LGBT-friendly primary care improves STD screening rates

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(HealthDay)—A quality improvement initiative that enhances lesbian,

gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) affirming care also improves screening rates for sexually transmitted diseases, according to a study published in the July/August issue of the *Annals of Family Medicine*.

Bruce W. Furness, M.D., M.P.H., from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, and colleagues developed and evaluated a quality improvement initiative (Transforming Primary Care for LGBT People) to enhance the capacity of 10 federally qualified health centers (FQHCs; 123 clinical sites in nine states) to provide culturally affirming care.

The researchers found that FQHCs reported increases in culturally affirming practices, including collecting patient pronoun information (42.9 percent increase) and identifying LGBT patient liaisons (300.0 percent increase). Based on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) from electronic health records among nine FQHCs, SOGI documentation increased from 13.5 to 50.8 percent of patients. Screening of LGBT patients increased from 22.3 to 34.6 percent for syphilis, from 25.3 to 44.1 percent for chlamydia and gonorrhea, and from 14.8 to 30.5 percent for HIV among the eight FQHCs reporting the number of LGBT patients.

"FQHCs participating in this initiative reported improved capacity to provide culturally affirming care and targeted screening for LGBT patients," the authors write.

More information: Abstract/Full Text

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