GLMA’s Impact

*LGBT healthcare equality is our goal. Policy, advocacy and education are our strategies. Professional membership is our core strength.*

Through the expertise of our members and in collaboration with other lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) civil rights and health organizations as well as with health associations and policy-makers at all levels, GLMA is a major force in the effort to ensure the health and well-being of LGBT individuals and families.

We at GLMA take great pride in the impact we’ve made over our 30+ year history—with the support of our members, our supporters and the community at-large—toward greater equality in healthcare.

Below are just a few ways we have made a significant and sustainable impact. With your support, we can do more! **Join us in this important work!**

### Healthcare Reform
- Hospital Discrimination
- Electronic Health Records
- Marriage Equality
- Patient Education & Referrals
- HIV Discrimination

### Cultural Competence
- Health Profession Advocacy
- Health Profession Education
- Continuing Education for Health Professionals
- Promoting Research

### Healthcare Reform
- **Amicus Brief Supporting Successful Defense of the Affordable Care Act**
  In 2012, GLMA joined a friend-of-the-court brief to the US Supreme Court supporting the expanded healthcare access and coverage available for people living with HIV/AIDS under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). The ACA, and in particular the minimum coverage requirement or individual mandate, had been challenged as unconstitutional but the Court, in a historic decision, upheld the mandate. The brief was authored by Lambda Legal and
was joined by about 15 other HIV advocacy organizations. The brief outlines how health care reform with an individual mandate, as was enacted in Massachusetts, can improve health concerns for people living with HIV.

Hospital Discrimination

- Policy Changes on Hospital Visitation and Nondiscrimination
  In April 2010, after the culmination of a year-long process involving a coalition of LGBT groups organized by GLMA, Jackson Memorial Hospital announced significant policy changes that would result in better care for LGBT patients and families. The hospital put in place a nondiscrimination policy that includes sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, a patient's bill of rights that demonstrates the hospital's commitment to providing quality care for LGBT patients and a visitation policy that updates the definition of family to include same-sex partners and other people who may not be legally related to a patient.

GLMA became involved in this case after learning about Lambda Legal's lawsuit on behalf of Janice Langbehn and her children. While at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami, Langbehn claimed she and her children were subjected to verbal harassment and denied visitation with the children's mother and Janice's partner of 18 years, Lisa Pond, who subsequently died in the hospital while being treated.

President Obama subsequently learned about Janice’s story, which prompted him to issue a memo to US Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius asking her to issue regulations to ensure hospitals cannot deny visitation based on sexual orientation and gender identity, among other categories. GLMA and other LGBT organizations supported and helped shape these regulations, which became final in 2010 and, as a condition for participation in Medicare and Medicaid, apply to almost all hospitals in the nation.

In addition, the Joint Commission issued new patient-centered standards, which took effect in 2012, that included requirements for hospitals to adopt nondiscrimination policies that include sexual orientation and gender identity and equal hospital visitation policies. GLMA staff and board members served on the expert advisory panel that helped develop the new standards.

- Resources for Healthcare Settings
  GLMA has compiled a number of resources for hospitals and other healthcare settings to utilize, including:
  ✓ Guidelines for Care of LGBT Patients
  ✓ GLMA's Non-Discrimination Policies for Hospitals
  ✓ GLMA's Visitation Guidelines for Hospitals

- Healthcare Equality Index (HEI)
  The annual Healthcare Equality Index (HEI), which began as a joint collaboration between the Human Rights Campaign and GLMA in 2007, provides a quality indicator for healthcare related to LGBT people. The HEI is used by inpatient and outpatient healthcare organizations nationwide to strengthen the care they give LGBT patients—increasing quality, safety and satisfaction. GLMA remains an Endorsing Partner of this valuable tool.
Electronic Health Records

- Letter to CMS in Support of Including Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity in Electronic Health Records

In 2012, GLMA, joined by Lambda Legal, submitted a letter to HHS in support of the inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity data in electronic health records (EHR), primarily focusing on the importance of inclusion as “crucial to improving the quality and efficiency of the healthcare LGBT people receive, and to addressing the significant health disparities that the LGBT population experiences.” Later in 2012, the Institute of Medicine, in follow-up to its groundbreaking report on LGBT health, held a one-day workshop on inclusion in EHR, attended by GLMA staff and board members, and issued a report on this workshop in late 2012. In early 2013, GLMA joined a follow-up letter to HHS calling for inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity in EHR as part of Stage 3 of the definition of meaningful use of electronic health records.

