An LGBT Center's HIV TLC

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ACT UP started in this room, part of New York's remodeled LGBT Community Center

HIV services have always been a cornerstone of Manhattan's LGBT Community Center. In fact, a requirement to provide them was included in the deed to buy the building back in 1983.

Much has changed since then: HIV treatment, pre-exposure prophylaxis, same-sex marriage equality. Plus, the center recently completed a $9.2 million renovation to better meet the needs of its 6,000 weekly visitors.

What hasn't changed is the center's focus on HIV. "It's infused into so much of what we do," says the center's executive director, Glennda Testone.

Support groups there cater to both the newly diagnosed and long-term survivors. Youth programs teach how to talk about sexual health. Family programs cover everything from pre-conception medical issues to parenting while HIV positive. And gender identity programs both support and educate transgender women, a group that's at high risk of HIV.

The center runs the only LGBT-specific state-certified substance abuse treatment program, and upward of 60 percent of participants are HIV positive. "Whether substance abuse is the root of seroconverting or it's a coping mechanism," says Testone, "our program, since it's for and by the LGBT community, can address these issues in ways that mainstream programs cannot."

And of course, the center also provides HIV testing and much-needed meeting spaces for the community. ACT UP was birthed at the center, and it still meets there each week. On last year's World AIDS Day, the center held its first movie screening in the renovated auditorium. And what played? *The Normal Heart*.

To read about the LGBT Center's ribbon-cutting ceremony and to view more images of the remodeled space, click here.

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