community members on task force and figure out how to pay them!
 - In our community advocates formed a group called Allyship in Action so they could function as paid consultants. They joined with other advocates & now offer talks on various intersections of diversity, equity and inclusion. <https://allyshipinaction.com/>
6. Host a grand rounds on trans healthcare – use networks created above to ensure a well-attended talk.
 - **Follow talk by local panel / fishbowl. Providers listen.**
 - Our training was paid for through a grant and conference fees (\$75 for 8 CMEs with student rates)
7. At grand rounds announce a 1.5 day conference, 4 months out so providers can clear schedules. Collect emails and begin to organize a community wide coalition
8. Invite school staff, churches, DHS, and family members to the larger 1.5 day training as audience members. Let them come for free.
 - Consider including law enforcement presence to ensure safety. This might take some advance bridge building between law enforcement and trans community members
9. Use a larger training with regional experts as an opportunity to “train the trainers.” Our training paired emerging local advocates and providers with experienced presenters. Local advocates with minimal experience to healthcare were trained in EPIC and other health tools in preparation for the training
10. Following the training, launch a trans health coalition. Gather emails from the training, schedule quarterly meetings, and identify some folks good at social media. Again include members from the trans community, their families, and allies.
11. Use regional coalition to promote collaboration and the ongoing identification of gaps

Action plan within a single health system (modelled after steps taken at St Charles)

1. Create an integrated area workgroup at your health system. Include resources from all departments, including teams that are not directly involved in clinical care, such as, billing, HIM, legal, etc. The workgroup serves as an advisory group to the decision making structure at your facility which makes workflow and policy changes for the health system. Additionally, the workgroup assists with issue resolution and makes training recommendations.
 - Make sure to have a strong provider advocates, preferably one from both a primary and inpatient setting. (such as the ED)
 - Also have someone from your C suit involved as your executive sponsor to help promote work and to step in when needed to find resolution.
 - **Include members from the LGBTQ community. We can't stress enough that if you do not involve members from your community, you will not be successful.**
 - Include your IT team, specifically an EHR analyst who can be a champion from a technology perspective.
2. Can use EHR functionality as a platform to begin conversations around workflow changes that promote an inclusive environment.
 - Health systems on EPIC have, or will be adopting, new SOGI (Sexual Orientation Gender Identity) functionality. EPIC has worked with the Fenway Institute to make recommendations on how to use the Functionality
 - Always ask, why not EPIC foundation? (foundation=EPIC recommendation)
3. Get your leadership teams engaged. St. Charles has various decision making bodies (domain groups) that make decisions. The different domain groups represent areas like: ED, inpatient clinical, registration & scheduling, billing, etc.
 - We asked for 20 minutes on each groups agenda and delivered a presentation on why St. Charles needs to get engaged on this topic. This accomplished two things:
 - Managers understood importance/value in sending staff to training events
 - Set the stage for future conversations around workflow changes
4. Stay patient focused. St. Charles Health System's motto is 'Care for All' so...."How does this decision affect how we deliver patient focused care for all?" Staying focused on this question helps to avoid discussion around conflicting beliefs for these topics.
 - However, lesson learned: Make room for feelings on various decisions. It took many hours of conversation to get where we are today on some workflow decisions. Commonly, decision makers would have to talk through their own feelings before the group was ready to answer the questions of "How does this decision affect how we deliver patient focused care for all?"
5. Support your staff! Implement a training strategy. Your organization will be as successful as your staff is knowledgeable.
 - For most, terminology and concepts will be new. As an example, gender and sex are often used interchangeably in conversation. Know the difference, teach for staff to understand the difference.
 - Include why it is important to have sensitivity and awareness for this topic. The 2015 US Transgender survey is a good resource for information. They have state specific break down of data. [Http://www.ustranssurvey.org/](http://www.ustranssurvey.org/)
 - Create a visual indicator for employees who took a SOGI sensitivity course, such as a rainbow buddy badge. (We offer a two hour class, led by community members, quarterly. Attendance is optional, but we have had excellent turn out.)
 - Our rainbow buddy badge serves two purposes
 - Employees know who to turn to if they need help/questions regarding an LGBTQ topic
 - Shows patients and peers that they have had extra training and can be easily identified as a safe person
6. Scope your wish list, and have the conversations. You will likely be surprised how ready for organization is for change! The trick is creating the team that will see the work through!

Resources / References

The **2015 U.S. Transgender Survey (USTS)** is the largest survey ever devoted to the lives and experiences of transgender people, with 27,715 respondents across the United States. The USTS was conducted by the National Center for Transgender Equality in the summer of 2015, and the results provide a detailed look at the experiences of transgender people across a wide range of areas, such as education, employment, family life, health, housing, and interactions with police and prisons. <http://www.ustranssurvey.org/>

National LGBT Health Education Center / www.lgbthealtheducation.org

Educational programs, resources, and consultation with the goal of optimizing health care for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people

The Transgender Law Center has created, “10 Tips for Working with Transgender Patients (PDF),” an information and resource publication for health care providers.

World Professional Association for Transgender Health / www.wpath.org

Promotes evidence based care, education, research, advocacy, public policy, and respect in transgender health. You can download current standards of care from their website.

Human Rights Campaign

HRC envisions a world where LGBTQ people are ensured of their basic equal rights, and can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.

www.hrc.org

[HRC—Supporting and Caring for our Gender Expansive Youth](#)

This groundbreaking report (available online or in PDF format) of 925 gender-expansive youth is designed to provide adults with a better understanding of these youth and to help adults find ways to communicate with and support all youth in their lives.

Supporting & Caring For Transgender Children; September 2016. This is a position statement put together by Human Rights Campaign and American Academy of Pediatrics. Available online at

<http://hrc.im/supportingtranschildren>

“[Endocrine Treatment of Gender-Dysphoric/Gender-Incongruent Persons: An Endocrine Society Clinical Practice Guideline](#),” Updated in 2017. You can find them online or in the November 2017 print version of the Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism (JCEM).

UCSF Transgender Care has a host of resources for primary care providers. Download “Guidelines for the Primary and Gender-Affirming Care of Transgender and Gender Nonbinary People”; Second Edition; Edited by Madeline B Deutsch, MD, MPH / <https://transcare.ucsf.edu/guidelines>

Gender Spectrum new guidance for promoting gender inclusive puberty education!

<https://www.genderspectrum.org/blog/gender-inclusive-puberty-and-health-education/>