



the Voice

VOL. 34 NO. 2 DECEMBER 2023

CULTURAL
COMPETENCE IN
HEALTHCARE

BENEFITS OF
HORMONE
REPLACEMENT
THERAPY

AIDSWATCH 2023



Radiant
Health Centers
LGBTQ+ Health and HIV Care

OUR MISSION Radiant Health Centers provides compassionate and comprehensive health services to all underserved individuals in Orange County, with a special focus on the LGBTQ+ community and those living with and affected by HIV.

CONTENTS

3 Cultural Competence
in Healthcare

4 HRT Study

5 Mpox

AIDS Watch/Advocacy

6 Gala 2023 Recap

7 AIDS Walk Preview

8 Save the Date – Gala 2024

Board of Directors

OFFICERS

David Harrod *President*

Zach Abrams *Vice President*

Kourosh Kohanteb *Treasurer*

Larry Will, D.D.S. *Secretary*

MEMBERS

Abraham Weil, Ph.D.

Arana J. Greenberg

Arnold Henson, M.D.

Daniel G. Garza

Duane Vajgrt, M.D.

Gary Johnson

Haley Horton

John Mitchell

Lydia Bottegoni

Matt Andre

Norri Hennagin

Olivia Blanchard

Tim Braham

OUR VISION Compassionate primary care and specialty services for all, with a focus on LGBTQ+ health care equity and ending the HIV epidemic in Orange County.

UNLOCKING HOPE:

A MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear Remarkable Friends and Supporters,

Hope is a powerful beacon, especially in the ever-changing landscape we navigate together. As we enter the fall season, we pause to reflect on the remarkable journey unfolding at Radiant Health Centers.

Our mission is fueled by a relentless pursuit of cultural competence in healthcare—a journey that transcends boundaries and embraces inclusivity. We're creating an environment where every voice resonates, and every story finds its place.

In these pages, you'll uncover the heart of our initiative. Radiant Health Centers is now offering FREE Mpox vaccines to all Orange County residents—an essential step in safeguarding our community's well-being. It's more than a vaccine; it's a shield of protection for you and a contribution to the collective immunity of our community.

March marked a historic milestone as we stood with over 350 advocates from 37 states at the 30th anniversary of AIDSWatch in Washington, D.C. Our unwavering commitment to ending the HIV epidemic speaks volumes about our shared mission—to create a world where HIV is no longer a public health crisis.

And thank you to all who participated in the 37th annual AIDS Walk Orange County on October 7th. Your involvement not only raised awareness but has also generated

crucial funds that will directly support the vital work of Radiant Health Centers. Your dedication is a beacon of hope, shining light on the path toward a world free from the challenges associated with HIV/AIDS.

Amid these pages, we invite you to consider the profound impact of your support. Your generosity makes all this possible. Through your unwavering commitment, we continue to unlock hope and create a world where everyone reaches their full potential.

Join us on this journey, where hope knows no bounds and inclusivity lights the way. Together, we shape a world where every contribution, like yours, makes a difference.

With boundless gratitude,



Philip Yaeger
CEO



David Harrod
Board Chair





Breaking Down Barriers:

Radiant Health Centers' Approach to Inclusive Healthcare

Cultural competence in healthcare isn't just about ticking off boxes or following a checklist. It's an art, a dance, a commitment to transcending barriers and connecting on a deeply human level. It's about bridging the gap separating healthcare providers from individuals from various cultural, linguistic, and social realms. We grasp the profound truth that health isn't a one-size-fits-all equation, but rather something that is deeply intertwined with a person's cultural beliefs, values, and lived experiences.

At Radiant Health Centers, we see our community as a mosaic, each unique piece contributing to the grand tapestry of humanity. Our pursuit of cultural competence isn't a mere checkbox; it's a relentless quest. We don't merely open our doors; our goal is to create an oasis of inclusivity where every voice is heard, and every story matters.