Marriage Equality

- Coalition Advocacy

Building on GLMA’s longstanding work on marriage equality, in 2012, GLMA joined marriage equality coalitions in four states where residents voted on marriage ballot initiatives. Three of the states—Maine, Maryland and Washington—won the freedom to marry and the fourth—Minnesota—defeated a constitutional ban. GLMA continues to work with our partners in other states where marriage and partnership recognition initiatives take hold as the momentum for marriage equality builds.

- Same-Sex Marriage and Health

In 2008, GLMA published its landmark report, “Same-Sex Marriage and Health,” which summarizes research about how the health and well-being of LGBT people and their families is negatively affected by the denial of their right to marry. The report serves as a useful advocacy tool for health professionals who want to use their expertise to play a role in advocating for marriage equality in their own states or within their professional associations.

Patient Education & Referrals

GLMA provides resources to LGBT individuals and their families to help them receive the best possible care. Our resources include:

- GLMA’s Provider Directory

GLMA’s Provider Directory is a free online directory of almost 2,000 LGBT-friendly providers from across the US and Canada that helps LGBT patients connect with welcoming, culturally competent providers they can trust.

- Top Ten Health Concerns LGBT People Should Discuss with their Provider

LGBT people have unique health needs and concerns and, unfortunately, many healthcare providers don’t fully understand these issues. GLMA’s popular “Top Ten” factsheet series identifies and explains health issues that are most commonly of concern for LGBT people. These factsheets empower patients to take charge of their health and help them communicate even more effectively with their healthcare provider about the health issues that may apply to them.
HIV Discrimination

- **Amicus Brief in Supporting Job Applicant with HIV**

In July 2011, GLMA submitted a friend-of-the-court brief to the US Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta, presenting information about advancements in medical treatment of HIV. The brief was in support of a lawsuit in which an Atlanta police department candidate was denied employment because of his HIV status. In a unique turn of events, just one week after hearing oral arguments, the court ruled in favor of the police officer candidate, allowing his discrimination lawsuit against the Atlanta Police Department to move forward. The police department subsequently settled the lawsuit, agreeing to pay $250,000 to the officer candidate, who was represented by Lambda Legal.

GLMA's brief helped break down the myths and stereotypes about what it means to be a person living with HIV. By presenting the most up-to-date scientific information on the treatment of HIV, GLMA helped demonstrate that there was no medical reason for the city to suggest the plaintiff should have “no physical contact or involvement with individuals” and therefore deny him employment as a police officer.

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Cultural Competence

- **GLMA’s cultural competence webinar series**

GLMA’s free four-part webinar series, *Quality Healthcare for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender People*, is an education program open to anyone interested in learning about the healthcare needs of LGBT people. This cultural competence series explores the health concerns and healthcare of LGBT people. Facilitators review the social determinants that influence how LGBT people seek and receive care and the impact those influences have on health. The webinar series virtually follows the experience of LGBT people and those who care for them to better understand how they can create healthcare environments that are welcoming and can help minimize the existing disparities experienced by this population. The content delves into the clinical concerns specific to LGBT persons- both in terms of physical health and mental health- so healthcare providers and administrators can better understand how to create comprehensive systems of care that support positive outcomes and experiences for LGBT people and result in high quality healthcare. The webinar content has broad relevance to clinicians, administrators, researchers and academics alike.

- **Supporting Cultural Competency Requirements**

GLMA has been an advocate for state legislation requiring health professional to take continuing education courses in cultural competency to serve LGBT patients. In 2011, GLMA supported California’s SB 747, a bill which would have required this continuing education focus. The bill made it through the legislature but was ultimately vetoed. GLMA has worked on similar legislative issues in Oregon and Washington, and will focus efforts on additional states in the future.

