

Testimonials from HEI 2013 Leaders in LGBT Healthcare Equality

On the pages that follow, 21 HEI 2013 Leaders in LGBT Healthcare Equality reflect on what the HEI has meant to their organizations. In all, 464 healthcare facilities were awarded Equality Leader status in the HEI 2013 because they meet all of the Core Four criteria for LGBT patient-centered care. For a complete list of HEI 2013 Leaders, see page 52.

“Just after Greenville Health System was ranked as a Leader in the HEI for the first time, I received an email from someone who lived out of state, but had parents who lived in our service area. **He said he had always been fearful that he or his partner would get sick while visiting and be forced to seek care at a hospital that might discriminate against them. After seeing our ranking as a Leader on the HEI, he said he no longer carried that fear.**

That email reaffirmed my commitment to participating in the HEI every year and striving to do better. It demonstrated why it is so critically important that healthcare organizations commit to the journey of LGBT patient-centered care.”

Kinneil Coltman, DHA
Director, Diversity & Language Services
Greenville Health System
Greenville, SC



“Earning the status as a Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality from the HEI over the past three years has been a source of pride for OHSU, Oregon’s only public academic health and science university. **Our partnership with HEI has guided us in continuous improvement in our policies, practices and services to our LGBT patients, employees, students and community.** In 2012, our university became the largest employer in Oregon to ensure transgender-inclusive healthcare for employees and their dependents. We provide ongoing learning opportunities for staff, students and faculty to reinforce best practices in LGBT patient-focused care.”

Norwood Knight-Richardson, MD, MA, MBA
Senior Vice President,
Chief Administrative Officer
& Chief Diversity Officer
Oregon Health & Science University
Portland, OR



“We are grateful to have this tool to navigate through the ongoing process of equitable care for our LGBTQ community. Becoming an HEI Leader has required a true collaborative effort across departments, disciplines and facilities. Senior leaders listened and then worked with those of us with direct patient contact, helping us to ‘hardwire’ equitable care for our LGBTQ patients and families. **The HEI ties in well with HealthEast’s vision of optimal health and well-being for our patients, our communities and ourselves.**”

Laurie Kilfoy, MSN(R), RN
Registered Nurse, Telemetry
St. John’s Hospital
HealthEast Care System, St. Paul, MN



“Billings Clinic is deeply committed to exceeding the expectations of every patient and guest. **This mission includes creating an environment that demonstrates compassion, dignity and respect with every interaction we have with each other and with our patients.** Participating in the HEI demonstrated that we were hitting the mark. We’re proud to be a Leader, and equally excited to be able to identify additional ways that we can continue to improve the Patient Family experience for every individual.”