Language is a way to communicate and understand each other, and it should never get in the way of good healthcare. That's why we offer translation and interpretation services.

We make sure language isn't a roadblock but a way to connect and show empathy. And we don't just stop at words; we dig deeper. We understand the cultural differences that shape our patients' lives, knowing that these differences can affect their health decisions and how they feel.

Cultural competence isn't a trend that waxes and wanes with the seasons. It's a bedrock principle, a fundamental pillar of the healthcare we provide. It's about recognizing that each patient is a unique composition of experiences and beliefs, and tailoring our services accordingly isn't just a courtesy – it's necessary. It's about nurturing a relationship of trust where patients aren't just seen as cases but as individuals with their own narratives and needs.

Together, we work to build a healthier and more inclusive community where everyone can reach their full potential. In this community, compassion has no limits. We invite you to join us on this journey toward a brighter and more hopeful future. 🌈

Unlocking the Potential: A New Study Reveals the Benefits of Hormone Replacement Therapy

In a groundbreaking development, a recent study published in the New England Journal of Medicine has shed light on the transformative effects of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) for transgender and nonbinary youth. This research, involving 315 participants aged 12 to 20, underscores the pivotal role of HRT in enhancing the mental well-being and overall quality of life of individuals on their journey to self-discovery.

The Study's Revelations

The study's findings are nothing short of remarkable. Nearly 70% of participants who initially entered the study with severe depression experienced significant improvements, with their depressive symptoms transitioning to the minimal or moderate range after two years of hormone therapy. This remarkable decrease in depression levels underscores the essential role of HRT in supporting the mental health of transgender and nonbinary youth.

It's important to understand the context here. For many transgender individuals, the mismatch between their physical appearance and their inner sense of gender identity can lead to profound mental health challenges. HRT, also known as gender-affirming hormones, plays a pivotal role in aligning an individual's physical characteristics with their gender identity, offering a path to greater congruence and, as this study reveals, a reduction in symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Why Access to Hormone Replacement Therapy is Critical

Historically, transgender and nonbinary individuals have faced numerous barriers when seeking gender-affirming healthcare, including HRT. These hurdles have contributed to health disparities and hindered overall well-being. The findings of this study emphasize the urgent need for accessible, LGBTQ+ affirming healthcare services that prioritize the unique needs of these communities.

At Radiant Health Centers, we have taken proactive steps to address these challenges head-on. We are committed to ensuring that HRT and gender-affirming care are readily available to the LGBTQ+ community in Orange County. We recognize that the journey of self-identification and transition can be complex, and our services are designed to provide the understanding, compassion, and expertise necessary to navigate these pathways.

Beyond HRT: Comprehensive Care and Support

Our commitment extends beyond HRT. We offer a wide array of healthcare services, including mental health and counseling services,

provided by knowledgeable medical staff who understand the specific needs of the LGBTQ+ community. Our youth programs provide a valuable platform for individuals to connect with like-minded peers, offering vital support and allyship during these transformative stages of life.

These services are thoughtfully designed to support mental well-being, manage anxiety and depression, and provide strategies for coping with the unique challenges associated with identity and transition. As always, our Orange County LGBTQ+ medical clinic welcomes anyone seeking support and guidance in accessing our comprehensive range of services.

Access Hormone Replacement Therapy in Orange County

Radiant Health Centers provides comprehensive medical care and mental health services from our clinic in Irvine. If you are considering hormone replacement therapy, counseling, or any of our services, please do not hesitate to contact our team. We are here to help. Reach out to us at (949) 809-5700 to request an appointment today, and take the first step toward a brighter, healthier future. 🌈

Protecting Our Community: Free Mpox Vaccines Available at Radiant Health Centers

We're excited to announce that Radiant Health Centers is offering FREE Mpox vaccines for all Orange County residents, and we encourage everyone to take advantage of this opportunity.

Mpox is a rare but potentially serious viral disease that has made headlines in recent years. While it's not as common as other diseases, prevention is key to safeguarding our health and the health of those around us. Getting vaccinated against monkeypox is a responsible choice that can help reduce the spread of the virus.

