



First National LGBT Health Awareness Week Will Focus on Wellness

As part of the first National Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Health Awareness Week, to be celebrated March 16-22, 2003, the National Coalition for LGBT Health has launched an extensive web site that provides detailed information on a range of topics including practical ways that individuals can participate in the week's activities. The web site www.lgbthealth.net/awareness_week contains information that is important to these vibrant communities and individuals.

Callen-Lorde Community Health Center, Bronx Lesbian and Gay Health Resource Consortium and Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC) have joined with the National Coalition for LGBT Health to promote the week's activities. Organizers hope to focus attention on the very real health issues that exist among LGBT individuals and communities.

In keeping with the week's theme of "*mind, body, spirit: our community, our health,*" the inaugural LGBT Health Awareness Week will draw attention to a wide scope of health concerns, by focusing on issues such as cancer, nutrition, domestic violence, sexual and mental health.

"Members of LGBT communities face many barriers to adequate and supportive health care," said Ana Oliveira, Executive Director of GMHC, one of the New York City-based partners. "Our long experience with HIV has shown how important it is for people to become active, educated consumers. By raising awareness of our health needs, LGBT people can organize and help shape our health care system."

"LGBT Health Awareness Week provides us all with an opportunity to learn more about our own individual health, as well as that of our partners, our friends and our community", said Jay Laudato, Executive Director of Callen-Lorde Community Health Center. "It is equally important to educate the health care system about our health needs."

Mark A. Reyes, Executive Director of Bronx Lesbian and Gay Health Resource Consortium, said: "For too long now the healthcare needs of the LGBT community have been ignored. Specifically, access to quality and sensitive care for the Bronx LGBT community is further layered with economic and heterosexist barriers. The launch of LGBT Health Awareness Week is an important step in bringing attention to the needs of our under-served communities."

To promote LGBT Health Awareness Week, the New York members of the National Coalition for LGBT Health will be distributing materials throughout local businesses and community based organizations that serve the LGBT communities. An extensive list of medical and mental health providers will receive a joint letter alerting them to LGBT Health Awareness Week and the unique health concerns our communities face.

Contact Details

Bronx Lesbian and Gay Health Resource Consortium

Mark A. Reyes
Executive Director
(718) 842-9831
Blghrc@aol.com

Callen-Lorde Community Health Ctr.

Steve Albert, MPH
Director of Health Education &
Communications
212 271-7272
salbert@callen-lorde.org

Gay Men's Health Crisis

Lynn Schulman
Director of Communications and
Marketing
212 367 1210
lynns@gmhc.org