



Oral Health Equity and Justice for Marginalized Communities

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About AIDPH

AIDPH is a 501c3 nonprofit organization committed to transforming dental public health practices through **research, education, and advocacy**.

Serving as a catalyst for change, AIDPH advocates for a **justice-oriented oral health system** that prioritizes equity and inclusion.



AIDPH's Mission and Vision

MISSION

Empowering our community to advance oral health through science, education, and advocacy

VISION

A justice-oriented oral health system



AIDPH's communities of focus



LGBTQIA+

Reduce disparities and promote oral health equity for all individuals regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status,



Veterans

Improve oral health outcomes, promote preventive care, and enhance the overall quality of life for those who serve in the military.



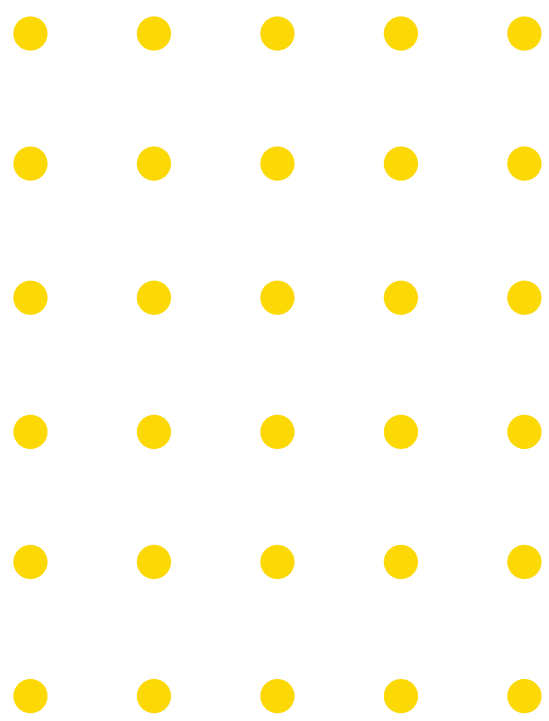
Disabilities

Improve the oral health outcomes and overall well-being of people with disabilities.



Rural

Contribute to reducing oral health disparities and improving the overall well-being of rural communities.



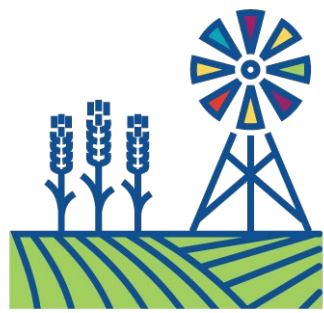
Fast Facts: Intersections of Communities of Focus



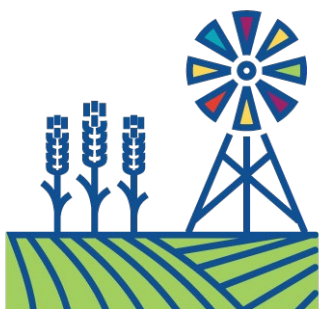
There are **1 million** veterans who identify as LGBTQIA+ and **90,000** active duty queer service members



Approximately **30%** or **5.2 million** veterans report having a disability



About **25%** of veterans (4.6 million) live in a rural area



An estimated **2.9 – 3.8 million** LGBTQIA+ people live in rural areas



Between **3 – 5 million** queer people have a disability

Common experience of historical exclusion and marginalization from healthcare systems.

AIDPH's model for community engagement



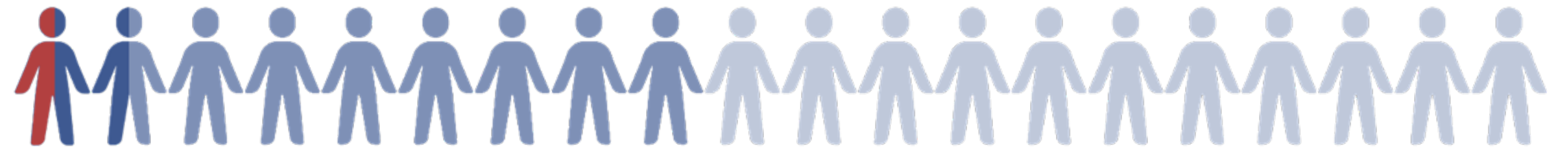
knowledge
expertise
technical skill
research capacity



**Community
Research Partner**

lived experience
community trust
representation
direct benefit

Community Highlight on Veterans



There are **18 million** veterans in the US. Of those, **9 million** receive healthcare from the VHA. Only **2.2 million** are eligible for dental care from the VHA, with just over **600,000** receiving dental care.