Vaccines are available to anyone in Orange County by appointment only. Booking an appointment is easy; simply visit myturn.ca.gov or call (949) 809-5700. Our friendly staff is ready to assist you in scheduling your vaccination at your convenience.

But why should you consider getting the Mpox vaccine? First, it's important for your own protection. Mpox can cause a range of symptoms, from fever and fatigue to a rash, and even severe complications in some cases. By getting vaccinated, you significantly reduce your risk of contracting this virus.

Moreover, certain groups are particularly vulnerable to Mpox, including individuals with weakened immune systems, the elderly, and young children. By getting vaccinated, you not only protect yourself but also contribute to the collective immunity of our community, helping shield those who may be at higher risk.

At Radiant Health Centers, your health is our priority. We urge everyone in Orange County to take advantage of this opportunity to get a free monkeypox vaccine. Let's work together to keep our community healthy and safe. 🌈

AIDSWatch 2023: Advocating for Change in the Fight Against HIV

AIDSWatch, the largest constituent-led HIV advocacy event in the United States, celebrated its 30th anniversary from March 19 to March 21, 2023. As Orange County's leading HIV testing and treatment provider, Radiant Health Centers proudly joined more than 350 HIV advocates from 37 states in Washington, D.C., for this momentous occasion. Over the course of three days, attendees engaged with 182 congressional offices, united in their unwavering commitment to end the HIV epidemic.

The Evolution of AIDSWatch

Over its three-decade history, AIDSWatch has transformed from a small assembly of HIV/AIDS advocates into a trailblazing advocacy event that leaves a profound impact. What started as a modest group of individuals dedicated to improving the lives of those living with HIV has grown into a powerful force for change.

AIDSWatch's primary mission is to advocate for policies that encompass various aspects of life for people living with HIV. These include crucial areas such as healthcare access, housing, mental health support, substance use disorder services, access to essential support services, quality food availability, reproductive choices, and employment opportunities. By focusing on these critical elements, AIDSWatch aims to bring about comprehensive change in the lives of individuals affected by HIV.

Beyond its policy advocacy, AIDSWatch serves as a platform for unity and collaboration. It transcends boundaries, bringing together diverse communities and political affiliations to work collectively toward achieving common objectives. Much like other significant events such as World AIDS Day, AIDSWatch underscores the importance of joining forces to combat HIV and related challenges and serves as a testament to the power of collective action and our capacity to make a tangible difference. 🌈



Celebrating Compassion and Equality:

RADIANT HEALTH CENTERS' 2023 GALA RECAP

On June 3rd, 2023, Radiant Health Centers hosted its annual Gala at The Turnip Rose Promenade in Costa Mesa. This year's event was dedicated to raising funds and supporting the organization's mission of bringing equitable healthcare to the LGBTQ+ community.

The Gala, attended by esteemed guests and passionate advocates, was a remarkable evening filled with compassion and celebration. Gala Co-chairs Adrienne Matros and Zach Abrams played pivotal roles in ensuring the event's success and impact. However, the true highlight of the night was the presentation of the prestigious Radiant Compassion Award to Broadway star Javier Muñoz.

Javier Muñoz, renowned for his portrayal of "Alexander Hamilton" in the hit musical *Hamilton*, received the Radiant Compassion Award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to LGBTQ+ rights and HIV/AIDS advocacy. As an activist and a staunch supporter of organizations such as GMHC and (RED), Muñoz embodies the spirit of compassion and equality.

The Gala's fundraising efforts received an outpouring of generosity, resulting in the collection of nearly \$260,000 in funds. A particularly significant contribution came in the

form of a \$25,000 matching gift, doubling the impact of each donation. These funds play a direct role in advancing Radiant Health Centers' mission to offer comprehensive and compassionate healthcare services to underserved individuals in Orange County, with a special focus on the LGBTQ+ community and those affected by HIV.

