Training Health Care Providers to Improve the Wellness of Black Gay Men

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Half of black gay men will contract HIV in their lifetime, if current diagnosis rates continue. To address this problem, a new online training platform called His Health aims to help health care providers unlearn implicit bias and to better offer quality care to black men who have sex with men (MSM).

The website, HisHealth.org, has been launched by the National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors, according to a NASTAD press release, and is a partnership with the Health Resources Services Administration's HIV/AIDS Bureau (HRSA/HAB). His Health also included the input of black gay men, providers, public health professionals, federal health agencies, LGBT advocates and community stakeholders.

As the press release explains, HisHealth.org is a training tool that:

- Provides accredited and expert-led continuing education courses that count toward the credits medical professionals already need to maintain their medical licensure
- Offers portraits of innovative models of care including Project Silk, a CDC funded, Pittsburgh-based recreational safe space and sexual health center rooted in house ball culture, and Connecting Resources for Urban Sexual Health, a sexual health clinic created by and for LGBTQ youth of color; and
- Gives easy access to evidence-based resources to support the delivery of high quality, culturally affirming health care services for Black men who have sex with men.

"There is a lot of discussion right now about implicit bias and police brutality in the U.S.—but the truth is, this is a huge challenge for health care providers as well," said Omoro Omoighe, NASTAD's associate director of health equity and health care access, in the press release. "We know doctors and nurses desperately wish to offer culturally affirming health care that is stigma-free to black LGBT patients. With the advent of His Health, they now have the tools necessary to tackle implicit bias and feel more confident in their ability to uplift the standard of care for black

gay men while maintaining their licensure to practice medicine.”

The His Health website states that patient-provider relationships must recognize the following:

- Every provider wants to give their patients the best care, some may not know where to start.
- Patients and practitioners are sometimes uncomfortable because they don’t understand one another’s needs.
- Good health care for black gay men includes partnerships with health care providers rooted in trust, respect and humility.
- When coupled with good clinical practices, cultural competency results in better patient engagement and retention for black gay men.

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