



Recommendations for Health Departments

1. Build the **capacity** of state and local health departments (HD) to address the HIV and STD crises among gay and bisexual men and other MSM.
 - Require ongoing periodic cultural competency trainings for agencies that serve the community (e.g., provide trainings to mainstream LGBT organizations on serving communities of color and to non-LGBT organizations on serving LGBT communities);
 - Ensure grantees services are provided to populations most disproportionately impacted by the epidemic; and
 - Address the need for workforce development among health departments and community stakeholders, including:
 - Recruitment and retention of health department staff reflective of the communities being served;
 - Development of health department staff to appropriately address these epidemics among gay and bisexual men; and
 - Establish collaborations with local colleges and universities in efforts to foster new leadership in public health.
2. Create an **integrated and coordinated** response across disease areas (i.e., HIV, STD, TB, and viral hepatitis), mental health and substance abuse, which will assist in defining optimal care for gay and bisexual health (e.g., providing rectal swabs, approaching sexual health beyond STD and HIV testing).
 - Identify strategic partnerships with state and community stakeholders to better leverage resources and areas of expertise (e.g., domestic violence, tobacco, minority health offices, STD's);
 - Facilitate and develop relationships with clinicians and federally qualified health centers (FQHC) to better serve gay and bisexual men; and
 - Establish holistic health systems that address the unmet mental health and substance abuse needs of gay and bisexual men.

3. Improve data collection systems that provide an improved understanding of the health, social and structural realities of gay and bisexual men.

- Incorporate country of origin in addition to race/ethnicity (e.g., Latino: Colombian, Mexican, Cuban);
- Include sexual orientation, gender and gender identity (e.g., questions that allow for identifying both assigned gender at birth and current gender identity); and
- Integrate other health issues (e.g., mental health and substance use/abuse).

4. Develop comprehensive strategies to better address the epidemic among gay and bisexual men.

- Policy and Partnership:
 - Establish, implement, and enforce policies that support the lives of gay and bisexual men (e.g., domestic partner benefits);
 - Assess and improve current program and service delivery targeting gay and bisexual men;
 - Construct funding opportunities that require training of community-based organizations (CBO) to address issues that impact gay and bisexual men;
 - Host community dialogues to educate the need for high impact programs and to better inform priorities for HD prevention portfolios;
 - Support and build on the Department of Education's (DOE) anti-bullying and safe schools campaign;
 - Educate and engage gay and bisexual men and their social networks (e.g., provide opportunities for general education, leadership training, and community planning);
 - Create partnerships with local non-HIV-focused organizations to increase awareness and mobilize around HIV, STD and viral hepatitis (e.g., community health centers, arts organizations, and civil rights organizations); and
 - Create partnerships with local [Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#) (HBCUs) and/or [Hispanic-Serving Institutions](#) to effectively:
 - Target young Black and Latino gay and bisexual men;
 - Mobilize students of color around HIV/AIDS issues;
 - Encourage outreach and volunteerism in the local community;
 - Support LGBT student groups and college and university initiatives targeting gay students.

- Technology:
 - Address challenges for health departments in effectively utilizing social media;
 - Identify political barriers at the state and community level and establish protocols identifying where websites can be launched with fewer obstacles;
 - Generate list of sites considered “sexually explicit” and provide rationale for accessing those sites as a public health strategy;
 - Establish a comprehensive training on cultural competency of internet use for gay men;
 - Create guidelines and protocols for internet outreach for health departments and their community partners; and
 - Establish internet guidelines for young gay and bisexual men addressing internet safety.