Philip Yaeger, CEO of Radiant Health Centers, expressed deep gratitude to the organization's dedicated supporters and generous donors, noting, "Their unwavering commitment to LGBTQ+ healthcare equity has brought us closer to our vision of a healthier and more inclusive Orange County."

The funds raised at the Gala promise a lasting and meaningful impact on the community, ensuring Radiant Health Centers can continue to provide crucial healthcare services. The event emphasized the vital importance of LGBTQ+ healthcare equity and celebrated

the tireless efforts of advocates like Javier Muñoz.

Radiant Health Centers extends heartfelt gratitude to all attendees, sponsors, and supporters who contributed to the Gala's success. Together, they have taken significant strides toward creating a world where compassionate and inclusive healthcare knows no boundaries.

As we reflect on the inspiring evening of the Gala, we invite you to join us in supporting our mission. Your involvement makes a difference. Together we can create a brighter and more inclusive future for Orange County. We look forward to your support as we work towards a healthier and more inclusive community.

Clockwise from top left: Warren Hennagin, Norri Hennagin, Karla Kleijn-Elder, Jeff Elder; Jim Pari, Co-Owner at RLM Event Management & Production; Keri Pari; Rick Matros, CEO, President, and Chair of the Board at Sabra; Adrienne Matros, Gala Co-Chair; Bill Lawrence, Board Member Haley Horton, Jeff Stuckhardt, Conrad Heiney; Gala Honoree Javier Muñoz, with 2022 Gala Honoree Tony Morrison



MAKING STRIDES TOGETHER

On October 7th, Radiant Health Centers presented the 37th annual iconic AIDS Walk Orange County, an event that brings our community together to support those affected by HIV/AIDS and raise vital funds for crucial programs and services. With over 300 dedicated participants coming together to support this crucial cause, the event exceeded all expectations by raising a remarkable sum of more than \$120,000.

AIDS Walk is more than just a walk; it's a powerful movement that unites individuals, families, friends, and advocates in the fight against HIV/AIDS. This event is a cornerstone in our mission to create a future where HIV is no longer a public health crisis.

YOUR PARTICIPATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE

We are truly grateful to everyone who participated this year. Those who walked directly contribute to Radiant Health Centers' efforts to provide comprehensive care and support to individuals affected by HIV/AIDS. Your involvement helps us continue offering essential services such as medical care, counseling, and housing support to those who need it most.



"We are profoundly grateful to everyone who participated in AIDS Walk Orange County 2023, as well as our generous sponsors and volunteers," said Philip Yaeger, CEO of Radiant Health Centers. "The community's response this year has been truly heartwarming. These funds will enable us to expand our efforts in providing essential health and social services to those who need it most."

A WALK THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

The money raised this year will be allocated to a range of critical initiatives, including access to healthcare, prevention and education programs, counseling and support services, and housing

assistance for those affected by HIV. These initiatives play a pivotal role in improving the quality of life and overall well-being of individuals living with HIV in Orange County.

AIDS Walk Orange County has a long history of making a substantial difference in the fight against HIV, and this year's event has once again demonstrated the power of unity and compassion within our community.



The success of AIDS Walk Orange County 2023 underscores the Orange County community's commitment to working together in the fight against HIV. This achievement serves as a reminder that we can create lasting change and provide hope for those in need by coming together.





17982 Sky Park Circle, Suite J
Irvine, CA 92614

www.radianthealthcenters.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 100
Claremont, CA

Questions & Feedback:

Editor Joe Alfano

17982 Sky Park Circle, Suite J

Irvine, CA 92614

www.radianthealthcenters.org/contact-us

SAVE
THE
DATE



Save the Date for Radiant Health Centers' **2024 Gala** at the **Balboa Bay Club on Saturday, April 13th**. Join us for an evening of friends, food and fun.

For more information about the Gala, including sponsorship opportunities, please contact Joe Alfano at jalfano@radianthealthcenters.org.