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Addressing the Needs of Gay Men and Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM)

A Provider's Introduction to Substance Abuse Treatment for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Individuals

Second Edition

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- *Identify one challenge to locating gay male research subjects.*
- *Identify two health issues/behaviors for which gay men have a higher risk.*
- *Outline two differences between Gay Men and MSM.*
- *Identify one example of how providers can work effectively with MSMs.*





Gay Men



Gay Men:

Challenges to understanding who contemporary gay men are:

– *Definitional Challenges:*

- *Almost all studies define sexual orientation based on attraction, behavior, or identity.*
- *When reviewing research, it is essential to understand how the study is defining sexual orientation (e.g. attraction, behavior, or identity).*



Gay Men:

Challenges to understanding who contemporary gay men are cont.:

- *Is a male gay, if he has a strong attraction to other men but is married to a female and has never engaged in same-sex sexual activity?*
- *Is a man who has sex with other men, and identifies as “straight” really gay?*
- *Does simply labeling oneself a gay man make one so?*



Gay Men:

Challenges locating research subjects:

- *Studies tend to focus on easily accessible gay men, typically those who are publically out and living in large urban areas.*
 - *Example: gay bars and businesses, cultural LGBT groups and LGBT community centers.*



Gay Men:

Challenges locating research subjects cont.:

- *The second largest group of research participants consists of gay college students.*
- *Recruiting LGBT individuals outside college campuses and LGBT community centers, are often time consuming and costly to undertake.*
- *Individuals who choose not to attend college, who enlist in the military, and who are enrolled in trade schools are not being captured in the data. Therefore the information obtained would not reflect the larger gay male population.*



Gay Men:

- Furthermore, despite tremendous progress for LGBT rights, many gay men keep their sexual orientation hidden.
- Many states do not have LGBT nondiscrimination protections. While marriage equality exists in all states and territories (except for American Samoa and some tribal communities), LGBT people in many states can still be fired from their jobs and/or evicted from their homes.

(Fidas, 2014; Eliason, Dibble & Robertson, 2011)



Gay Men:

- A 2014 national survey found that over half of LGBTs were not open in the workplace. Reasons included the following:
 - *Possibility of damaging relationships with co-workers.*
 - *Workers fear possibility of being negatively stereotyped.*
 - *Concern other people might feel they are coming on to them.*

(Fidas, 2014; Eliason, Dibble & Robertson, 2011)





Related Health Issues for Gay Men



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

Substance use:

– *Studies show that gay men use substances, including alcohol and drugs, at a higher rate than their heterosexual counterparts.*

(Blackwell, 2012)

– *Studies also indicate that gay men use tobacco at much higher rates than straight men—reaching nearly a 50 percent difference in some cases.*

(Green & Feinstein, 2012)



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

Substance use cont.:

- *Alcohol, tobacco, and cocaine use rates are in decline, but there are still higher rates in gay men compared to the general population.*

*(Anderson, 1996; Blackwell, 2012;
Green & Feinstein, 2012)*



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

Substance use cont.:

- *A study on methamphetamine use in urban gay and bisexual population estimated that, methamphetamine use is 5 to 10 times more common in gay and bisexual men than in the general population.*
- *Meth use is associated with high rates of HIV.*

(Shoptaw,, 2006)



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

Mental health:

- *Multiple studies have shown that depression and anxiety affect gay men at a higher rate than the general population, and are often more severe for gay men who are yet to “come out”.*
- *Social stigma has a negative impact on mental health.*
 - *Depression in gay men 4.5-7.6 times higher than heterosexual peers.*

(Cochran et al., 2007; Berg, Mimiaga & Safren, 2008; Burgess et al., 2008; Bostwick et al., 2009; Barker, 2008;; Mills et al., 2004; Stall et al., 2001)



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

Prevalence of some psychological disorders among gay men vs. heterosexual men:

	<u>Gay/Bi Men</u>	<u>Heterosexual</u>
– <i>Major depression</i>	31%	10.2%
– <i>Generalized anxiety disorder</i>	2.9%	1.8%
– <i>Panic Disorder</i>	17.9%	3.8%

(Cochran et al., 2003)



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

Self-harm and suicide:

- *Gay men 7x more likely to have attempted suicide.*
- *Gay youth comprise 30% of completed suicides annually.*
- *Gay and bisexual men have higher rates of deliberate self-harm.*

(Remafedi, 1999; Remafedi, 2002; King et al., 2008; Lytle et al., 2014)



