SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY LESBIAN, BISEXUAL AND QUEER WOMEN’S HEALTH COLLABORATIVE

INITIATED BY: HUMAN SERVICES & RENT STABILIZATION DEPARTMENT
(Corri Planck, Acting Director)
(Jenny Ivanova, Strategic Initiatives Specialist)

STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT:
The City Council will receive an update on the work of the Los Angeles County Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer Women’s Health Collaborative.

RECOMMENDATION:
Receive and file.

BACKGROUND / ANALYSIS:
The City of West Hollywood is one of the co-conveners and funders of the Los Angeles County Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer Women’s Health Collaborative (LBQWHC). In addition to the City of West Hollywood, the Iris Cantor-UCLA Women’s Health Education and Research Center, the L.A. County Department of Public Health’s Office of Women’s Health, other Collaborative members/partners include the Los Angeles LGBT Center, as well as individuals representing health care facilities, academic institutions and community organizations.

This year, the Collaborative also received funds from Los Angeles County and Third District County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl’s office to help further its mission, with a specific focus on substance abuse prevention and harm reduction and mental health. The funds are managed by the Iris Cantor-UCLA Women’s Health Education and Research Center.

With support from the City of West Hollywood, the Collaborative has developed training materials and tailored curricula, conducted several trainings with health care providers and administrators and hosted educational conferences.

In the last fiscal year, the Collaborative has provided on-site trainings for the Women, Infants & Children (WIC), L.A. County Department of Public Health, L.A. County Department of Mental Health/Health Services Collaboration Program, Abode Communities, Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE) and the American Heart Association.

The Collaborative has also provided virtual trainings due to COVID-19 pandemic for the Antioch University - COLORS LGBTQ Youth MAP Program, Antioch University and Pacific Clinics. On August 18, 2020, the Collaborative also hosted a special virtual forum
entitled “Fostering Resilience Among Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer Women of Color.” This is the first of a series of discussion forums specifically to address LBQ women of color.

In previous years, trainings have been offered to Women’s Health Workshop (Raha International), USC Verdugo Hills Hospital, Keck Hospital of USC, Lynwood Jail, The People Concern (homeless outreach team), Downtown Women’s Center, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), the Department of Public Health (Service Planning Areas 3 and 8), APLA Long Beach Health Center, Maternal Mental Health NOW, UCLA Rape Treatment Center, San Fernando Valley Community Mental Health Center and the UCLA OB/GYN Family Planning Clinic, Kaiser Permanente (Woodland Hills and South Bay), the St. John’s Well Child and Family Center, the Northeast Valley Health Corporation, the Cancer Support Community of Pasadena, the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST), Anthem Blue Cross, the California State University-Northridge (CSUN) Klotz Student Health Center, and the Peer Health Exchange at Occidental College, CSUN and California State University-Dominguez Hills.

These trainings have been offered based on requests generated from the larger-scale conferences held by the Collaborative, and the Collaborative will continue to respond to requests, and identify additional opportunities for future trainings. Due to limited funds and staffing capacity to organize the trainings, the LBWHC is not soliciting requests for additional trainings Conducted by highly regarded physicians, activists, health professionals and professors, the audiences for these trainings have included physicians, nurses, health educators, therapists and case managers. The City has also funded a modest stipend/individual instructor of $200 per training.

Last year, the Collaborative hosted its conference – “Lesbian and Bisexual Women’s Health in Los Angeles County: Advocacy, Communication, Policy and Healthcare Delivery” -- on March 12, 2019 at the California Endowment to a capacity crowd of 250 participants from all over Los Angeles County and from diverse range of service providers and institutions. Topics covered at the conference included “Caring for Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer Women,” “Addressing Legal, Regulatory, and Compliance Issues,” “Social Service Support & Accessing Community Based Agencies,” Ensuring Care for the Trans Community” and question and answer opportunities with medical and social services providers and advocates who are serving lesbian, bisexual and queer women.

Additionally, the Collaborative provided guidance to the LA LGBT Center in developing a successful $17.5 million budget request to the California State Legislature to create a Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer Women’s Health Equity Fund. These funds will be administered by the California Department of Public Health’s Office of Health Equity and will be distributed through a series of grants across the state. The funding is designed to addresses barriers in accessing health care, stigmatization and discrimination in health care settings, and disparities in health outcomes of lesbian, bisexual and queer women. The City of West Hollywood also supported this budget request.