Community Highlight on Veterans



- Veterans disproportionately **experience disease and disability** compared to nonveterans
- Veterans have **higher rates** of heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and mental health conditions
- Veterans self-report **visiting the ED** for a dental condition at a higher rate than non-veterans
- Veterans experience high rates **dental pain** and tooth loss
- Veterans with dental pain have **lower productivity** in the workplace

Community Highlight on Veterans





American Institute of Dental Public Health



Institute for Oral Health

GET DATA

ABOUT US

ABOUT THE DATA

PUBLICATIONS

ADVOCACY

CONNECT



Essential information on the oral health of veterans in the United States.

See the State Profiles




Good oral health is essential for health and well-being. Unfortunately, many veterans bear a disproportionate burden of disease and disability due to their military service. Over 85% of Veteran Health Administration (VHA) enrollees are not eligible for dental care leaving approximately 7.6 million veterans without access to vital dental care services. Use data available in this site to advocate for and support sound strategies and policies to improve the oral health and overall well-being of veterans.

Veterans in the United States


Rollover to see states data, or click on states to see county-level data.



VetDentalData.org



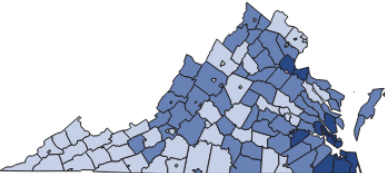
American Institute of Dental Public Health



Institute for Oral Health

The Oral Health of Veterans Living in Virginia

Veterans cannot be healthy without oral health. Veterans bear a disproportionate burden of disease and disability as a result of their military service. Across the country, more than 85% of Veteran Health Administration (VHA) enrollees are not eligible for dental care coverage. That means roughly 7.6 million veterans who are eligible for other primary care through the VHA aren't getting dental care. Inadequate dental care is costly and painful — particularly when poor oral health is accompanied by chronic disease conditions like heart disease or diabetes. This profile provides data that describe what oral health looks like for veterans living in the state of Virginia, highlight additional health indicators by age and rurality, and compare veterans living in Virginia to veterans nationally. These profiles can be paired with our [data dashboard](#) and [research briefs](#) for additional insights into veteran oral health and wellbeing.



Percentage of Veterans by County

0-4%

5-9%

10-14%

15-19%

20-25%

Quick Facts About Veterans In Virginia

10.5% of the state population, or about 713,000 people, are veterans

9.6% of veterans live in a rural county

Hampton City
York
Stafford counties have the highest veteran population

A Closer Look at Veteran Health in Virginia

Working Age Veterans (Under 65)

Virginia

National

Edentulism 1% 3%

Heart Disease 1% 6%

Diabetes 11% 10%

Uninsured 5% 8%

All Veterans

Virginia

National

Edentulism 6% 8%

Heart Disease 11% 14%

Diabetes 17% 17%

Uninsured 3% 6%

Rural VA Veterans

Edentulism 12%

Heart Disease 21%

Diabetes 30%

Uninsured 4%

State Ranking Across Four Conditions*

46 Edentulism

47 Heart Disease

19 Diabetes

45 Uninsured

*Rankings were assigned from worst (#1) to best (#51) by comparing the "All Veterans" status across the 50 states plus Washington DC using unrounded values. Values displayed graphically were rounded to the nearest ones place.



- **Very little data** exist on the oral health and well-being of queer people
- Preliminary data suggest transgender people **see the dentist less** than cisgender people
- In general, dental providers report being “comfortable” with queer patients yet don’t fully **understand the nuances** of lived experience
- Preliminary data indicate **dental schools** don’t focus on this population

Community Highlight on LGBTQIA+





Pride in Knowledge: Transforming LGBTQIA+ Oral Health Through Education

We're excited to announce LGBTQIA+ Oral Health Week, taking place from October 21-25, 2024! This year's theme, "Pride in Knowledge: Transforming LGBTQIA+ Oral Health Through Education," focuses on the critical role of education in fostering inclusive, affirming care for the LGBTQIA+ community.

Each day will focus on a specific subtheme to help us advance LGBTQIA+ dental public health equity!

