Inclusive Emergency Planning & Response

Considerations for the LGBTQ+ Community in your organization or community’s emergency planning & disaster response

March 23, 2022
Leighton Jones, ALM, CEM.

MARYLAND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NETWORK
Helping Maryland’s Most Vulnerable
The Maryland-National Capital Homecare Association (MNCHA) is the trade association for the homecare sector in Maryland. We represent both non-profit and for-profit health care providers in Maryland and D.C. including Medicare-certified Home Health Agencies, Private Duty agencies and registries, and Durable Medical Equipment businesses.

Executive Director: Caitlin Houck

Questions: Email Caitlin at chouck@mncha.org

Website: www.mncha.org
The Maryland National Capital Homecare Association (MNCHA) and the Maryland Department of Health Office of Preparedness and Response (MDH OP&R) partner to better enable homecare providers and their patients to be prepared in the case of an emergency.

Our partnership created the Maryland Emergency Preparedness Network (MD EPN) which disseminates free, important, and timely information before, during, and after an emergency. We encourage you to check out our Fact Sheets and webinars. The EPN’s goal is to build health resilience among one of Maryland’s most vulnerable populations, the homebound.

This event is brought to you by the Maryland Department of Health Office of Preparedness & Response through the Maryland-National Capital Homecare Association (MNCHA), & Direct Relief.

Website: www.mdemergencyprepnetwork.org
Questions: Email Associate Director Char McCready at info@mdemergencyprepnetwork.org
About Our Speaker

Leighton is the Director of Emergency Response for Direct Relief, an international humanitarian organization based in Santa Barbara, CA.

Prior to joining Direct Relief Leighton led the Emergency Preparedness Research, Evaluation & Practice (EPREP) Program at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in Boston, which serves as Harvard’s Center for public health and healthcare preparedness.

Leighton’s background is in non-profit administration and emergency management having previously worked as the Chief Program Officer for the American Red Cross of Massachusetts and in various leadership positions for The American Red Cross and The Salvation Army in New York. He has deployed in response to numerous disasters across the United States including hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, fires, and aviation disasters. Leighton also served at Ground Zero in Manhattan immediately following the September 11th attacks and led the Red Cross response to the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombings.

Leighton is a graduate of the University of Plymouth (UK) and Harvard University. He is a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM) with the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) and conducts trainings nationally on diversity, equity and inclusion in emergency planning and response.

Leighton Jones
(he, him)

www.directrelief.org
Webinar Structure

- Overview of the LGBTQ+ Community
- Demographics & statistics level-setting
- Definitions
- Emergency planning considerations
- Emergency response considerations
- Resources

**Action Points**

‘Action Points’
Suggestions to consider in your planning and response

**Pause Point**

‘Pause Point’
Briefly pause to digest and take questions
Webinar Ground Rules

Note:
• Be open to learning from the experience of others.
• Be empathetic.
• No one has all the answers.
• Everyone has bias and prejudice.
• Assume the best of people.

“Do the best you can until you know better.
Then when you know better, do better.”
Maya Angelou
“Disasters don’t discriminate, but sometimes people do”

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
Whole Community Disaster Planning

A planning approach
“by which residents, emergency management practitioners, organizational and community leaders, and government officials can collectively understand and assess the needs of their respective communities and determine the best ways to organize and strengthen their assets, capacities, and interests.”

- FEMA
LGBTQ+ Community

• The LGBTQ+ Community is diverse.
• Everyone is unique.
• There are no set answers that apply to every individual.

• Lesbian
• Gay
• Bisexual
• Transgender
• Intersex
• Gender Non-Conforming

• Non Binary
• Gender Fluid
• Queer
• Questioning
• Asexual
• +
4.5% total US population identify as LGBTQ+
13,042,000 people

25% LGBTQ+ people have income <$25k
LGBTQ+ Community

Action Points

• Use ‘Orientation’ rather than ‘Preference’. Orientation & identity are not a choice

• It's about humanitarianism and compassion not politics

• If your organization doesn’t already have an inclusion statement, think about drafting one, and then display it prominently
LGBTQ+ History

1969 ~ Stonewall Riots
2011 ~ Don’t ask don’t tell repealed
2004 ~ Massachusetts allows same-sex marriage
2013 ~ US vs Windsor Supreme Court Ruling
   Defense of Marriage Act overturned
2015 ~ Obergefell vs Hodges Supreme Court Ruling
   Federal marriage equality
2020 ~ Supreme Court ruling
   LGBTQ+ equal protection under 1964 Civil Rights Act
Now ~ Texas Governor’s letter
   Defining gender-affirming medical care as child abuse
   ~ Florida Parental Rights in Education Bill
      Prohibits classroom discussion of sexual orientation or gender identity
LGBTQ+ Youth

• 42% say where they live is not accepting of LGBTQ+ people
• 90% have been harassed or assaulted in the last year
• 40% of homeless youth are LGBTQ+
• 5x more likely to attempt suicide
• 40% of trans youth attempt suicide

LGBTQ+ Seniors

• LGBTQ+ Senior Population expected to double by 2030
• 21% do not tell their doctor their orientation
• 2x more likely to live alone
• 4x less likely to have children

