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LGBTQ Health Awareness Week brings together local organizations to improve health equity

Between March 21 and March 25, National LGBTQ Health Awareness Week aims to bring attention to the unique health needs of LGBTQIA+ communities. The 2022 theme, “Live Out Loud,” encourages open dialogue and emphasizes awareness building around certain topics like mental health, HIV, trans health, and ending stigma.

The awareness week follows recent anti-LGBTQIA+ efforts by some US lawmakers, such as Florida’s “Don’t Say Gay” bill and Texas’s child abuse investigations against parents of transgender children—actions which LGBTQIA+ rights advocates say criminalize LGBTQIA+ identity and can cause severe damage to ensuring safe and equitable access to health education and essential care for LGBTQIA+ people.

LGBTQIA+ communities are impacted by higher rates of sexually transmitted infections, behavioral health issues, homelessness, discrimination, violence victimization, and other challenges that create severe health disparities and gaps in access to healthcare. According to the national 2015 US Transgender Survey, 40% of transgender respondents surveyed had attempted suicide in their lifetime, compared to 4.6% of the general population. One third of respondents reported that they had at least one negative experience with a healthcare provider related to their gender identity. In Oregon, gay, bisexual, and queer men and their partners account for roughly 61% of people newly diagnosed with HIV.

Improving access to safe, gender affirming, and culturally responsive healthcare and health education is a key part of National LGBTQ Health Awareness Week’s message as well as an ongoing goal for local LGBTQIA+ focused nonprofits like HIV Alliance and TransPonder. The two longtime partners collaborate on trans-specific programs like free sterile syringe delivery for people who inject hormones, HIV testing events, and increasing access to behavioral health care and PrEP, the highly effective medication for preventing HIV.

As part of National LGBTQ Health Awareness Week, HIV Alliance and TransPonder will be hosting an event on March 23 to improve health equity through access to appropriate care and responsive education for LGBTQIA+ communities. The in-person event will take place at As You Like It, a Eugene-based LGBTQIA+ inclusive pleasure shop and sexual health resource hub. The event will include a question-and-answer session with Dr. Kialing Perez and local Glamazon Maliena B Itchcock. The discussion is meant to be both fun and informative and will also be live streamed on Facebook for those who cannot attend in-person. In addition, HIV Alliance will provide free COVID-19 vaccines and home tests as well as onsite rapid testing for HIV, Hepatitis C, and Syphilis.



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Executive Board: Board President: Vince Mays | President-Elect: Mark Molina | Secretary: Spencer McCoy | Treasurer: Paul Hempel

Event Information:

National LGBTQ Health Week Event with TransPonder, HIV Alliance, and As You Like It

Q&A on LGBTQIA+ health

Free rapid testing, COVID-19 vaccines and home tests, and general information and resources

Wednesday, March 23, 2022

1:00 – 5:00pm

As You Like It Shop

1655 W 11th Ave.

Q&A session 4:30 – 5:30pm

Facebook Live event available through HIV Alliance's Facebook page

HIV Alliance Prevention Manager, Rebecca Noad, and Senior Program Director, Amanda McCluskey as well as TransPonder Executive Director, Kyle Rodriguez-Hudson, are available for interviews.

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