HIV/AIDS and Gender-Based Violence:
What It Means for TransLatin@s

Transgender
Someone whose gender identity or expression is different from what was assigned at birth.

TransLatin@
Transgender individuals of Latin@ descent

The Issue
Transgender communities are among the groups at highest risk for HIV infection in the United States yet there is little research on the impact of HIV and intimate partner violence in TransLatin@ communities.1

HIV risk in transgender communities is affected by several public health problems, including...

- Inaccessible Quality Mental Healthcare
- Substance Abuse
- Violence and Victimization
- Discrimination
- Economic Hardship

Combined, these problems contribute to...
Higher rates of suicide and murder
Higher rates of drug and alcohol abuse
Higher rates of HIV infections
Higher rates of smoking

According to surveys...

Half of the participants were turned away by healthcare providers²
47% of Latin@ respondents were denied a job because of their transgender identity or gender non-conformity²
65% responded that they did not have any form of medical insurance³

Barriers that prevent TransLatin@s from living a better quality of life include...

Employment and housing discrimination
Uninformed and biased health care systems.
Anti-immigrant sentiments
Pervasive structural barriers of transphobia and racism
Lack of language access

1 in 12 TransLatin@ respondents were HIV positive in a national study²
54% TransLatin@ respondents in the same study were harassed²

The intersections of intimate partner violence (IPV) and HIV for TransLatin@s highlight the convergence of issues that require culturally effective responses and the need for ongoing collaboration among the anti-violence and HIV/AIDS fields.
Unfortunately, many local clinics and emergency rooms lack trained personnel to respectfully and ethically attend to the medical needs of many Trans Latina immigrants.

- A Trans Latina

At the clinic I feel discriminated for being a Trans Latina because I write my female name and they always call me as a male.

- A Trans Latina

I am a strong woman and I have surpassed many abuses. I will always be myself, even if society mistreats me.

- A Trans Latina

Recommendations

Provide more funding for community-driven research in family acceptance, access to health care, and public health problems affecting TransLatin@s.

Train organizations on the specific issues and needs of TransLatin@s and design culturally competent services and programs for TransLatin@s.

Prepare healthcare providers to be supportive and respectful of TransLatin@s’ experiences, self-determination, and identities.

Advance ongoing advocacy in the part of policy makers to advance the rights of TransLatin@s in all areas of life, including the ability to obtain documentation that reflect their gender identity.

Sources:

1. HIV in Transgender Communities: Syndemic Dynamics and a Need for Multicomponent Interventions (2011) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3075534/
