

**Transforming HIV Prevention
into Gay Men's Health:**

Making the Total Paradigm Shift

**Presented by
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The Gay Men's Health Movement in the United States (1997-2003)

- **Origins**

- **Dallas, 1995: Identification of need for new generation of health work with gay men**
- **HIV/AIDS prevention**
- **LGBT health movement**
- **Women's health movement**

- **Key Events**

- **Philadelphia, 1997: Transformation of Safeguards from HIV focus to GMH**
- **Gay Men's Health Summit I., Boulder in 1999: 300 participants**
- **Gay Men's Health Summit II., Boulder in 2000: 500 participants**
- **2000-2002: Over 25 local & regional Gay Men's Health Summits held in the U.S.**

- **Ideas to Consider about a Gay Men's Health Movement:**
 - **Theory & research based**
 - **Strategically planned**
 - **Principle-driven**
 - **Core issues to gay, bi, and queer men focused upon**
- **Characteristics**
 - **Decentralized, anarchistic and neotribal**
 - **De-professionalized**
 - **Community-based and subculture-based**
 - **Mobilization focused**
 - **Dependent upon the kindness of strangers**
- **The Path Forward**
 - **Identification and education of organizers for racially and geographically diverse gay men's health movements**
 - **Creation of local community-based gay men's health summits, projects, and trainings**
 - **Beyond Raleigh...**

For consideration:

The 6 Foundational Principles of Gay Men's Health Summits, Projects, or Campaigns

- 1. Replace the HIV-centric paradigm of health advocacy with holistic models that integrate (but do not default to) HIV**
- 2. Exit the crisis paradigm of HIV work and embrace understandings, meanings, and implications of HIV for men in 2003**
- 3. Challenge deficit-based models for work with gay, bi, and queer men and replace them with asset-based approaches**
- 4. Confront structural forces challenging the well-being of gay, bi, and queer men strategically and politically**
- 5. Embrace a “big tent” vision of community, respecting diverse ways of organizing sex and relationships → Shame and guilt are the health hazards, rather than specific sex practices and sex cultures**
- 6. Launch only efforts that are not overtly or covertly sanitizing, sanctimonious or moralistic.**

For consideration:

Address the 8 Core Issues

Confronting gay, bisexual, and queer men of diverse generations, ethnicities, races, locations, and social classes

- 1. Meanings of anal sex, penetration, & the exchange of semen**
- 2. Relationships between various cultural and class-based masculinities and anal sex practices**
- 3. Understandings, resources, & wounds emerging from childhood experiences with boys & men**
- 4. Sources of resilience, creativity, determination, humor & playfulness in diverse queer cultures**
- 5. Healing from trauma: violence, abuse, homophobia, racism, poverty, AIDS and addiction**
- 6. The relationship between transgression, risk, and the taboo and sexual desires, practices, and subcultures**
- 7. The ways privileged masculinities of youth present challenges to & opportunities for well being as men age**
- 8. The revival & re-creation of community rituals, social structures, and in the post-AIDS era**

Possible Key Features of a Gay Men's Health Movement

It is not...	It is...
HIV focused	Holistic
Deficit-driven	Asset-driven
Individual focus	Relational focus
Directive	Informative
Fear-based & Moralistic	Trusting & Celebratory
Monocultural	Multicultural
Self-Esteem Building	Community-Building
Professionalized	Grassroots
Unitary	Multiple

Implications for HIV Prevention

- **A powerful gay men's health movement may provide a strong foundation for health promotion related to syphilis, HIV, substance abuse, and domestic violence**
- **HIV prevention may be most effective by not referencing HIV**
- **Challenging HIV-centric thinking may do much to strengthen community health**
- **Non-directive, non-manipulative, non-coercive approaches may be most effective with gay, bisexual, and queer men**
- **Sexual meanings and social identities may be central to sexual practices, subcultures, and communities**
- **A gay men's health movement may be a site to consider as having the potential to catalyze new thinking, create new projects, and mobilize masses of gay, bisexual, and queer men**