Carlos Arce
Chief Learning Officer
Billings Clinic
Billings, MT

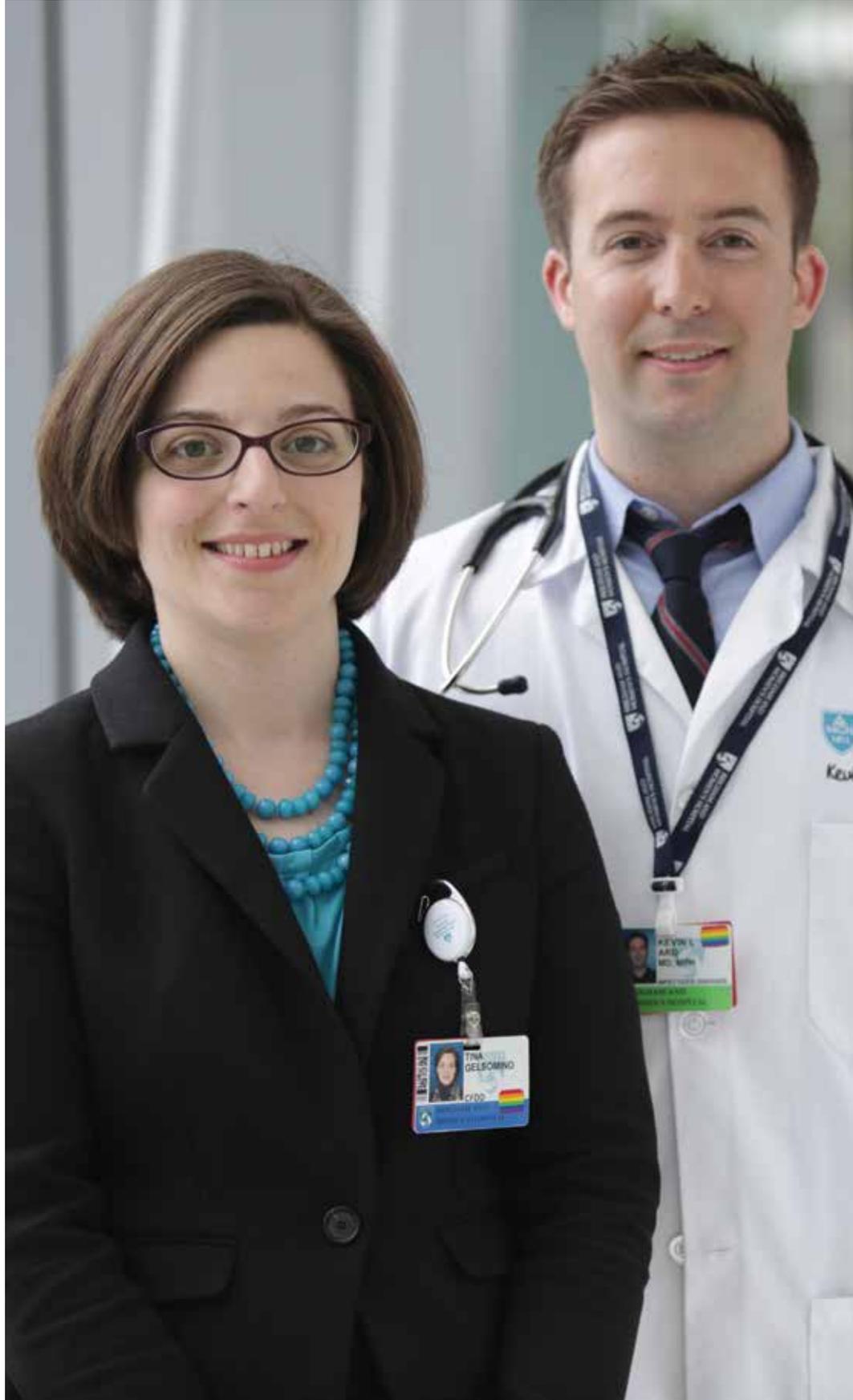


“We at Brigham and Women’s Hospital and Brigham and Women’s Faulkner Hospital are honored to take part in the HEI each year. **We are proud of the people who work every day to create and sustain a safe, supportive and affirming environment for all members of the LGBT community.** We thank HRC for its efforts in preparing this index and the opportunity it provides us all to renew and strengthen our commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion of the LGBT community across our organizations.”

Tina Gelsomino, MSW, LCSW
Administrative Director,
Office for Women’s Careers,
Center for Faculty Development
and Diversity

Kevin Ard, MD, MPH
Clinical & Research Fellow
in Infectious Diseases

Brigham & Women’s Hospital
Brigham & Women’s Faulkner Hospital
Boston, MA



**Tina Gelsomino, MSW, LCSW
and Kevin Ard, MD, MPH**



“Kaiser Permanente’s diversity and inclusion, as a core business strategy, includes our unrelenting commitment to optimizing health for all our members and diverse communities. **As part of our LGBTI Health Equity Initiative, we work to promote equitable health outcomes and provide culturally relevant and respectful care and services.** I am proud of our ongoing participation and achievement of leadership status in the Healthcare Equality Index. This designation signals our commitment and obligation to all people that we are so privileged to serve.”