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

Self-harm and suicide cont.:

- *The following contribute to higher rates of suicidal attempts and completions among gay men and youth than among other populations.*
 - *Verbal and physical harassment,*
 - *Negative experiences related to “coming out” (including level of family acceptance), substance use, and isolation.*

(Cochran et al., 2007; Gilman et al., 2001; Berg, Mimiaga & Safren, 2008; Burgess et al., 2008; Bostwick et al., 2009)



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

Injury and violence:

- *Data show that gay men generally experience two types of violent victimization:*
 - *Criminal violence based on their sexual minority status; and*
 - *Violence from an intimate male partner.*
- *74% of gay men report having been target of physical violence or property destruction.*
- *32% of gay men report being the target of physical violence or property destruction because of their sexual orientation.*

(Herek, 2009; Willis, 2004; Houston & McKirman, 2007)



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

HIV/AIDS:

- *In 2010, an estimated 1.1 million people aged 13 years or older were living with HIV infection in the United States.*
- *76% of those living with HIV were male, and 69% of males were gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men*

(CDC, 2013)



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

HIV/AIDS:

- *In 2010, men accounted for 80% (38,000) of the estimated 47,500 new HIV infections.*
- *In 2010, Gay and bisexual men accounted for 63% of new HIV infections in the United States and 78% of infections among all newly infected men.*
- *Young gay and bisexual men are at increased risk, a study estimated that from 2008 to 2010, new HIV infections increased 22% among young (aged 13-24) gay and bisexual men and 12% among gay and bisexual men overall.*

(CDC, 2013)



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

HIV/AIDS cont.:

- *In 2011, 57% (500,022) of persons living with an HIV diagnosis in the United States were gay and bisexual men, or gay and bisexual men who also inject drugs*
- *38% of gay and bisexual men living with an HIV diagnosis are white, 36% are black/African American, and 22% are Hispanic/Latino.*



(CDC, 2013)



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

HIV/AIDS cont.:

- *Among gay men overall, more young black men (ages 13–29) became infected with HIV than did any other age/racial group.*
- *Hispanics represent approximately 16% of the total U.S. adult population, and account for 21% of new HIV infections.*
- *The rate of new HIV infections for Hispanic males was 2.9 times that for white males.*

(CDC, 2008; CDC, 2013)



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

Cancer:

- *Gay men are at higher risk for anal cancer due to an increased risk of becoming infected with human papillomavirus (HPV), the virus that causes genital and anal warts.*

(Asencio, et al., 2009; Mayo Clinic, 2010; Bowen & Boehmer, 2007; Heslin et al., 2008; Chin-Hong et al., 2005; McRee, Reiter & Chantala, 2010)

- *Trans gay men should also be screened for cervical and breast cancer regularly*

(Peitzmeier, et al., 2014; Brown & Kenneth, 2015; Peitzmeier, et al., 2014;



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

Cancer cont.:

- *Gay and bisexual men are estimated to be 17 times more likely to develop anal cancer than heterosexual men.*

(Palefsky et al., 200; Nagle, 2009; Vajdic et al., 2009; Tider, Parsons & Bimbi, 2005; CDC 2007)

- *Gay men and bisexual men are at an increased risk for skin and prostate cancer*

(Asencio, et al., 2009; Blashill & Pagoto, 2015)



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

Body image and eating disorders:

- *Problems with body image are more common among gay men than among their straight counterparts.*
- *In addition, gay men are much more likely to experience an eating disorder such as bulimia or anorexia nervosa.*

*(Siconolfi, Halkitis & Allomong, 2009;
Donald et al, 2007; Deputy & Boehmer, 2010)*



Related Health Issues for Gay Men:

Body image and eating disorders:

- *Gay men 3x more likely than heterosexual men to have an eating disorder.*
- *Body image and eating disorders may take the form of compulsive exercise.*
- *Steroid abuse due to body image problems.*

(Matthews-Ewald et al., 2014; Carlat et al., 1997; Martins, Tiggemann, Kirkbride, 2007)





Provider Considerations



Provider Considerations:

It might be helpful to consider past approaches to health and wellness for gay men, as a way to help navigate future efforts:

- *Until 1973, much of the research focused upon “curing” or treating the condition of homosexuality.*
- *Organizing at local and national levels led to the delisting of homosexuality as a disorder by the American Psychological Association (APA) in 1973.*



Provider Considerations:

After 1973, the movement was towards:

- *Assisting individuals to successfully work through their coming out process.*
- *Creating gay-affirmative therapies assisting men and women to thrive in inhospitable and unsupportive environments.*
- *Assisting gay men and lesbians to recognize, process, and overcome their internalized homophobia.*



Provider Considerations:

Moving forward affirmatively:

- *Educate yourself on emerging gay male health issues and HIV prevention efforts.*
- *Speak up when you see discrimination, insensitivity, gaps in knowledge and action.*
- *Strive to respect and uphold clients' confidentiality.*



Provider Considerations:

Moving forward cont.:

- *Best practice is to include significant others in at least one session of treatment.*

(Fals-Steward, O'Farrell, & Lam, 2009)

- *Support clients on their choice to come out or not. Respect their sense of where they are in this process and their need to feel safe in treatment.*

- *It is of note that attempts to change sexual orientation using “reparative therapy” persisted throughout the 90s and early 2000s. In August 2014, the American Psychological Association disavowed the practice stating that there is “insufficient evidence to support the use of psychological interventions to change sexual orientation.”*

(APA, 2014)



Provider Considerations:

Interventions proven to be effective:

Intervention Title	Targeted Concern (s)	Description
Suicide assessment (Blackwell, 2015)	Assessment of suicide, depression and anxiety	In emergency rooms settings, address issues of suicide, depression and anxiety disorders, especially in gay and bisexual men.
CBT for social anxiety in gay men (Walsh & Hope, 2010)	Social anxiety	Gay men report more social anxiety than heterosexual men, especially if they try to hide their sexual identity. Specifically focusing on sexual identity in addition to social anxiety reduced symptoms drastically



Provider Considerations:

Interventions proven to be effective:

Intervention Title	Targeted Concern (s)	Description
Behavioral couple therapy (BCT) for gay and lesbian couples with alcohol use disorders (Fals-Steward, O'Farrell, & Lam, 2009)	Individuals with alcohol use disorders and their non-substance-abusing same-sex relationship partners.	Both gay and lesbian couples who received BCT and individual therapy for the identified client with alcohol use disorder did significantly better than the couples who only received individual therapy for the client with alcohol use disorder.
Specific alcohol and other drug treatment for gay and lesbian individuals (Rowan, Jenkins & Parks, 2013)	Culturally specific alcohol and other drug treatment programs	Results indicate three major themes that make this type of treatment valuable: (1) a separate treatment unit or facility, (2) a safe and supportive therapeutic milieu, and (3) specific tailored treatment approaches.



Provider Considerations:

Interventions proven to be effective:

Intervention Title	Targeted Concern (s)	Description
Friends Getting Off (Shoptaw, et al., , 2005)	Gay and bisexual men who use methamphetamine	Manualized intervention designed to reduce and change risk behavior related to HIV and other substance use. 24 session gay-specific cognitive behavioral therapy coupled with vouchers redeemable for goods or services in exchange for urine samples that are methamphetamine metabolite-free.

While not on NREPP, this intervention has performed well in several research studies and participants indicate that they like the intervention and find it effective.





*Men who have Sex
with Men (MSM)*



MSM:

- MSM: an abbreviation for men who have sex with men. This term focuses on behaviors.
- The term does not indicate sexual orientation.
 - *Example: a male who identifies as heterosexual in the community, but also engages in same-gender sexual interactions while in jail.*

(Johns Hopkins University, 2015)



Discussion Exercise:

In small groups or a pair, discuss the following, record notes, and share with the larger group:

- *What have you heard about MSM in your community?*
- *What biases have you heard regarding MSM populations?*



MSM:

How was this term first used?

- *Early on in the AIDS epidemic, many gay men were the first to become sick.*
- *During this period, providers wanted to distinguish those who identified as gay because of the higher risk.*



MSM:

Term used cont.:

- *Outreach was then specifically directed towards gay men.*
- *During this period many grass root community groups became the first to offer assistance to men who were sick and quickly dying.*
- *These programs worked with very limited budgets and existed mostly on contributions and charity fundraising.*



MSM:

- Term used cont.:
 - *The response and financial support from elected officials was at best, slow and minimal.*
 - *When some federal or state funding did become available oppositional political leaders questioned if federal or state funds were being used to promote a “homosexual lifestyle.”*



