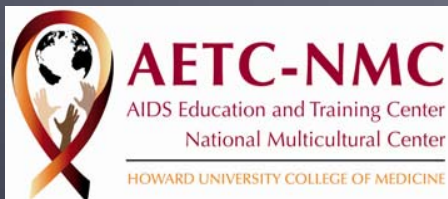


# *Cultural Competence: Strengthening the Clinicians Role in Delivering Quality HIV Care within AANHPI Transgender Communities*

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# Outline

1. Objectives and Pre-assessment
2. AANHPIs in the US
3. Gender Identity & Terminology
4. History of Transgender People in AANHPI Cultures
5. Profile of AANHPI Transgender Communities
6. Stigma
7. Barriers to HIV Services for AANHPIs and AANHPI Transgender People
8. Strategies for Service Provision
9. Post-assessment
10. Resources

# Learner's Objectives

By the end of the training, participants will be able to:

- Describe the impact of HIV on AANHPI communities, specifically AANHPI Transgender communities
- Understand the history of AANHPI Transgender communities
- Identify at least 3 barriers to accessing and utilizing health services for AANHPI transgenders
- Describe 2 strategies for providing more effective and sensitive services to AANHPI transgenders
- Name at least 1 organization which they can use as a resource

# Who are AANHPIs?

- Over 50 distinct ethnic subgroups who speak more than 100 different languages and dialects.<sup>1</sup>
- The term “Asian” includes persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent (e.g. India, China, Philippines, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Burma, Pakistan, etc.).
- The term “Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander” (NHOPI) includes people having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

Source: Office of Management and Budget (1997). Revisions to the standards for the classification of Federal data on race and ethnicity. Federal Register 62FR58781-58790. [online] [www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/1997Standards.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/1997Standards.html)

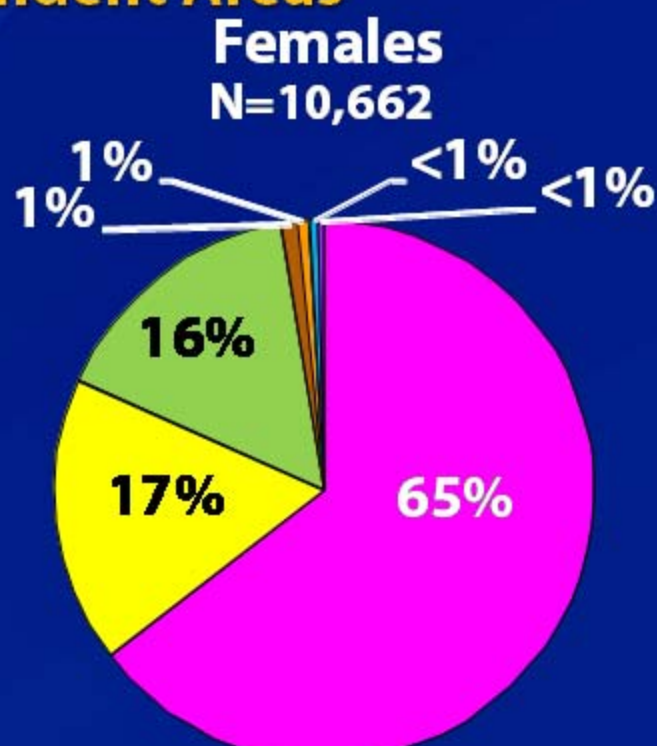
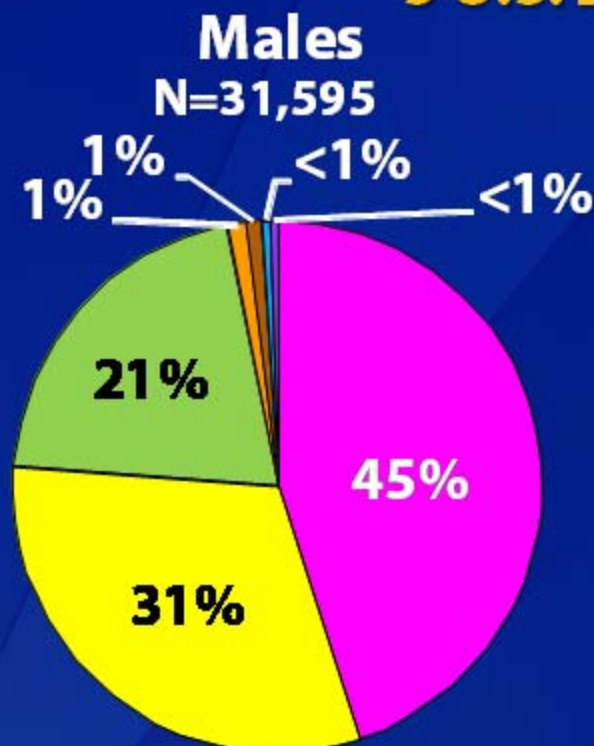
# AANHPIs in the US

- Represent 6%(18.5 million) of total population
- 1.5 million businesses owned by Asian-Americans in 2007, an increase of 40.4 % from 2002.
- 17% of ANHPIs lacked health insurance coverage in 2009
- 80% of Asians living in a household with Internet use — the highest rate among race and ethnic groups.