2019: Trevor Project
2021: Sage USA: National Resource Center on LGBT Aging
LGBTQ+ Families with Children

- 48% of LGBTQ+ women are raising children
- 20% of LGBTQ+ men are raising children

- States with the highest percentage of LGBTQ+ raising children: Mississippi (26%), Wyoming (25%), Alaska (23%)

- LGBTQ+ individuals are 6x more likely to be foster parents

- Higher likelihood of poverty:
  - Single parent LGBTQ+ families are 3x more likely to be in poverty (than other single parent families)
LGBTQ+ Transgender Community

• 40% have attempted suicide
  • 9x the rate of the general population

• 29% in poverty (12% US population)

• 47% have experienced sexual assault

• Unemployment is 3x the general population

• 68% don’t have an identification with the name and gender they prefer

2015 Transgender Survey
LGBTQ+ Transgender Community

Identity Document
Gender Changes
Laws & Policies

LGBTQ+ Intersectionality

“There is no such thing as a single issue struggle because we do not live single issue lives” - Audre Lorde

34% of black trans women have an income <$10k per year

2021: 57 murders of trans people in the US – majority were trans POC. (under reported)

47% of POC LGBTQ+ adults were low income (13% US)

LGBTQ+ political power is weighted towards white, gay, men

International/cultural differences in LGBTQ+ acceptance

2018 The Williams Institute UCLA School of Law
Pause Point
LGBTQ+ Family Relationships

Definition of Household
1988 Stafford Act (Federal Disaster Assistance Act)

“one or two cohabitating individuals and the dependent children of either individual, regardless of biological relation or adoptive relationship, for whom an individual is currently acting as the primary caregiver.”

*However there is often an assumption of heteronormativity during disaster response*
LGBTQ+ Family Relationships

• Despite marriage equality - not everyone chooses to marry

• Wide range of terminology used: Partners, spouses, husbands/wives, girlfriends/boyfriends, roommates, friends, etc. May or may not use same last name

• Different perception of anniversaries

• Many LGBTQ+ people may have ‘chosen families’

• Extended family may not know, or recognize LGBTQ+ relationships
LGBTQ+ Families

**Action Points**

- Respect all relationships and family structures
- Avoid asking too many intrusive questions about their relationship
- Honor the importance of ‘chosen family members’
- Try asking, “Who do you consider family?”
LGBTQ+ Families

Action Points

• Use gender-neutral language on family registration forms. For example, parent/guardian in place of mother/father and partner/spouse in place of husband/wife

• Honor family units and the relationship status of all families when providing services

• Be careful not to ‘out’ someone to their extended family
Pause Point
LGBTQ+ Transgender Community

• Gender vs Sex: Sex is biological. Gender refers to socially constructed norms, roles and relationships

• Transgender: People whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex that they were assigned at birth

• A transgender identity is not dependent upon physical appearance or medical procedures

• Being transgender does not imply any sexual orientation

• Gender Identity: Internal. Sense of self

• Gender Expression: External. How you express your gender

2019 GLAAD Transgender FAQs
LGBTQ+ Transgender Community

www.itpronouncedmetrosexual.com
Transgender woman: identifies as a woman, but was not assigned this gender/sex at birth

Transgender man: identifies as a man, but was not assigned this gender/sex at birth

FTM/MTF: relatively outdated terms to refer to a “female to male” “male to female” transgender people

Non-Binary: do not identify solely as a man or a woman. They may identify as both, neither, or as a gender somewhere in-between

Cisgender: describes a person whose gender identity and sex assigned at birth are the same
LGBTQ+ Gender & Pronouns

- He/Him/His
- She/Her/Hers
- They/Them/Thiers

- Don’t assume
- Ask
- Apologize if you mis-gender

**Mis-Gender:** Being labeled by others as a gender other than one that a person identifies with

**Dead-naming:** Referring to a transgender or non-binary person by a name they used prior to transitioning, such as their birth name
LGBTQ+ Gender & Pronouns

Action Points

• Normalize asking for pronouns for everyone. Suggestion: Can you clarify your name, your DOB and your pronouns?

• Consider eliminating gender questions from registration forms, if knowing someone’s gender is not needed to offer assistance. Registration forms give a first impression.

• If you do need to include non-binary options. Avoid using “other” as a gender option. A write-in option is a great idea.
LGBTQ+ Gender & Pronouns

**Action Points**

- Introduce yourself using your pronouns and add them to your name badge, email signature, etc

- Don’t assume gender, orientation or relationship

- Under ‘Name’ on your registration form, add ’Legal Name, if different’

- Be aware, and understanding, that many transgender people do not have id that matches their gender identity
LGBTQ+ Gender & Pronouns

Action Points

• Avoid using gendered greetings such as “sir”, “ma’am”, or “Ladies & Gentlemen” to be more inclusive.

• Ask how you can best offer assistance, and how you can make them feel welcome and safe.
Pause Point
Disaster Shelter Planning

Sharli-e Dominique Case Study: A trans woman arrested for taking a shower in the women’s bathroom at a shelter at Texas A&M University following hurricane Katrina. She spent five days in jail for criminal trespass.

