American Academy of Nursing Supports Initiatives that Address the Health Needs of Transgender Individuals

Academy Marks LGBT History Month with Release of Position Statement Stressing Importance of Health Care Needs for Transgender Individuals

Washington, D.C. (October 13, 2016) – To mark LGBT History Month, the American Academy of Nursing announces its support for initiatives that address and support the health care needs of transgender individuals — those who have a gender identity and/or gender expression that is different than the one they received at birth. Transgender individuals have unique health care needs that are not often addressed adequately due to various barriers and challenges.

The Academy's position statement “Health Care Services for Transgender Individuals” was published in the September/October 2016 issue of the Academy's journal, Nursing Outlook. The Academy recommends that health care service institutions and providers, including nurses, become more informed, educated, and sensitive to the unique health care needs of transgender individuals.

“The Academy urges health care providers and policy makers to become more aware of the daily challenges and health care service barriers faced by transgender individuals. These challenges and barriers contribute to disproportionately higher rates of common health issues among this population because these individuals are not able to access adequate and sensitive care,” said Academy President Bobbie Berkowitz, PhD, RN, FAAN.

Barriers may include health care providers who lack the necessary information and discrimination from health care institutions. These barriers contribute to many health issues, including increased risk for HIV, sexual violence, depression, self-harm and suicide, and substance abuse. However, like the general population, transgender individuals have health needs that vary across the lifespan.

Read the full position statement here.

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