- **Monday** – *Laying the Foundation: LGBTQIA+ Inclusivity in Dental Care and Education*
- **Tuesday** – *Advancing Knowledge: Integrating LGBTQIA+ Education in Dental Curricula*
- **Wednesday** – *Building Inclusive Practices: Continuing Education for Dental Professionals*
- **Thursday** – *Empowering Patients: Advocacy for LGBTQIA+ Oral Health*
- **Friday** – *Engaging Communities: Building Partnerships for Equitable Oral Health*

Community Highlight on LGBTQIA+





Tips for Integrating LGBTQIA+ Topics into Dental Curricula and Creating a Safe Learning Environment

The following list is designed to provide ideas and starting points for improving the environment on campus for LGBTQIA+ students and ensuring your curriculum reflects the needs of LGBTQIA+ patients. Although implementing all of the recommendations may not be possible or practical, it's often best to implement multiple strategies.

- ☐ Train students to confront implicit biases and avoid assumptions about a patient's gender or sexual orientation, using neutral and [inclusive language](#) unless a patient explicitly identifies their pronouns or orientation.
💡 Refer to our [Cultural Responsiveness for Oral Health Providers](#) workbook.
- ☐ When discussing social and health issues among the LGBTQIA+ community, be careful to avoid language that pathologizes diverse gender identities and sexual orientations.
- ☐ Acknowledge the diversity and distinct, often-intersecting identities within the LGBTQIA+ community by avoiding generalizations in language and educational materials.
- ☐ Consider adding pronouns to email signatures to model inclusivity, even if it is optional to protect the privacy of those not ready or not able to disclose.
- ☐ Utilize clinical case studies and patient scenarios that include patients with diverse gender identities, sexual orientations, and accompanying social determinants of health to help students consider the full context of each patient's life and identity.
- ☐ Develop modules that address specific oral health needs within the LGBTQIA+ community, such as the impact of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) on oral health.
💡 Learn more about the [oral health implications of gender-affirming care](#).



Creating an LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Environment

Creating an inclusive environment in a dental practice (or any healthcare setting) ensures all patients feel welcomed, respected, and understood. Here's a checklist to help guide practices in fostering inclusivity.

Physical Environment

- ☐ Signage: Display clear, inclusive signs. Consider signs indicating that your practice is an LGBTQIA+ safe space.
💡 [Download a sign](#) to place in the front of your practice.
- ☐ Gender-neutral restrooms: Establish or label gender-neutral restrooms.
- ☐ Inclusive visuals: Ensure that brochures, posters, and other materials represent diverse groups, including LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Intake and Administrative Procedures

- ☐ Inclusive intake forms: Update forms to include spaces for preferred names, and pronouns.
💡 Read [this guidance](#) from the National Center for Transgender Equality.
- ☐ Training for front desk staff: Ensure reception staff are trained in using inclusive language and providing information.
- ☐ Privacy measures: Implement procedures to protect patients, especially when discussing LGBTQIA+ health concerns.

Staff Training and Awareness

- ☐ Ongoing inclusivity training: Offer regular training on LGBTQIA+ inclusivity, cultural competence, and communication.
- ☐ Resource availability: Ensure that staff have access to resources on LGBTQIA+ health concerns, terminology, and support.
- ☐ Open dialogue: Foster an environment where staff can discuss concerns, and share experiences with patients.



