



Transgender Health

Celebrating Our First Issue!

By Elaine Martin

Welcome to the first issue of Transgender Health. This newsletter is one component of the Virginia Transgender Health Initiative to improve the lives and health of transgender persons through a combination of information, resource sharing, health planning and research. On behalf of the Virginia Department of Health, Division of HIV, STD, and Pharmacy Services, I am excited to be part of such an historic venture to reach out to those individuals who have not been included in our health services, prevention or planning processes in Virginia. In collaboration with the Virginia Commonwealth University

Survey and Evaluation Research Laboratory, the Virginia HIV Community Planning Committee, transgender individuals and community-based organizations, we hope to determine the HIV prevention and care needs as well as other pressing health issues of the transgender community and help translate those needs into programs and action. A Transgender Task Force has been organized to carry out the goals of the Transgender Health Initiative.

Our first success under this initiative was a two-day workshop for HIV prevention and care providers in

January 2004 to educate them about the health related needs of transgender persons and to improve their capacity to provide services in a nonjudgmental, competent and sensitive way. This was followed by series of focus groups. Information from these groups will be used to develop effective programs and guide further research such as individual surveys.

We would like to invite additional participation on the Transgender Taskforce. If you are interested, please contact Cat Hulburt at (804) 864-8005 or Catherine.Hulburt@vdh.virginia.gov

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The Virginia Transgender Taskforce NEEDS YOU!

Come join us at the next meeting of the Transgender Taskforce The task force provides consultation for the Transgender Health Initiative which includes cultural competency training, research and program development.

We encourage all transgender individuals from across the Commonwealth to participate!

If you would like to become a member of the Transgender Task Force, please call Cat Hulburt at 864-8005 or e-mail

Catherine.Hulburt@vdh.virginia.gov.

A Round of Applause Please...

In March 2004, the Survey and Evaluation Research Laboratory (SERL) began the Transgender Health Initiative with Phase 2 Transgender Focus Groups. Eight groups have been conducted all over Virginia! We would like to take a moment and

thank the 48 participants who took a few hours to provide valuable information for the study.

Transcripts from those focus groups are being analyzed by the SERL study team and the report will be ready soon.

Preliminary results were presented at the American Psychological Association Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii July 30th. Another presentation of the results is scheduled for the American Public Health Association in November 2004.

**Transgender Health Initiative
Contact Information**



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**Building healthy
transgender communities**

The Virginia HIV Community Planning Committee identified transgender persons in Virginia as a target population. To identify the health related needs of transgender persons, focus was turned to conducting research, increasing understanding and knowledge of transgender communities in Virginia and developing transgender sensitive and specific HIV interventions and health care. From this, the Transgender Health Initiative was born with leadership from the Transgender Task Force (comprised of CPG members, transgender individuals, community members and researchers). The goals of the Task Force are to:

- 1) Inform effective training to promote culturally competent health care to the transgender communities;
- 2) Develop a statewide resource guide to be distributed across the state to facilitate increased access to care for Transgender individuals;
- 3) Develop and implement HIV interventions to the transgender community.



**FACE IT: We Can't Do This Without YOU!
This is How YOU Can Participate!**

Let's face it, the only way we can build stronger, healthier transgender communities around the Commonwealth of Virginia is for all of us to work together! This column will announce different ways in which you can participate in the Transgender Health Initiative, taking Virginia by storm!

Helping Hands #1: Statewide Transgender Resource Guide

The resource guide will list support groups, services, health care providers, mental health providers, health education services and other important resources that are "transgender friendly." In order to do this, we need your help! Please send us the names and addresses of the services you use

and that have been most helpful to you. All information can be sent to Catherine.Hulburt@vdh.virginia.gov.

Helping Hands #2: Joining the Transgender Health Task Force

The Taskforce is looking for transgender individuals wanting to participate. Meetings are held once a month in Richmond, Virginia. Don't have transportation? The distance is too far? That's ok! If you want to be an active member of the Taskforce, we can arrange for you to call in and participate using a 1-800 number. Call Cat Hulburt for more information (804) 864-8005 or

Catherine.Hulburt@vdh.virginia.gov .



Helping Hands #3: Become Part of the Transgender Research Network

In Fall 2004, the SERL will conduct a statewide transgender survey. We need as many transgender people to fill it out as possible! If you would like to help get the word out about this important survey of would like more information, please contact Mert Rives 804-828-8813 or mrives@mail1.vcu.edu