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To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Edwin Ivey. I've have been on the Board of OutCT for over 3 years. OutCT is a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer organization in Southeastern Connecticut. We work closely with our community and ask their needs all the time.

One of our bigger events is a Pride Festival on the beach, which includes local vendors and resource booths. Last year we included on-site HIV education, testing and health related trivia. To our surprise our community was under educated on many health-related issues. Some people didn't know who or how to ask health related questions. We need to work on this breakdown in communication and build a healthier community.

Another concern is the youth's health education in the LGBTQ Community. A lot of younger people are coming out as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer now. They have questions and look to our community for answers. Sometimes we can't always give that to them. A Transgender person's health needs are specific to that individual person and that comfort level between health provider and patient is necessary.

I believe an establishment of health and human services network dedicated to their specific needs is essential. We need some foundation established to help bridge that gap in communication and care.

Thank You,
Edwin Ivey, OutCT