In a press briefing at the White House in 1982, a journalist asked a spokesperson for President Reagan “...does the President have any reaction to the announcement ...that AIDS is now an epidemic and has over 600 cases?” The spokesperson responded - “**What’s AIDS?**”

(Avert, 2015)

MSM:

Term used cont.:

- *As a strategy, agencies applying for funding began to utilize the term that researchers initially used specifically to address behavior of men who had sex with men (MSM).*
- *Thus, agencies avoided having grant applications automatically rejected.*



MSM:

- Today, a way to avoid bias and judgment towards male clients who engage in sex with other males is to avoid labeling client's sexual orientation based on their behavior only.
 - *Example: "he must be gay if he sleeps with men."*
- We aim to respect and affirm clients' identities, regardless of our opinions and judgments.
- Whatever word, description and or term client's use, we reflect that wording in our interactions with that client.



MSM:

- One way to help reduce the spread of HIV is to educate all male clients on behaviors that might put them at risk, regardless of whether or not we think it applies to them.
- Behaviors include: unprotected vaginal and anal sex, as well as sharing used syringes.



MSM:

- For some men, their same-sex sexual encounters may be restricted by institutional settings.
 - *Examples: military, prisons, sleep away camp, boarding schools, college, seminary, fraternities or other predominantly gender-specific environments.*



MSM:

- Some men seek sexual gratification with other men because they consider it to be more accessible at:
 - *Sex clubs, adult bookstores, gyms, saunas or via social internet platforms.*
- These men still might consider themselves to be heterosexual.
- Again, we are focused on risk behaviors in an effort to reduce health risks and promote health and wellness.





*Related Health issues
for MSM*



Related Health Issues for MSM:

Research considerations:

- It is important to remember the challenges of data collection on a population that doesn't have a universally understood agreement on the term "MSM."
- The lack of inclusion of trans men and the historical inclusion of trans women in MSM-related research poses additional challenges.



Related Health Issues for MSM:

Methamphetamine (meth) use:

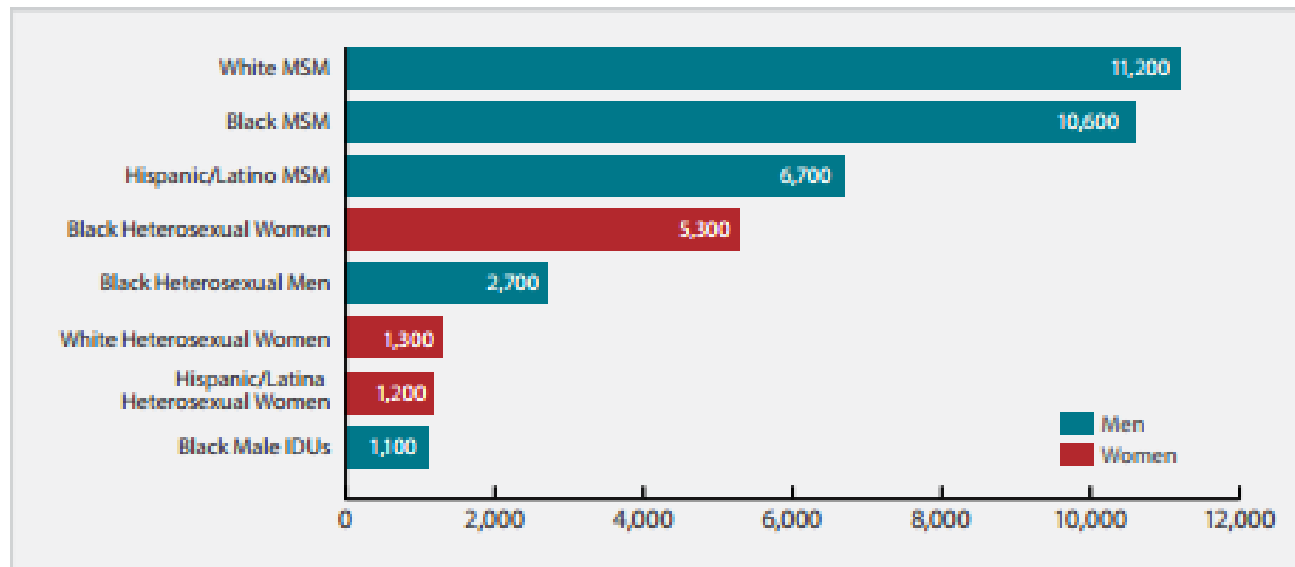
- *In 2009, National Survey on Drug Use and Health estimated that 1.2 million Americans ages 12 and older had tried methamphetamine at least once throughout the year.*
- *Numerous studies have shown increased use of methamphetamine among MSM across the US, and have found it to be associated with HIV infection.*

