



END AIDS. LIVE LIFE.

**MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT  
A725 (L. Rosenthal)**

Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), the world's first and leading provider of HIV/AIDS prevention, care and advocacy, strongly supports the passage of A725 (L. Rosenthal); a bill that would require medical professionals to complete training on sexual health, sexual orientation and gender identity, human immunodeficiency virus and testing for sexually transmitted infections every four years.

As an organization that serves HIV/AIDS-affected communities, GMHC provides risk-reduction services and testing for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Ongoing training is crucial to ensure that patients and providers have the information needed to proactively address sexual health concerns and reduce the rate of sexually transmitted infections.

Fear of anti-HIV stigma among clinicians can be a deterrent for many potential patients seeking treatment. In a study of people in the LGBT community conducted by Lambda Legal, 63% of respondents with HIV reported receiving one or more types of discrimination and harassment as a result of their LGBT or HIV status.<sup>1</sup> Even small changes can increase provider's comfort and competency working with LGBTQ patients. A 2013 study found that students' comfort working with transgender patients increased by 63% after gender identity content was added to the curriculum.<sup>2</sup> Further, a 2019 study of OB/GYN resident physicians found that participation in just one training course regarding HIV transmission and PrEP usage increased comfort levels in determining eligibility for and prescribing PrEP.<sup>3</sup>

Reviews of U.S. medical and nursing schools indicate that coverage of sexual health topics, including sexual orientation and gender identity, in school curriculum varied widely and showed little uniformity nationwide. As a result, curricula have shown to be particularly inadequate in addressing the needs of LGBT patients. Continuing medical education on sexual identity, gender identity, and sexual health is an imperative step in ensuring that clinicians have the knowledge and confidence to effectively address patients' sexual health needs.

For these important reasons and in an effort to continue and expand the work being done to End the Epidemic in New York State, GMHC strongly supports passage of this bill.

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<sup>1</sup> Lambda Legal. (2010). *When health care isn't caring: Lambda Legal's survey on discrimination against LGBT people and people living with HIV*. <https://www.lambdalegal.org/publications/when-health-care-isnt-caring>

<sup>2</sup> Safer, J. D., & Pearce, E. N. (2013). A simple curriculum content change increased medical student comfort with transgender medicine. *Endocrine Practice*, 19(4), 633–637. <https://doi.org/10.4158/EP13026.OR>

<sup>3</sup> Ramirez, A., Wautlet, C. K., Yamamoto, A., & Spector-Bagdady, K. (2019). A missing key in ending the AIDS epidemic: Training Ob/Gyn resident physicians in the management of HIV PrEP. *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 221(6), 688.e1–688.e5. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajog.2019.10.045>