The Collaborative grew out of the 2007 Women’s Health Summit, sponsored by the L.A. County Department of Public Health’s Office of Women’s Health, where lesbian and
bisexual women’s health was identified as a priority issue, specifically the health disparities faced by lesbian and bisexual women.

In 2008, the West Hollywood City Council adopted the Lesbian Health Bill of Rights, drafted by the City’s Lesbian Visibility Committee. Members of that committee, along with City Council and staff, worked in partnership with the Office of Women’s Health to convene the first meeting of local stakeholders in lesbian and bisexual women’s health. Recognizing the need for sustained focus in addressing these health disparities, the L.A. County Lesbian and Bisexual Women’s Health Collaborative was established in 2009. In 2019, the Collaborative changed its name to the Lesbian, Bisexual, and Queer Women’s Health Collaborative (LBQWHC) to also address the needs of queer women.

In addition to the development of educational materials, trainings and conferences, the Collaborative has compiled a Resource Guide. The guide is a compilation of academic research on lesbian and bisexual women’s health and continues to be updated with synopsis and support from the Iris Cantor-UCLA Women’s Health Education and Research Center. This guide provides easy and credible references for researchers, academicians, and other interested parties.

The Collaborative also previously conducted focus groups with under-represented lesbians and bisexual women -- including women of color, veterans, seniors, and youth – to solicit their health care opinions and experiences. The data from these focus groups has served as an important part of the foundation for improving cultural competency training opportunities for health care providers and administrators. The Collaborative has sought out opportunities to share this information in medical publications as another vehicle to increase awareness and cultural competency. Members of the LBQWHC have also presented information about the trainings at the 2019 California LGBTQ Health and Human Services conference, 2019 Southern California Sexual Health Conference, and in September, will be presenting via zoom at the SYNC2020 national HIV, HCV, STI and LGBTQ health conference.

The Collaborative has accomplished its original objectives, including the development of the training curriculum, as well as continuing to provide trainings and host conferences. Additional, ongoing objectives of the Collaborative are to:

- Increase the number of health care institutions participating in the Human Rights Campaign’s Healthcare Equality Index (HEI) survey. The HEI is the national LGBTQ benchmarking tool that evaluates the policies and practices related to the equity and inclusion of their LGBTQ patients, visitors and employees.
- Supplement existing LGBT training programs and materials with information unique to lesbian and bisexual Latinas, African Americans, Asian Pacific Islanders, veterans, women ages 65 and over and youth.
- Host conferences for executives and other health professionals about health care and cultural competency for lesbian and bisexual women. Past conferences have included representatives from UCLA, USC, Kaiser, LA County health agencies, non-profit health care and service providers, City of Hope, Providence Holy Cross Hospital, California Medical Center, Eisenhower Medical Center, etc.
• Provide tailored training and education programs to health care facilities and health care providers about best practices for serving patients who are lesbian, bisexual and queer women.

CONFORMANCE WITH VISION 2020 AND THE GOALS OF THE WEST HOLLYWOOD GENERAL PLAN:
This item is consistent with the Primary Strategic Goal(s) (PSG) and/or Ongoing Strategic Program(s) (OSP) of:
• OSP-12: Actively Participate in Regional Issues.
In addition, this item is compliant with the following goal(s) of the West Hollywood General Plan:
• HS-1: Maintain and pursue humane social policies and social services that address the needs of the community.

EVALUATION PROCESSES:
The Collaborative solicits evaluations at the conclusion of each training and conference and will continue to compile and review that data in order to continue to create and offer targeted, meaningful and effective educational opportunities. This data is used in adjusting the training curriculum and in planning for future events.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTH:
The Collaborative exists to help address the health disparities faced by lesbian, bisexual and queer women – and particularly LBQ women of color. The fundamental purpose of this Collaborative is to enhance the health and well-being of LBQ women by increasing cultural competencies at all levels of health care provision.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:
The steering committee for the Collaborative includes members of the LBQ women’s community, as well as representatives from public-serving agencies, including the Iris Cantor-UCLA Women’s Health Education and Research Center, the L.A. County Department of Public Health’s Office of Women’s Health, the Los Angeles LGBT Center and various health and academic institutions.

OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY:
HUMAN SERVICES & RENT STABILIZATION DEPARTMENT / STRATEGIC INITIATIVES DIVISION

FISCAL IMPACT:
None. The proposed expenditures for this item, $6,500, is budgeted for fiscal year 2020-2021 in account 100-3-05-54-533021.
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**ATTACHMENTS:**
None