(SAMHSA, 2010)

(Freeman, et al., 2011; Reback, et al., 2013)



Estimated New HIV Infections in the United States, 2010, for the Most Affected Subpopulations



(CDC, 2015)



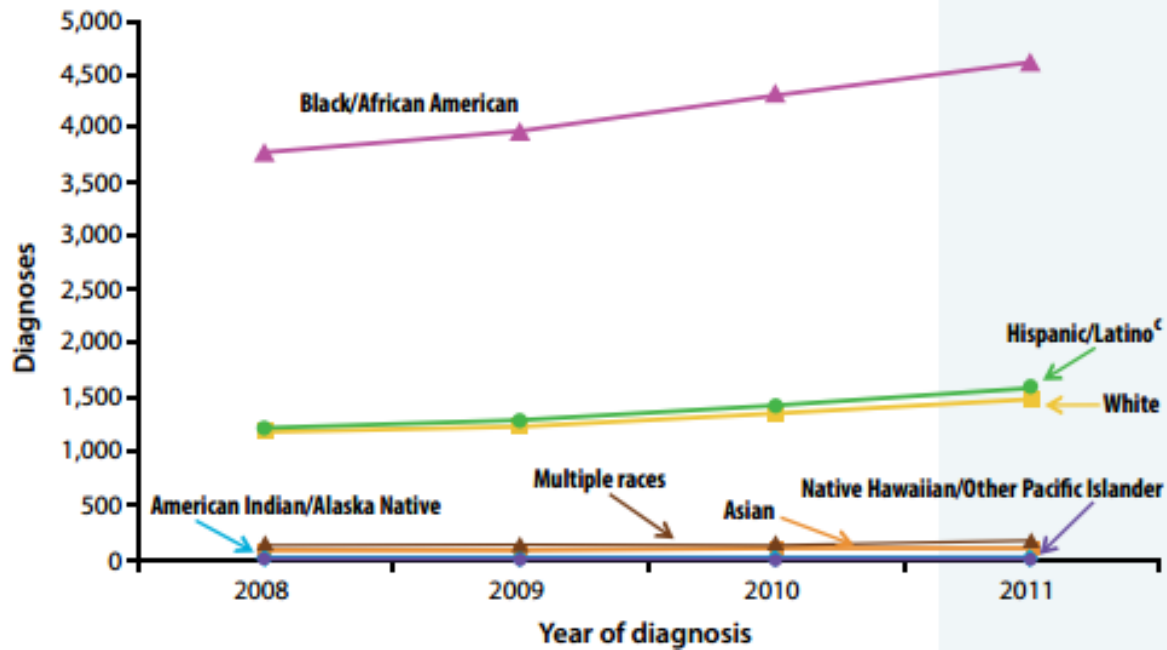
Related Health Issues for Young MSM:

- HIV/AIDS:
 - In 2011, for adolescent males aged 13–19 years, about 93% of all diagnosed HIV infections were from male-to-male sexual contact.
 - From 2008–2011, YMSM aged 13–24 years had the greatest percentage increase (26%) in diagnosed HIV infections.
 - In 2011, among all YMSM aged 13–24 years with HIV infection, an estimated 58% were black; 20% were Hispanic/Latino.
 - Black YMSM also had the largest increase of all racial/ethnic groups in diagnosed HIV infections—from 3,762 diagnoses in 2008 to 4,619 diagnoses in 2011.

(CDC, 2014)



Diagnoses of HIV Infection Among Men Who Have Sex with Men Aged 13–24 Years, by Race/Ethnicity 2008–2011—United States and 6 Dependent Areas



(CDC, 2015)



Related Health Issues for Young MSM:

HIV/AIDS cont.:

- *Rates of HIV infection were also increasing among Latino and White YMSM*

(CDC, 2014)



Related Health Issues for MSM:

- HIV/AIDS cont.:
 - *Many HIV prevention campaigns for youth often only talk about the risks of heterosexual sex, and there is little appropriate information available to men who have sex with men, which can give them the false impression that they are not at risk.*

(Avert, 2014)



Related Health Issues for MSM:

HIV/AIDS cont.:

- *MSMs are more likely to experience depression due to social isolation and disconnectedness from health systems, which can make it harder to cope with aspects of HIV such as adherence to medication.*

