

LGBTQ+

Veterans:

U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Serves

All Who

Served!

LGBT Veteran Care Coordinator
Michele Mick, PhD
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Veterans Health Education Committee

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Commitment to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBTQ+) Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to addressing the health needs of LGBTQ+ Veterans and reducing health disparities for them and members of other vulnerable communities.



The South Texas Veterans Health Care System (STVHCS) participates annually in the **Human Rights Campaign's Healthcare Equality Index** survey to make public its commitment to LGBTQ+ Veterans and their families. Like many VA hospitals across the country, **STVHCS is recognized as a leader in LGBT healthcare equality** for its non-discrimination policies and commitment to training staff in LGBT patient-centered care.

VA defines "family" as anyone a Veteran identifies as family. This may include persons not legally related to the Veteran. Veterans and their family members will not be discriminated against in VA facilities for any reason, including sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. Also, Veterans may designate any persons they choose as their surrogate healthcare decision makers for times when they might become unable to make decisions for themselves.



No Need to Watch Your Pronouns

VA has never had a "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. You do not have to hide who you are, what you do, or whom you love. You do not have to be careful about using gender-neutral pronouns when speaking with your medical providers. You also may ask VA staff to use your preferred name and gender-affirming pronouns.

Transgender Care

Your VA primary care team can help arrange specialized transgender services. Although prohibited by Congress from providing gender-confirming surgeries, VA offers otherwise complete transgender medical/mental health care including:

- Gender-affirming hormone therapy
- Voice retraining therapy
- Gender-confirming pre/post operative care
- Anatomy-based exams and cancer screenings (e.g., breast, pelvic, prostate) .

EXPERIENCED SUPPORT STAFF:

If you need assistance—or have questions, concerns, suggestions, or compliments—please contact:

LGBT Veteran Care Coordinator

Michele Mick, PhD

(210) 617-5300 Ext. 16645

Transgender Primary Care Service Navigator

Andrea Shomo, LMSW

(210) 617-5300 Ext. 65095

Gender Diversity Mental Health Navigator

Alison Bess PhD

(210) 617-5300 Ext. 19340

PrEP Coordinator

Quintin Tafoya, PharmD

(210) 617-5300 Ext. 13070/17200

STVHCS Patient Advocates

(210) 949-3822

Go to **VETS.gov** for more information or use a smart phone “QR” app to scan the codes below.



VETS.gov - VA healthcare, educational, employment, and disability benefits



VA Patient Care Services for LGBTQ+ Veterans
<https://www.patientcare.va.gov/LGBT/>



STVHCS LGBTQ+ Veterans webpage (local)
<https://www.southtexas.va.gov/services/lgbt/index.asp>

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LGBTQ+ Veteran Online Resources


[VA does not endorse the information, products, or services provided by these organizations.]

- American Veterans for Equal Rights
(VA-recognized LGBT Veteran Service Organization.)
 - Gay Military Signal
 - American Military Partner Association
 - Service Academy Gay and Lesbian Alumni Network (links to branch-specific support)
 - The Palm Center (Gender, Sexuality, & Military)
 - OUTServe / Servicemembers Legal Defense Network
 - Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE)
 - National Center for Lesbian Rights
 - National Black (LGBT) Justice Coalition
 - Transgender American Veterans Association
 - National Center for Transgender Equality
 - Transgender Law Center
- Local:**
- Pride Center San Antonio —Resource Page
 - Out In SA (online magazine)
 - San Antonio Gender Association (SAGA)



LET'S TALK!
Sexual orientation and gender identity matter in health care.

LGBT Health Awareness Month
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Program
Office of Primary Care Services
LGBTProgram@va.gov

VA  U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Primary Care Services

**VA has STD/HIV care,
including PrEP!**

Your VA healthcare team can help you address known health risks specific to your sexual orientation and gender identity. Find VA Health Fact Sheets for Lesbian & Bisexual Women, Gay & Bisexual Men, Transgender Women, and Transgender Men on the VA LGBT Program webpage (<https://www.patientcare.va.gov/LGBT/>).

Find more LGBT-specific health information from the following sources.



Centers for Disease Control (CDC)



LGBT Healthlink Network
for Health Equity