GMHC Partners With ACRIA to Create a More Nationally Focused AIDS Group

The two groups will integrate their HIV services and research-driven programs, boosting their efforts to end the epidemic.

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Two pioneering AIDS organizations are joining forces. Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC) provides a variety of services to over 12,000 people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS in New York City. The AIDS Community Research Initiative of America (ACRIA) offers expertise and research on long-term survivors and programs that focus on at-risk young people. Both have been leaders in the HIV community since the beginning of the epidemic. Thirty-five years old this year, GMHC is the world's first HIV/AIDS organization; ACRIA was founded in 1991. Now they are working together.

GMHC is partnering with ACRIA to boost both groups' efforts to end HIV and to create a more nationally focused organization (ACRIA is located in New York and San Francisco). By partnering with ACRIA, GMHC will be able to scale up services, including prevention and education, according to a GMHC press release. Under the partnership, the two will share finances, donors and supporters. This means ACRIA can raise its profile and GMHC can bolster its voice in research-backed health policy, one of ACRIA's specialties.

"We're thrilled to partner with ACRIA, drawing on its critical research expertise as we work together to enhance our high-impact prevention, mental health and substance use services," said GMHC CEO Kelsey Louie in the press release. "With the ACRIA team under our tent, we will collaborate on new research-driven care and prevention programs tailored for at-risk populations and long-term survivors, as well as evolve some of our existing programs to help maximize their impact. This combined research-service approach will bring us closer to our goal to end the AIDS epidemic in New York State by 2020 and to make new inroads in other communities across the country."

"As a long-standing supporter of GMHC and all the work they do, joining forces to better serve those living with HIV or AIDS is an honor and an exciting opportunity for ACRIA," said Benjamin Bashein, executive director of ACRIA. "Combining many of GMHC's existing programs and lifesaving, on-the-ground work with ACRIA's research expertise, we will be able to expand our scope of work and serve more people in need."

"GMHC joining forces with ACRIA comes at a particularly critical time for people affected by

HIV/AIDS," added GMHC board cochairs Michael C. Harwood and Roberta A. Kaplan. "In a time of political uncertainty, when access to health care for people with preexisting conditions like HIV/AIDS is continually at risk, we need every available resource to continue our mission of advocating for people affected by HIV/AIDS. ACRIA's expertise, resources and network of friends and supporters will be invaluable on that front."

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