



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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UCSF TRANSGENDER HIV PREVENTION CENTER FUNDED TO PROVIDE PRIMARY CARE INFORMATION

The UCSF Center of Excellence for Transgender HIV Prevention (CoE) has received a grant from The California Endowment that will expand access to information and resources on providing culturally competent health care to transgender individuals.

“Many physicians are in dire need of the information that we will make available in order to provide the highest quality and most appropriate healthcare to transpeople. This grant will improve the quality of medical care received by transpeople in California and around the nation,” said UCSF CoE Director JoAnne Keatley, MSW.

“In addition, this grant brings the CoE into the healthcare arena and takes us closer to our vision of becoming a comprehensive center for transgender health,” added Keatley.

The CoE was launched in 2007 to provide leadership, capacity building, professional training, policy advocacy, research development, and resources to increase access to culturally competent HIV prevention services for transgender people in California.

“The establishment of the Center of Excellence in Transgender HIV Prevention was a historic event. This is the first time any state has funded a statewide effort to impact HIV among transpeople, the launching of the website provides access to the resources and information that providers need in order to deliver culturally competent, effective services,” said Keatley.

The transgender community is currently experiencing the highest rates of HIV in many parts of California. In Los Angeles, studies have shown that between one quarter and one half of trans women in the county are living with HIV. In San Francisco, the percentage of trans women living with HIV is estimated to be between 16 and 60 percent. In San Diego, 15 percent of trans women are estimated to be HIV positive. And in one study in Alameda County, it was reported that 58 percent of the African American trans women who participated in the study were living with HIV.

The CoE receives funding from the California Department of Public Health, Office of AIDS.

“Access to appropriate and sensitive primary health care is an important component of HIV prevention for transgender individuals,” said Michelle Roland, MD, division chief of the Office of AIDS. “The California Endowment’s grant to expand access to transgender primary care information is an important step forward in our on-going efforts.”

It is a collaborative partnership that combines the unique strengths and resources of a renowned training and capacity building institution, the UCSF Pacific AIDS Education and Training Center (PAETC), and an internationally recognized leader in HIV prevention research, the UCSF Center for AIDS Prevention Studies (CAPS).

“Through PAETC we provide training and educational activities related to the clinical management of HIV. With this new grant, we can assist in ensuring that clinical providers provide

appropriate care for transpeople in a welcoming environment,” said CoE principal investigator, Michael Reyes, MD, MPH, from UCSF PAETC.

The CoE provides a vital role in disseminating essential information and best practices among caregivers and community based organizations across the state. The CoE’s Community Advisory Board is drawn from community members throughout California and works to vigorously sustain the critical dialogue that needs to take place between a community facing a public health crisis and providers tasked with responding to that crisis, according to Reyes.

“The Center provides consultation and technical assistance to community-based organizations that provide HIV prevention services to transpeople and we wish to improve or expand those services. We help agencies stay informed of research findings as they implement their programs and we learn from providers and the community about directions that future research should take to improve HIV prevention outcomes among transpeople,” said Jae Sevelius, PhD, CoE co-principal investigator from the UCSF CAPS.

UCSF’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center helped develop the proposal for the CoE.

“Over the last decade, UC has been a trailblazer in transgender equality. UC was one of the very first universities to add ‘gender identity’ to its non-discrimination policy, and UC was one of the very first employers to offer transgender health coverage. This grant will enable UCSF to take another very positive step for transgender people—and to provide much-needed information to health care professionals,” said the LGBT Center’s director, Shane Snowdon.

UCSF’s PAETC and CAPS are affiliated with the AIDS Research Institute (ARI) at UCSF. UCSF ARI houses hundreds of scientists and dozens of programs throughout UCSF and affiliated labs and institutions, making ARI one of the largest AIDS research entities in the world.

UCSF is a leading university dedicated to defining health worldwide through advanced biomedical research, graduate level education in the life sciences and health professions and excellence in patient care.

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