(World Health Organization, 2011)



Related Health Issues for MSM:

Syphilis:

- *In 2012, men who have sex with men (MSM) accounted for 75% of primary and secondary syphilis cases in the United States.*
- *Syphilis, which is a genital ulcerative disease, can cause significant health complications and can facilitate the transmission of sexually transmitted infection.*

(Patton et al., 2014; Heffelfinger et al., 2007; Su et al., 2011)



Related Health Issues for MSM:

Syphilis cont.:

- *Over the past several years, an increase and outbreaks in Syphilis among MSMs has been reported in various cities and areas:*
 - *Chicago, Seattle, San Francisco, Southern California, Miami, and New York City.*
 - *These areas have experienced high rates of syphilis and HIV co-infection, ranging from 20 to 70 percent.*

(SAMHSA, 2012; CDC, 2007)





*Provider
Considerations
for MSM*



Provider Considerations:

- We cannot always rely on patients' self-reported identities to appropriately assess risk for HIV infection and sexually transmitted diseases.
- We must inquire about behavior in a cultural appropriate manner
- Public health prevention messages must be crafted to explain the dangers of risky sexual behaviors in a manner that is effective with the targeted audience.



Providers Considerations:

- For some men there is concern for stigma, ridicule and even violence and homicide if they are suspected to be anything other than heterosexual.
- We meet clients anywhere along the continuum of sexual behaviors, orientations and identities – our goal is to be effective helpers.



Providers Considerations:

- Annual screening for HIV (in uninfected patients) and for bacterial STDs, such as syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydia, is recommended for all sexually active MSM.
- More frequent screening is indicated for MSM who have multiple or anonymous partners, those who have sex in conjunction with drug use (such as meth), and those who have drug-using partners.



Providers Considerations:

- When completing a sexual history or sexual health assessment, avoid assumptions and judgments.
- Clients who are married may not be monogamous. It is important to ask about sexual partners outside of marriage.





*Questions and
Comments?*



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Provider Considerations:

Interventions proven to be effective:

Intervention Title	Targeted Concern (s)	Description
<p>Treatment strategies for Black, gay, bisexual, and heterosexual men-who-have-sex- with- men who use methamphetamine (Jerome & Halkitis, 2014)</p>	<p>High prevalence of HIV among Black gay, bisexual, and other men-who-have-sex-with-men (BMSM) and the strong association between meth use and HIV-seroconversion</p>	<p>Results indicated four treatment areas salient for BMSM seeking treatment for methamphetamine used disorders: (a) outreach/recruitment strategies, (b) therapist qualities, (c) group characteristics, and (d) intervention elements themselves. Findings gathered here and through literature review underscore the importance of adapting evidence-based methamphetamine treatment strategies to include culturally-relevant treatment strategies that address the specific needs of BMSM who use methamphetamine.</p>



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Resources:

1. Center for Disease Control and Prevention: Gay and Bisexual Men's Health: <http://www.cdc.gov/msmhealth/professional-resources.htm>
2. National Coalition for LGBT Health: <http://www.healthhiv.org/sites-causes/national-coalition-for-lgbt-health/>
3. Gay and Lesbian Medical Association: <http://www.glma.org>
4. Gays and Lesbians in Alcoholics Anonymous: <http://gal-aa.org/>
5. COLAGE: Children of LGBT Parents: <http://www.colage.org>
6. Trevor Project: <http://www.thetrevorproject.org>



Resources:

- The YMSM/LGBT CoE has also developed another curriculum addressing the needs of young men who have sex with men (YMSM). The curriculum includes the latest research-based information to help them decrease the rate of substance abuse and new HIV infections among racial/ethnic minority YMSM (ages 18-26) clients.
- Please visit www.ymsmlgbt.org for more information!



Resources:

- GLBTQ: An Encyclopedia of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, & Queer Culture: “Straight Men Who Have Sex with Men”: http://www.glbtq.com/social-sciences/straight_men_who.html
- AVERTing HIV and AIDS: Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM) and HIV/AIDS: <http://www.avert.org/men-who-have-sex-men-msm-hiv-aids.htm>
- Human Rights Campaign: Coming Out Resources: <http://www.hrc.org/resources/category/coming-out>
- The Trevor Project: Coming Out As You: <http://www.thetrevorproject.org/section/YOU>
- CDC Information Line: 800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)



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