

TEN KEY POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN WORKING WITH GAY MEN WHO ARE HIV POSITIVE

Section E



- 1. CONFIDENTIALITY IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE WHEN WORKING WITH THIS POPULATION BECAUSE OF THE STIGMA ATTACHED BY SOCIETY AND THE POSSIBILITY OF DISCRIMINATION THAT COULD OCCUR AT THEIR JOBS AND IN THE COMMUNITY**
- 2. THE TERMS “GAY” AND “QUEER” CAN HAVE BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS DEPENDING ON THE USAGE**
- 3. BE AWARE OF HETEROSEXUAL BIAS AT THE INDIVIDUAL, GROUP, AND INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL WHEN ENCOUNTERING THIS POPULATION IN THE CLINICAL SETTING**
- 4. YOU HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING IF THE PERSON SITTING ACROSS FROM YOU IS HOMOSEXUAL SO DO NOT MAKE ASSUMPTIONS**
- 5. REMEMBER THE DIGNITY AND WORTH OF THE PERSON-TREAT EACH PERSON WITH RESPECT AND SENSITIVITY**
- 6. JUST BECAUSE THEY ARE LABELED “GAY” DOESN’T MEAN THAT THEY HAVE NOT HAD INTERCOURSE WITH SOMEONE OF THE OPPOSITE SEX. MANY GAY MEN WERE PREVIOUSLY MARRIED AND MAY HAVE CHILDREN FROM THAT UNION**
- 7. SOME CULTURES SUCH AS CERTAIN PACIFIC ISLANDERS AND NATIVE AMERICAN ZUNI DO NOT VIEW HOMOSEXUAL BEHAVIOR AS DEVIANT BUT LATINO, ASIAN, AND AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURES HAVE STRONG GENDER ROLES FOR BOTH MALE AND FEMALE MAKING “COMING OUT” EXTREMELY HARD**
- 8. THERE IS MORE TO THEM THAN THEIR SEXUAL PREFERENCE OR THEIR DISEASE- WE ARE ALL COMPLEX AND UNIQUE**
- 9. KNOW THE CLIENT’S SOCIAL SUPPORT NETWORK— MANY GAY MEN DO NOT HAVE CLOSE FAMILY TIES AND RELY ON PARTNERS, FRIENDS, AND OTHERS FOR HELP**
- 10. FORMS AT MANY AGENCIES, HOSPITALS, SCHOOLS, ETC ARE BIASED -ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE THAT INCLUDES SPACES FOR OTHER CHOICES**

TEN THINGS TO AVOID WHEN WORKING WITH GAY MEN WHO ARE HIV POSITIVE

Section F

- 1. DO NOT AVOID TOUCHING THE CLIENT-SHAKE HANDS IN GREETING**
- 2. BEING HIV POSITIVE IS NO LONGER A DEATH SENTENCE SO DON'T TREAT THEM AS IF THEY ARE TERMINALLY ILL BUT DO INQUIRE ABOUT THEIR HEALTH**
- 3. BE AWARE OF YOUR OWN BIAS AND REFER CLIENTS IF YOU CAN NOT WORK WITH THEM BUT EXPLAIN THE REASON FOR THE REFERRAL**
- 4. YOU HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING IF THE PERSON SITTING ACROSS FROM YOU IS HOMOSEXUAL SO DO NOT MAKE ASSUMPTIONS JUST BECAUSE THEY ARE HIV POSITIVE OR HAVE AIDS**
- 5. AVOID LABELS-DON'T ASSUME THEY ALL WANT TO BE CALLED "GAY" OR HOMOSEXUAL**
- 6. DON'T BELIEVE THE STEREOTYPES IN THE MEDIA**
- 7. DON'T MAKE JOKES ABOUT THEIR LIFESTYLES-THEY ARE NOT ALL COMEDIANS LIKE THE CHARACTERS ON WILL AND GRACE**
- 8. THEY ARE NOT ALL SPOKESPERSONS FOR THEIR CULTURE**
- 9. DON'T ASSUME BECAUSE THEY ARE GAY THAT THEY ARE NOT SPIRITUAL-MAINSTREAM RELIGION MAY HAVE ABANDONED THEM BUT MANY GAY MEN STILL HAVE THEIR RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL BELIEFS**
- 10. DON'T ASSUME THAT THEY ALL ENGAGE IN RISKY SEXUAL BEHAVIORS MANY ARE IN LOVING LONG TERM RELATIONSHIPS**