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Health Profession Advocacy

GLMA is proud to work closely and forge strong relationships with health professional associations to improve the health of LGBT people and support LGBT professionals within the association. An example of these relationships can be seen in the work GLMA has done with the American Medical
From AMA leaders, including presidents, speaking at the GLMA Annual Conference to collaborating on joint projects, GLMA’s relationship and work with the AMA has helped lead to the formation of the AMA’s GLBT Advisory Committee, which has shown leadership in developing LGBT inclusive policies within the AMA. Other examples of GLMA’s health profession advocacy include:

- **Supporting AAPA Resolutions**
  At the request of the LGBT PA Caucus, GLMA submitted letters in support of two resolutions that were considered, and ultimately adopted, by the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) House of Delegates during its Annual Meeting in May, 2012. The policies relate to supporting HPV vaccination in boys and young men and also to supporting efforts to decriminalize HIV transmission.

- **Supporting AMA Resolutions**
  GLMA endorsed three LGBT-specific resolutions considered during the AMA’s House of Delegates meeting in 2012. The resolutions related to AMA: (1) support for marriage equality; (2) support for training healthcare providers “in cultural competency as well as in physical health needs” of LGBT patients; and (3) development of partnerships with other organizations to reduce suicide and address the health needs of LGBT youth.

**Health Profession Education**

- **GLMA-UCSF Leadership Intensive**
  In 2012, GLMA held a student and trainee Leadership Intensive—co-sponsored by the University of California – San Francisco—to bring together students and trainees from across a spectrum of educational environments to enhance their strength as LGBT advocates within their institutions. The Intensive addressed establishing and sustaining student organizations, advocating for reform and maintaining connections with national organizations and leaders. In addition to providing education programming, the GLMA Student/Trainee Leadership Intensive served as a forum within which attendees connected, created friendships and drew support and inspiration from each other.

**Continuing Education for Health Professionals**

- **GLMA’s Annual Conference**
  GLMA’s [Annual Conference](#) has provided a forum for the exchange of information about LGBT health and for LGBT health professionals for over 30 years. As the premier scientific conference devoted to LGBT health, the Annual Conference is the ideal place for clinicians, researchers, public health professionals and policymakers working in the area of LGBT health to share information about their work and to engage other leaders in the field to advance LGBT health equality.

  The mission of GLMA’s Annual Conference is to educate healthcare providers and health profession students about the unique health needs of LGBT patients and the unique challenges faced by LGBT healthcare providers and health profession students. GLMA’s CME/CE programming also aims to encourage and report on research into the health needs of LGBT people.
Topics presented at the GLMA Annual Conference include:

- Clinical health updates/primary care issues;
- Education and training;
- Health policy and public health programs;
- Emerging LGBT health issues;
- Health disparities research;
- Model programs; and
- Original research.

Promoting Research

- National Data Collection
  Data collection has long been a top priority for GLMA and fellow LGBT health advocates. The lack of inclusion of questions about sexual orientation and gender identity in national health surveys has frustrated efforts to get a true sense of the extent of health disparities affecting LGBT people. As a result of advocacy by GLMA and a coalition of LGBT organizations, in June 2011, Health & Human Services (HHS) announced that under provisions of the Affordable Care Act it would begin to incorporate questions on sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Health Interview Survey, which serves as the primary source of health information about the US population. The NHIS started including questions on sexual orientation in 2013, with plans to include gender identity at a later time.

- The Lesbian Health Fund
  The mission of the Lesbian Health Fund (LHF) is to improve the health of lesbians and other sexual minority women (SMW) and their families through research. LHF awards grants ranging from $500 - $10,000. Many applications are for small projects structured to provide pilot data for subsequent research. Founded in 1992, LHF has awarded nearly $800,000 to fund over 100 lesbian health research grants, and is the only US research fund dedicated solely to the unique health needs of lesbians and other sexual minority women.

- LGBT Health Digest
  GLMA’s popular LGBT Health Digest is a biweekly summary of salient LGBT health news and resources. The digest provides an overview of the LGBT health landscape by featuring the latest research, news media reports, program reports, national guidelines and state and federal policy announcements and recommendations. The digest has over 6,000 subscribers.

GLMA members and supporters make this work possible. Join us!

To learn more about our work, sign up for our mailing list.

GLMA’s Mission
GLMA’s mission is to ensure equality in healthcare for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals and healthcare providers.

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