Inclusive Interactions Toolkit



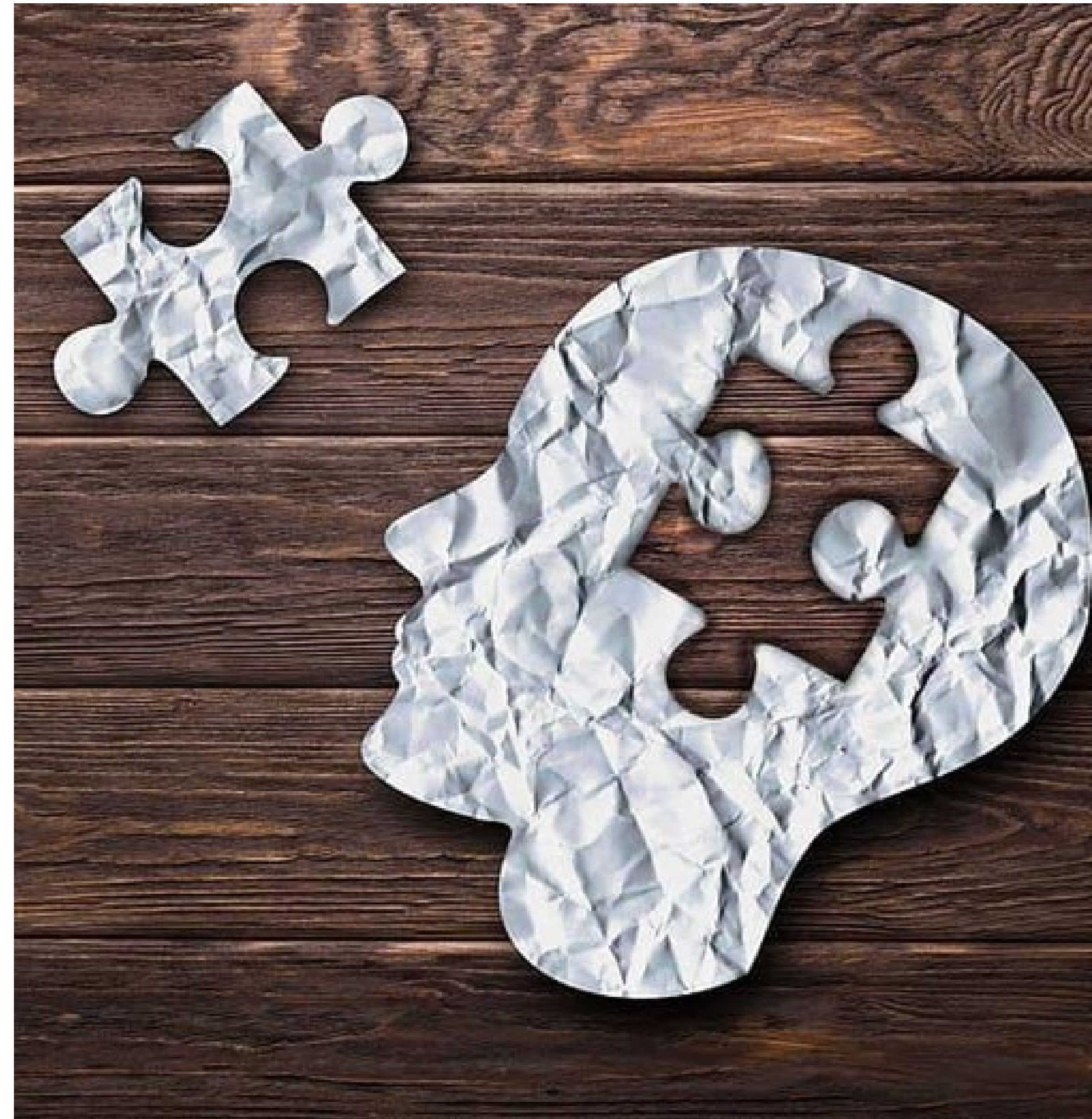
LGBTQIA+ Cultural Responsiveness for Oral Health Providers

Community Highlight on LGBTQIA+



Gaps in the Evidence Base

1. Minoritized veterans and lack of **available data**
2. Veteran outcomes **by age**
3. Connecting **mental health** and oral health
4. **Clinical outcomes** or differences for queer people
5. Lack of SOGI, veteran, and oral health data collected in **surveillance systems**



Strategic Recommendations

1. **Fund** research, education, and advocacy to address gaps in resources and knowledge
2. **Invest** in trauma-informed approaches and inclusive policies/practices
3. **Be proactive** to protect the current public health infrastructure for both veterans and queer people





Attend & present at the 2025 AIDPH Colloquium!

Join us in Chicago for
Dental Care as a Human Right to
continue the conversation



References from Presentation

- [Digital Technology in Community Engagement: Impacts and Implications](#)
- [Improving health literacy using the power of digital communications to achieve better health outcomes for patients and practitioners](#)
- [Using health information technology to engage communities in health, education, and research](#)
- [Community engagement: health research through informing, consultation, involving and empowerment in Ingwavuma community](#)
- [The Community-Engaged Research Framework](#)
- [Digital Technology in Community Engagement: Impacts and Implications](#)
- [Health Data Principles](#)
- [The Critical Role of Racial/Ethnic Data Disaggregation for Health Equity](#)
- [Engaging Community: What Does It Mean, and How Do We Measure It?](#)

