

New Jersey AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline

PRESS RELEASE
March 2022

National LGBTQ Health Awareness Week Live Out Loud

(New Jersey) — This week (March 21-25th) the [National Coalition for LGBTQ Health](#) and its partners are raising awareness of the important healthcare needs and challenges faced by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ+) individuals and communities. Barriers to medical care such as stigma, homophobia, transphobia and discrimination negatively affect the physical, emotional and mental health of LGBTQ+ community members.

This year's theme **LIVE OUT LOUD for LGBTQ Health** is an opportunity for advocates and community members, as well as state and federal officials to talk openly about the importance of adequate and accessible healthcare services for LGBTQ+ individuals and communities.

The LGBTQ+ community experiences significantly greater challenges in achieving good health compared to straight and cisgender community members. Inequities in medical care prevent individuals from accessing and receiving appropriate, patient-centered health and support services in a safe and inclusive environment.

By not getting the care they need, community members experience worse health outcomes in areas such as substance abuse, addiction, mental health and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV and AIDS.

HIV, AIDS and other STIs have a significant impact on LGBTQ+ individuals and communities. It's important to include testing for HIV and other STIs as part of a person's yearly health appointments. Anyone at higher risk for HIV and other STIs should be tested more frequently. Many people living with HIV or other sexually transmitted infections experience no signs or symptoms. Getting tested is the only way to know if you have HIV or other STIs.

Testing not only reduces the risk of spreading new infections, but also links people to prevention, medical care and treatment services. Anyone at high risk for HIV should get tested often and talk to their healthcare provider about available prevention options.

Over the past 10 years, "life-changing" advancements in HIV testing, prevention, medical care, and treatment have improved health outcomes— longer, healthier lives for people with HIV, and effective

prevention options for those who do not have HIV. Better options mean less new HIV infections, less people with AIDS, and less AIDS-related deaths.

Effective prevention options help end HIV in all communities. [PrEP \(pre-exposure prophylaxis\)](#) is a daily HIV medicine taken to help prevent getting HIV from sex or injection drug use. [PEP \(post-exposure prophylaxis\)](#) is a HIV medicine taken only in emergency situations. If you think you were recently exposed (in the last 72 hours) to HIV, immediately contact your healthcare provider, an emergency room doctor, or an urgent care provider about taking PEP to help prevent getting HIV.

While there is still no cure for HIV, early testing and treatment options make it possible to live healthy with HIV. Treatment with HIV medicine ([antiretroviral therapy](#)) can keep the amount of virus in the body to an undetectable level. Keeping an [undetectable](#) HIV level prevents passing the virus to others ([Undetectable=Untransmittable \(U=U\)](#)). All people living with HIV should start treatment regardless of how healthy they are or how long they have been living with HIV.

Live Out Loud. Support LGBTQ+ Health.

New Jersey offers free HIV and other STI services to all state residents via the hotline. Knowing who to call for resources and information is the first step in ending the HIV epidemic in New Jersey. The hotline is staffed by health professionals (doctors, nurses, and pharmacists) available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide free, confidential help: Call: 1-800-624-2377 or [Chat Here](#)

- Referrals for testing, prevention, treatment and other related services
- Prevention and treatment information for HIV, hepatitis and other STIs
- Information on the side effects of medicines used to treat HIV and other STIs
- Referrals to PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) and PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) services
- Counseling and treatment locations
- Referrals to harm reduction centers (syringe access available)
- Partner notification services
- New Jersey's AIDS Drug Distribution Program ([ADDP](#))

Connect with NJ AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline    (clickable)

Observance Day hashtags: #LGBTQHealth #LiveOutLoud

New Jersey AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline

Healthcare professionals (doctors, nurses and pharmacists) provide telephone consultation for people seeking information about HIV/AIDS, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), and other sexually transmitted infections (STI) including

hepatitis. Callers receive information tailored to their needs; discussion about prevention, referrals for testing sites and other related services, counseling and testing locations, and information on treatment and adverse reactions to medications. The hotline is administered by the New Jersey Poison Control Center and funded by the New Jersey Department of Health, Division of HIV, STD, and TB services.

Rutgers New Jersey Medical School

Founded in 1954, Rutgers New Jersey Medical School is the oldest school of medicine in the state. Today it is part of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and graduates approximately 170 physicians a year. In addition to providing the MD degree, the school offers MD/PhD, MD/MPH and MD/MBA degrees through collaborations with other institutions of higher education. Dedicated to excellence in education, research, clinical care and community outreach, the medical school comprises 20 academic departments and works with several healthcare partners, including its principal teaching hospital, University Hospital. Its faculty consists of numerous world-renowned scientists and many of the region's "top doctors." Home to the nation's oldest student-run clinic, New Jersey Medical School hosts more than 50 centers and institutes, including the Public Health Research Institute Center, the Global Tuberculosis Institute and the Neurological Institute of New Jersey. For more information please visit: njms.rutgers.edu.

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