

MHSA Advisory Member Input
LGBTQ Community Needs
July 1, 2016

MHSA Advisory Committee Members
Gail Theller and Brian Slattery

Several concerns were expressed regarding the lack of support for the LGBTQ and Trans-sexual Community of Marin. These included:

- The only LGBTQ agency is Spahr Center, which also provides AIDS testing and a needle exchange. These dual purpose and identity as an AIDS Center may create a barrier to accessing support for many in the LGBTQ Community.
- Bullying in schools aimed toward, LGBTQ youth or perceived LGBTQ youth is a problem in Marin schools.
- There are not enough supports for LGBTQ youth in Marin, and suicide and suicide attempts are a target for further investigation and intervention.
- Concerns were expressed about the upcoming Innovation Proposal not adequately targeting LGBTQ Youth.
- There is not a safe haven for the LGBTQ Community to gather for support. There is a lack of cohesion in the community to adequately mobilize the energies of this community.
- Data is not collected on the number of LGBTQ individuals, which are served in Marin Behavioral Health and Recovery Services. Without this data it is not possible to know if we are serving this population equitably.
- There are not specific support groups among those chronically and persistently mentally ill who are LGBTQ population served in our system of care.
- Seniors, which are sexual minorities are often isolated and at risk of depression.

Recommendations:

- Contact Mary Jane Burke at the Marin County Office of Education to see if it would be possible to set up focus groups with members of the Gay/Straight Alliance at schools to learn more about their experiences and needs for support.
- Begin collecting LGBTQ status with registration on individuals we serve from the community and get baseline data and set targets for equitable service provision.
- Conduct a needs assessment focusing on the range of available services, unmet needs and existing resources.