Ronald Copeland, MD, FACS
Senior Vice President
Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer
Kaiser Permanente



“The HEI has been a valuable resource to us when updating policies to reflect excellence in care for our LGBT patients and families. The education provided through the HEI webinars has been outstanding.”

Norma Tomlinson, MSN, RN, NE-BC, FACHE
Interim Executive Director
University of Toledo Medical Center
Toledo, OH



“Participating in the HEI is an opportunity for us to demonstrate that our commitment to excellence includes the LGBT community.

Although we have always practiced equality among our patients and employees, the HEI helped us discover that we could be more specific and inclusive in the actual wording of our policies.

We learned that having protections written into policies helps clarify our already established non-discrimination practices so that our patients and employees know without doubt that we firmly stand with them.”

Mikel Wilson

Director of Marketing & Communications
Scripps Health
San Diego, CA



“In the Teen Health Center at Cincinnati Children’s, we recognize that each individual has unique needs—something particularly true of our LGBT patients. It is the responsibility of our clinicians to understand and meet those needs.

Through efforts such as using inclusive language in verbal and written communication, displaying symbols of the LGBT community and being recognized as a Leader in the Healthcare Equality Index, we ensure a trusting environment in which all of our patients and families feel safe and respected.”

Lee Ann Conard, MD

Assistant Professor, Division of Adolescent Medicine
Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center
Cincinnati, OH

From left, Dr. Lee Ann Conard with patient Desia Hope, her mother Natrya Hall and James Page, Assistant Vice President of Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Competence at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center



“UCLA Health System is committed to providing quality care to all of our patients and we believe that the HEI is a unique resource for healthcare organizations to use as a guidepost in providing equitable, inclusive care to LGBT patients. **We decided to participate in the 2013 HEI survey to gain more knowledge through the sharing of best healthcare practices and policies for LGBT patients—** and to demonstrate our commitment to equal care for all patients, in keeping with our mission of healing humankind one patient at a time.”

David Feinberg, MD
Chief Executive Officer
UCLA Hospital System
Los Angeles, CA



“A leader in healthcare equality, NYU Langone believes all patients and families deserve the same respect, support and treatment. To continue the success of our recently established LGBT Advisory Council, focused on delivering quality care to each patient and reducing disparities, we understand there is a need to recognize what we’re doing right and to look at ways to improve. **The HEI has been a helpful guide and barometer to identify the work that is ahead of us.**”

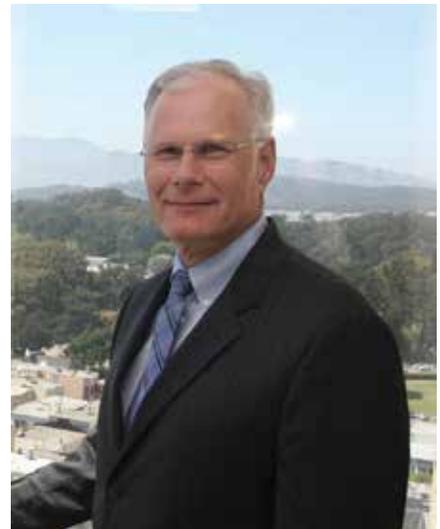
Jody Prysock, MS, CI
Director, Language,
Cultural & Disability Services
NYU Langone Medical Center
New York, NY



“The HEI has been a key component of our efforts to provide equitable, inclusive, knowledgeable and welcoming care to LGBT patients and their families. It has also motivated UCSF to seek out additional opportunities to meet LGBT health needs.

It has enabled us to reduce risk, reach out to an important segment of the local population, and maximize patient safety and satisfaction.”

Mark Laret
Chief Executive Officer
UCSF Medical Center &
UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital
San Francisco, CA







“MGH is thrilled to be recognized as a Leader in the 2013 HRC Healthcare Equality Index, and we believe we can best live up to this honor by continuing to build upon our strong foundation of support and advocacy for the LGBT community. Ongoing plans include displaying a rainbow to welcome patients at registration areas and publishing an LGBT provider directory to enable patients to select providers who have been specifically trained to address the needs of the LGBT community. The LGBT Employee Resource Group also plans to expand our webpage to consolidate resources and enable LGBT patients to find more easily the information they seek.

