

Resources and more information at: [share.nned.net/2022/04/nnedvr-addressing-the-intersectional-lgbtq-communities](https://share.nned.net/2022/04/nnedvr-addressing-the-intersectional-lgbtq-communities)

Hosted by the NNED National Facilitation Center and SAMHSA's Office of Behavioral Health Equity, in partnership with the Center of Excellence on LGBTQ+ Behavioral Health Equity, this roundtable explored the nuanced behavioral health needs of racially/ethnically diverse LGBTQ+ communities with a focus on the added impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and recent anti-LGBTQ legislation, as well as strategies to build affirming practices and environments. Panelists included the following (see full biographies at [nned.net/10349/#panelists](https://nned.net/10349/#panelists)):



Dr. Angela Weeks



Richard Zaldivar



Dr. Myeshia Price



Judy Morrissey

## Barriers to Receiving Care

- Many racially/ethnically diverse LGBTQ+ individuals experience a fear of being outed to their families, as well as a lack of familial support — there is stigma around seeking behavioral health care in many cultures
- Behavioral health treatment can further marginalize disenfranchised communities by enforcing "othering"
- There are a lack of creative and dynamic ways for people to engage in behavioral health services that deviate from traditional therapy
- Many providers are unable to offer in-language services or translators
- There are an insufficient number of LGBTQ+ identifying providers; clients also fear that providers will only focus on their sexual and gender identity without understanding their racial/ethnic identities and cultures
- Other barriers include affordability, transportation, feeling unsafe, fear around immigration status, and prior negative experiences

## The Impact of Current Context on Behavioral Health

- The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an increase in substance use, such as methamphetamine, among LGBTQ+ individuals
- LGBTQ+ individuals are experiencing increased rates of homelessness, food insecurity, and workforce instability amid the pandemic
- The country is in the midst of a behavioral health crisis — providers are scarce and overburdened
- There is an increase in mood dysregulation, suicidality, anxiety, lack of connection, and isolation due to anti-LGBTQ legislation, especially among youth; over 60% of LGBTQ+ youth say recent debates around legislation are negatively impacting their mental health
- LGBTQ+ individuals are feeling unsafe and experiencing fear of legal retribution in states that are passing anti-LGBTQ bills

## Strategies for Working With and Supporting Diverse LGBTQ+ Communities

- Collaborate with partners in the community who are serving diverse LGBTQ+ populations; establish relationships to share resources or create a steering committee to advise on actions to help the community
- Ensure you are communicating that you are affirming and welcoming of different communities — examine how your website conveys information and how your environment displays inclusivity (e.g., gender-neutral bathrooms)
- Disaggregate data to approach policy and care from an intersectional perspective — LGBTQ+ is not a monolith
- Honor various intersections of clients' identities; seek training to understand the needs of these clients rather than assuming
- Meet clients where they are; outreach to underserved populations and examine the existing issues around the retention of these groups
- Be honest about what needs you can meet; consider contracting with external LGBTQ-identifying providers to work with clients

“ Racism and anti-LGBTQ oppression, they are connected, and they have been connected throughout history. And in order to dismantle systems of oppression, we have to dismantle all the systems of oppression...when we're fighting for one community, we have to be thoughtful in fighting for the rights of all communities. ”

- Angela Weeks

### Survey Results

Following the roundtable, participants were asked to fill out a survey on their experience. 21 attendees responded to the feedback survey (3.7%). Over 90% of respondents felt that the virtual roundtable was informative, effective in raising questions and conveying information, increased their knowledge, and will be useful in their work.

### Participants

The roundtable was hosted on Zoom and streamed on Facebook Live.



567 participants  
941 registrants  
60% attendance rate



45 people reached  
72 views  
9 engagements