

UW Health: Earns “Leader in LGBTQ Healthcare Equality” designation

Posted on Friday, Aug 16, 2019

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WASHINGTON – UW Health has again been designated a “Leader in LGBTQ Healthcare Equality” by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation (HRC), the educational arm of the nation’s largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) civil rights organization

UW Health is the only Madison-area health care system to receive this designation.

The designation was reported in the 12th edition of the [Healthcare Equality Index \(HEI\)](#), reflecting on the progress in LGBTQ healthcare.

“American Family Children’s Hospital, UW Hospital and Clinics and UW Health at The American Center were granted leader status,” said Shiva Bidar-Sielaff, chief diversity officer for UW Health. “We are honored by the recognition. We strive every day to provide inclusive care for our LGBTQ patients and families.”

For the third year, participants were given a numerical score based on their policies and practices. The HEI participants were assessed on four criteria: Non-Discrimination and Staff Training, Patient Services and Support, Employee Benefits and Policies, and Patient and Community Engagement.

“We are committed to offering compassionate care and remarkable healthcare, so it is an honor to be recognized again,” said UW Health CEO Dr. Alan Kaplan. “Diversity and inclusion are critical to UW Health’s mission.”

A record 680 health-care facilities took part in the HEI 2019 survey. The HRC Foundation also proactively researched key policies at more than 1000 non-participating hospitals.

“The health care facilities that participate in HRC’s Healthcare Equality Index are making clear that they stand on the side of fairness and are committed to providing inclusive care to their LGBTQ patients,” said Human Rights Campaign Foundation president Alphonso David. “Going beyond inclusive non-discrimination policies, these health care facilities are adopting best practices in the areas of LGBTQ patient care and support, employee policies and benefits, and LGBTQ patient and community engagement.”

Some key highlights from the 2019 report include:

- More than half of HEI participants now have written gender-transition guidelines;
- 75 percent of hospitals surveyed offer trans-inclusive benefits — an impressive eight percentage point increase over last year, and numbers that bring them on par with their corporate counterparts, as measured by HRC’s 2019 [CEI](#);
- A 35 percent increase in training hours recorded — clocking in at more than 94,000 hours of LGBTQ care training provided;
- A 60 percent increase in the number of HEI participants whose electronic health records capture a patient’s sexual orientation, and a 40percent increase in the number of HEI participants whose electronic health records capture a patient’s gender identity.

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation is the education arm of America’s largest civil rights organization working to achieve equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people.