“To enhance the message of inclusion delivered by all staff, formal training modules are in development for all employees based on their functions and roles within the MGH system. LGBT health topics are also being integrated into grand rounds for clinical staff, and internal medicine residents are developing a training module to ensure that more physicians are knowledgeable and comfortable addressing the healthcare needs of the LGBT community both now and into the future.”

Kevin M. Knoblock, MHA, MBA, MSN, NP
Nurse Practitioner
Division of Gastroenterology

Thom Fitzgerald
Division of Trauma and Emergency Surgery

Massachusetts General Hospital
Boston, MA

**Members of MGH's
LGBT Employee Resource Group**

"I got involved in Christiana Care's response to the HEI several years ago. My motivation for working on the HEI has come from two primary personal sources.

"The first one focuses on my own needs as an employee. **Changes during the time I have been employed at Christiana Care (going on 13 years) give me the ability to cover my husband under the benefits I am afforded as an employee of Christiana Care.**

Additionally, pension survivor benefits now recognize same-sex marriages and civil unions. At age 54, I seem to be programmed to think about retirement and one of Christiana Care's inclusion monikers, 'We're all IN,' took on a whole new perspective for me with this latest change.

"Secondly, I am motivated as a person of faith to work for change and justice in the world. I recognized that I can be effective embodying this at Christiana Care as it relates to diversity, inclusion and cultural competency. For these reasons, taking a leadership role in Christiana Care's response to the HEI has been a great fit for me from both a personal and professional perspective. **To sum it up, working on the HEI is the just and right thing to do for me and for Christiana Care Health System."**

Timothy D. Rodden, MDiv, MA, BCC, FACHE

Director, Pastoral Services
Christiana Care Health System
Newark, DE





“Our participation in the HEI created an opportunity for us to begin the process of educating staff at all levels within our institution around the challenges experienced by LGBT patients, families, and employees.”

Melanie Steele, MPH

Program Administrator
Office of Diversity Programs
in Clinical Care,
Research & Training and
Office of Faculty Development
Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
New York, NY

From left, Memorial Sloan-Kettering's Penny Damaskos, PhD, LCSW, OSW-C, Program Coordinator, Resources for Life After Cancer; Melanie Steele, MPH; and Jorge Capote, Director, Patient Relations

Testimonials from HEI 2013 Leaders in LGBT Healthcare Equality

“From the beginning of the AIDS epidemic, Grady has been a leader in providing services for LGBT patients, as well as an advocate for their right to be treated with compassion, dignity and respect. Internationally known for our comprehensive approach to HIV/AIDS treatment, our dedication to serving Atlanta’s LGBT community and our philosophy of fair and equal treatment long ago extended beyond the walls of our AIDS center to encompass all of the health system’s services.

“To ensure that our philosophy of non-discrimination is transparent, our patients’ bill of rights clearly defines our policies of equitable, high-quality care for LGBT patients.

That transparency also extends to our visitation policy for same-sex parents, caretakers, partners, spouses and significant others of LGBT patients.

“But our policies mean little if they are not put into practice. To that end, the health system has engaged HRC to provide staff training. We believe that ongoing education is the key to compliance and that our efforts to ensure the rights of all patients benefit Grady now and into the future.”

