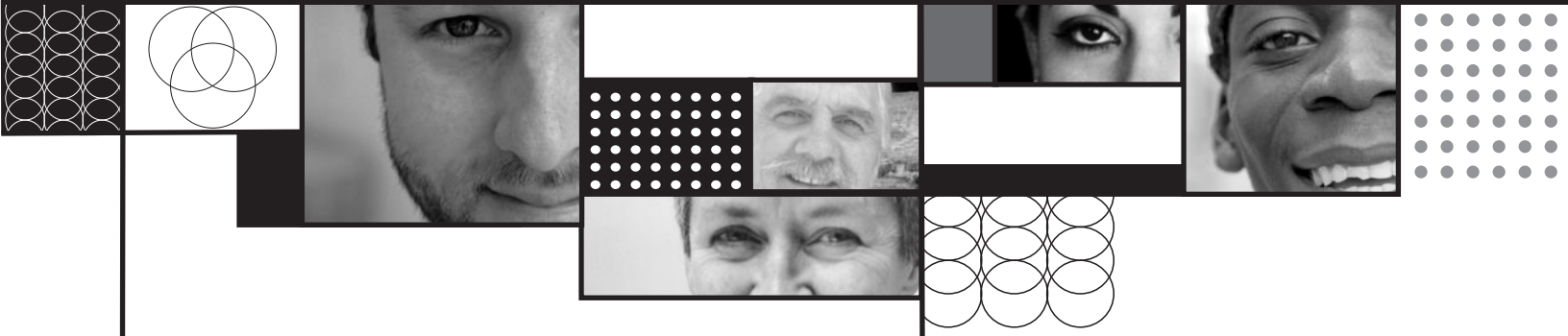




FOR MORE INFO VISIT WWW.LGBTHEALTH.NET



Access to Quality Healthcare

LGBT people often face financial, personal and cultural barriers when attempting to access healthcare. Further, we often withhold personal information about our sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, sexual practices and behavioral risks from healthcare providers because we fear discrimination. And as many of us know only too well, there is a lack of knowledge about LGBT health among health care planners and providers. These problems are compounded because:

- LGBT people are at increased risk for certain forms of cancers including (lung, cervical, breast, and anal cancer) due to a higher prevalence of smoking, being overweight, and inadequate risk assessment and healthcare screenings.
- LGBT people also have increased risk of stress-related mental health problems and substance abuse.
- LGBT couples are at a disadvantage in obtaining medical insurance compared to heterosexual couples since many insurance companies and employers do not provide domestic partnership benefits.
- Older LGBT people in same-sex relationships are at high risk of economic devastation due to an absence of Medicaid spend-down protections afforded to legalized partners.
- Transgender care is not taught in U.S. medical schools.

HERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT YOU CAN DO TO UPGRADE THE QUALITY OF YOUR HEALTHCARE:

- Be proactive! Test for HIV. Men should consider screening for prostate and anal cancer. Women should screen for cervical and breast cancer. And if you smoke, make a real effort to cut down or quit completely!
- Find an LGBT-friendly provider. Ask your friends, call your local LGBT community center to inquire about referrals, or log on to services such as www.gayhealth.com to research in greater detail.
- Consider coming out to your doctor. It's the most effective way to make certain your health concerns are addressed completely.
- If your state or locality has enacted domestic partnership benefits, find out if you may be eligible to access healthcare and other benefits.
- Inquire whether your health plan has LGBT cultural competence training required of the health professionals providing services under their plan.

take charge of your health.
you deserve quality healthcare.



A PROJECT OF:
National Coalition
for LGBT Health

LGBT HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK
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