



# The Denver Principles

Presented during the 2nd National AIDS Forum at the 5th National Lesbian and Gay Health Conference, held in Denver, Colorado, in June 1983.

December 1, 2008

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## Statement from the Advisory Committee of People with AIDS (1983)

We condemn attempts to label us as 'victims,' a term which implies defeat, and we are only occasionally 'patients,' a term which implies passivity, helplessness, and dependence upon the care of others. We are 'People With AIDS.'

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

1. Come out, especially to their patients who have AIDS.
2. Always clearly identify and discuss the theory they favor as to the cause of AIDS, since this bias affects the treatments and advice they give.
3. Get in touch with their feelings (e.g., fears, anxieties, hopes, etc.) About AIDS and not simply deal with AIDS intellectually.
4. Take a thorough personal inventory and identify and examine their own agendas around AIDS.
5. Treat people with AIDS as a whole people, and address psychological issues as well as biophysical ones.
6. Address the question of sexuality in people with AIDS specifically, sensitively and with information about gay male sexuality in general, and the sexuality of people with AIDS in particular.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL PEOPLE

1. Support & Membership in our struggle against those who would fire us from our jobs, evict us from our homes, refuse to touch us or separate us from our loved ones, our community or our peers, since available evidence does not support the view that AIDS can be spread by casual, social contact.
2. Not scapegoat people with AIDS, blame us for the epidemic or generalize about our lifestyles.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH AIDS

1. Form caucuses to choose their own representatives, to deal with the media, to choose their own agenda and to plan their own strategies.
2. Be involved at every level of decision-making and specifically serve on the board of directors of provider organizations.
3. Be included in all AIDS forums with equal credibility as other participants, to share their own

experiences and knowledge.

4. Substitute low-risk sexual behaviors for those which could endanger themselves or their partners; we feel that people with AIDS have an ethical responsibility to inform their potential partners of their health status.

#### RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WITH AIDS

1. To live as full and satisfying sexual and emotional lives as anyone else.
2. To receive quality medical treatment and quality social service provision without discrimination of any form, including sexual orientation, gender, diagnosis, economic status or race.
3. To obtain full explanations of all medical procedures and risks, to choose or refuse their treatment modalities, to refuse to participate in research without jeopardizing their treatment and to make informed decisions about their lives.
4. To ensure privacy and confidentiality of medical records, to receive human respect and the right to choose who their significant others are.
5. To die--and to LIVE--in dignity.

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[Click here](#) to read *"Renewing the Denver Principles"* by Sean Strub, POZ's founder and advisory editor, in which he advocates for a renewed commitment to the empowerment of people with HIV/AIDS during remarks at the 2008 United States Conference on AIDS.

[Click here](#) to view the Denver Principles as a PDF.

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