John M. Hauptert, FACHE

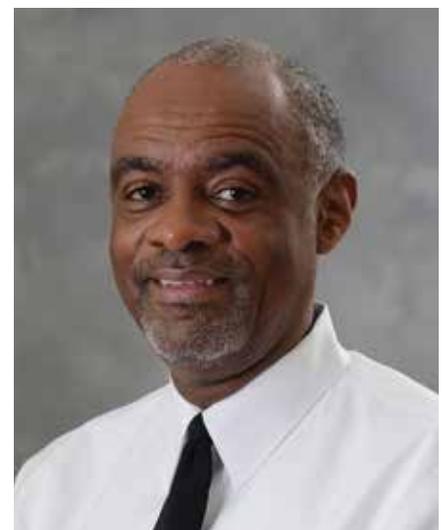
President & Chief Executive Officer
Grady Health System
Atlanta, GA



“At Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, **we believe that everyone deserves the fundamental right to receive care that is free of discrimination**, and SCCA supports HRC’s mission to achieve fairness and equality for all. Our goal, every day, is to turn cancer patients into cancer survivors, and through our work with HRC we aim to sustain an inclusive environment for patients, their families and our employees.”

Alphonso Emery

Director, Diversity Program
Seattle Cancer Care Alliance
Seattle, WA



“Vanderbilt’s professional practice model is Patient and Family Centered Care. Policies can be written, signed and implemented, but what really matters is the outcome. Did we follow the letter of the policy or could the patient feel an institutional cultural change? How does it feel to come here and receive care? How welcoming were we to you and your family member? We recently received an email from patient Josh Robbins that encouraged us we were making noticeable progress:

“My partner had surgery today and I went with him. I was concerned about what would happen when he told the staff that I’m his partner—but when he did, they continued the process without skipping a beat and truly made us both feel welcome. I know this was a direct result of initiatives your hospital has undertaken to really make people like me feel welcome and assure the best possible care for family units that don’t fit the definition of ‘traditional.’ I can’t explain what that meant to us—all I can do is offer our gratitude. Both of our lives are filled with stories of similar situations that didn’t have the same result. I’m so proud we live in a city with a hospital that recognized our family and made us feel at ease.”

Terrell Smith, MSN, RN
Director, Patient & Family Engagement
Vanderbilt University Medical Center
Nashville, TN



“I truly enjoy working with the dedicated staff at the Human Rights Campaign Foundation on the HEI, and I believe the experience allows us to mutually learn and evolve.

I am especially grateful for the training and guidance that helped us to come up with ideas to promote our inclusive policies and practices.”

Andy Moré
Staff Development Coordinator
Training & Development
Piedmont Healthcare
Atlanta, GA



“Henry Ford Health System is proud to participate in the HEI as a visible statement of support for the LGBT communities we serve, as well as an important affirmation of our Mission, Vision and Values. At Henry Ford each and every day we transform lives and communities through health and wellness—one person at a time. **The HEI is one of many visible ways in which we enhance wellness and transform lives by ensuring that we provide the highest levels of understanding, empathy and care for all.**”

“Core to our beliefs at Henry Ford is having a social conscience, and the HEI, which promotes respect and understanding of the unique needs of the LGBT community, further strengthens our social conscience. As a strategic partner in the delivery of health and wellness in Southeastern Michigan, we believe that the HEI is yet one more reminder of our commitment to make a positive and meaningful difference for all of the many people and communities we serve. Our motto at Henry Ford is ‘When Others Can’t—We Can,’ and when it comes to the HEI, ‘We Did!’”

Patrick F. Irwin

Vice President, Human Resources
The Henry Ford Hospital & Medical Group
Detroit, MI



“University of Iowa Health Care opened the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning (LGBTQ) Clinic in October 2012 to better meet the needs of an underserved community. **The HEI was an invaluable tool to assure that our patients’ rights policies and hospital visitation policies were updated to align with UI Health Care’s commitment to providing inclusive and equitable care to LGBTQ persons.** The training webinars provided by the HRC HEI helped to continue the conversation among top UI Health Care administrators and providers to ensure that the momentum of the newly opened LGBTQ Clinic continues to positively affect the University of Iowa as a whole and the surrounding communities which we proudly serve.”

Nicole Nisly, MD

Co-Director
UI Health Care LGBTQ Clinic

Katie Imborek, MD

Co-Director
UI Health Care LGBTQ Clinic

University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics
Iowa City, IA

UI Health Care’s Nicole Nisly, MD
(left) and Katie Imborek, MD