Transgender evacuee survives all obstacles

KATRINA’S AFTERMATH
Vicks remains positive in spite of shelter arrest

By Lisa Gray  Published 5:30 am CDT, Thursday, September 15, 2005
Arponio Vicks was born male, but in January, the 20-year-old became, she says, she started living as a woman.

In New Orleans, this was no big deal.
Disaster Shelter Planning

**Action Points**

- Consider temporarily replacing bathroom signage in shelter facilities to provide gender-neutral bathroom options. In some states and municipalities it is legally required to permanently sign all single-stall bathrooms as gender-neutral.

- Create a shower sign-up schedule for everyone. This provides everyone greater privacy.

- Never create separate and unequal accommodations for transgender shelter residents.
Disaster Shelter Planning

Action Points

• Provide private areas for changing of clothing that are gender-neutral and available for all to use

• Ensure that staff and volunteers actively monitor the shelter through the day and night. This helps to provide a safe environment, free from harassment or violence

• Include non-binary gender options on registrations forms. Avoid using “other” as a gender option. Consider using ‘non-binary’ or an open ‘write-in’ field
Disaster Shelter Planning

**Action Points**

- Ensure access to appropriate healthcare following a disaster, including access to medication.
- Post a statement of inclusion in a prominent place in your shelter.
Pause Point
LGBTQ+ Community Spaces

• LGBTQ+ Community gathering places are important
  • Community centers, LGBTQ+ business, gay coffee shops, welcoming faith communities, bars and nightclubs, etc

• LGBTQ+ community places may have been impacted by the disaster
  • After Katrina 4 out of 7 LGBTQ+ community providers closed and never reopened

• Reliance upon online connections for community
LGBTQ+ Community Spaces

Action Points

- Include LGBTQ+ Community organizations and spaces in your community response and recovery priorities

- Ensure that mental health services provided after a disaster are culturally competent
Other LGBTQ+ Response Considerations

- **Re-closeting**: When LGBTQ+ people hide their orientation and/or gender identity upon entering an unfamiliar, uncomfortable or threatening environment.

- **Immigration considerations**: Disasters often exacerbate immigration challenges.

- **Disaster fatalities**: potential extended family complications, relationship and inheritance concerns.
Other LGBTQ+ Response Considerations

INDEPENDENT
Gay people to blame for Hurricane Harvey, say evangelical Christian leaders

REUTERS
Religious figures blame LGBT+ people for coronavirus

guardian
Superstorm Sandy and many more disasters that have been the gay community

Newsweek
WORLD
Russian Orthodox Church Leader Blames Invasion on Ukraine's 'Gay Pride'
Other LGBTQ+ Response Considerations

• The LGBTQ+ Community are frequently blamed for the disaster

• Distrust of the American Red Cross

• Distrust of some faith communities who are often central to the disaster response and recovery
Other LGBTQ+ Response Considerations

**Action Points**

- Acknowledge past negative experiences and distrust with some responding organizations and reassure that you are here to support

- Invite LGBTQ+ community leaders and groups into the emergency planning process to assist in developing inclusive practices and policies.

- Ask LGBTQ+ community members to participate in community disaster exercises and drills
Other LGBTQ+ Response Considerations

Action Points

• Recruit LGBTQ+ volunteers into local volunteer disaster response groups

• Consider including LGBTQ+ cultural competency training for your staff and/or volunteers

• Offer personal preparedness education sessions to LGBTQ+ Community groups
LGBTQ+ Personal Preparedness

“Part of being LGBT is being prepared. You cannot assume your family, relationship and/or gender identity will be recognized or understood.”

- Legal and identification documents
- Partner is listed on insurance
- Partner is emergency contact
- Additional go-kit considerations
  - Grooming, packing, binding supplies.
LGBTQ+ Personal Preparedness

MD EPN Online Spring 2022 Webinar:
Disaster Preparedness for the LGBTQ+ Community

For Community Members & MD EPN Community

Wednesday, March 30, 2022, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. EDT

Resources

Affirmative Care for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People: Best Practices for Front-line Health Care Staff

WORKING COMMUNITY WITH THE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER

PROJECT HEALTH

TRANSLINE

Chase Brexton Health Care
Q&A

Survey
Contact

Leighton Jones, ALM, CEM
leightongjones@gmail.com
www.linkedin.com/in/leightongjones

Maryland Emergency Preparedness Network
Caitlin Houck, Executive Director, MNCHA
chouck@mncha.org

Char McCready, Associate Director, MD EPN
info@mdemergencyprepnetwork.org
www.mdemergencyprepnetwork.org
LGBTQ+ Personal Preparedness

MD EPN Online Spring 2022 Webinar:
Disaster Preparedness for the LGBTQ+ Community
For Community Members & MD EPN Community
Wednesday, March 30, 2022, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. EDT
References


• *Be a Ready Congregation: LGBT Needs & Disaster.* National Disaster Interfaiths Network. New York, NY.


• *LGBT Data & Demographics. 2019.* [https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu](https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu) UCLA School of Law Williams Institute. Los Angeles, CA.
References