Source: US Census Bureau [online]

[http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/facts\\_for\\_features\\_special\\_editions/cb11-ffo6.html](http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/cb11-ffo6.html)

# Diagnoses of HIV Infection among Adults and Adolescents, by Sex and Race/Ethnicity, 2008—37 States and 5 U.S. Dependent Areas



American Indian/Alaska Native

Asian

Black/African American

Multiple races

Hispanic/Latino<sup>a</sup>

Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander

White

Note. Data include persons with a diagnosis of HIV infection regardless of stage of disease at diagnosis.

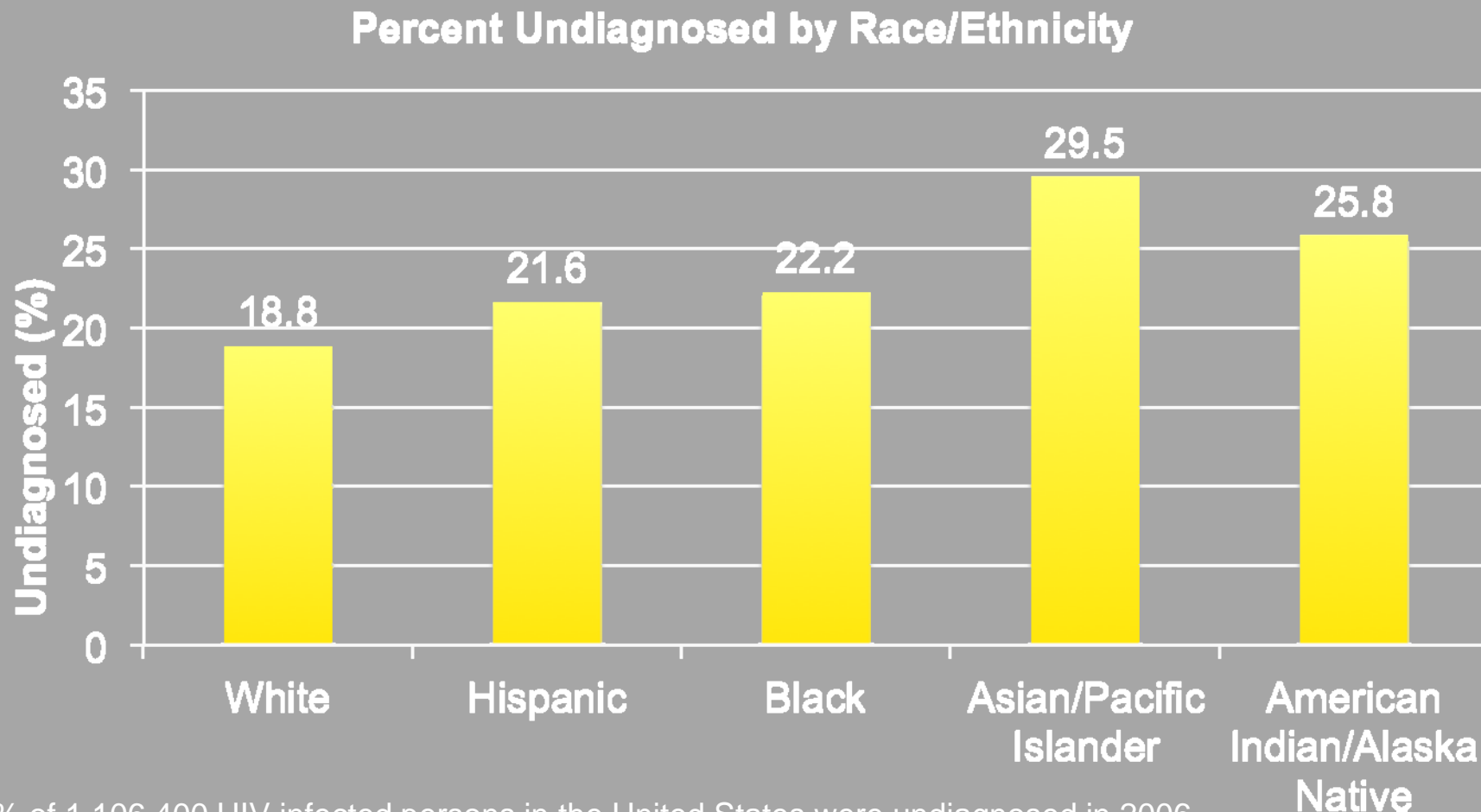
Data from 37 states and 5 U.S. dependent areas with confidential name-based HIV infection reporting since at least January 2005.

All displayed data have been estimated. Estimated numbers resulted from statistical adjustment that accounted for reporting delays, but not for incomplete reporting.

<sup>a</sup> Hispanics/Latinos can be of any race.



# CDC: Estimated Prevalence of Undiagnosed HIV Infection in the United States (2006)

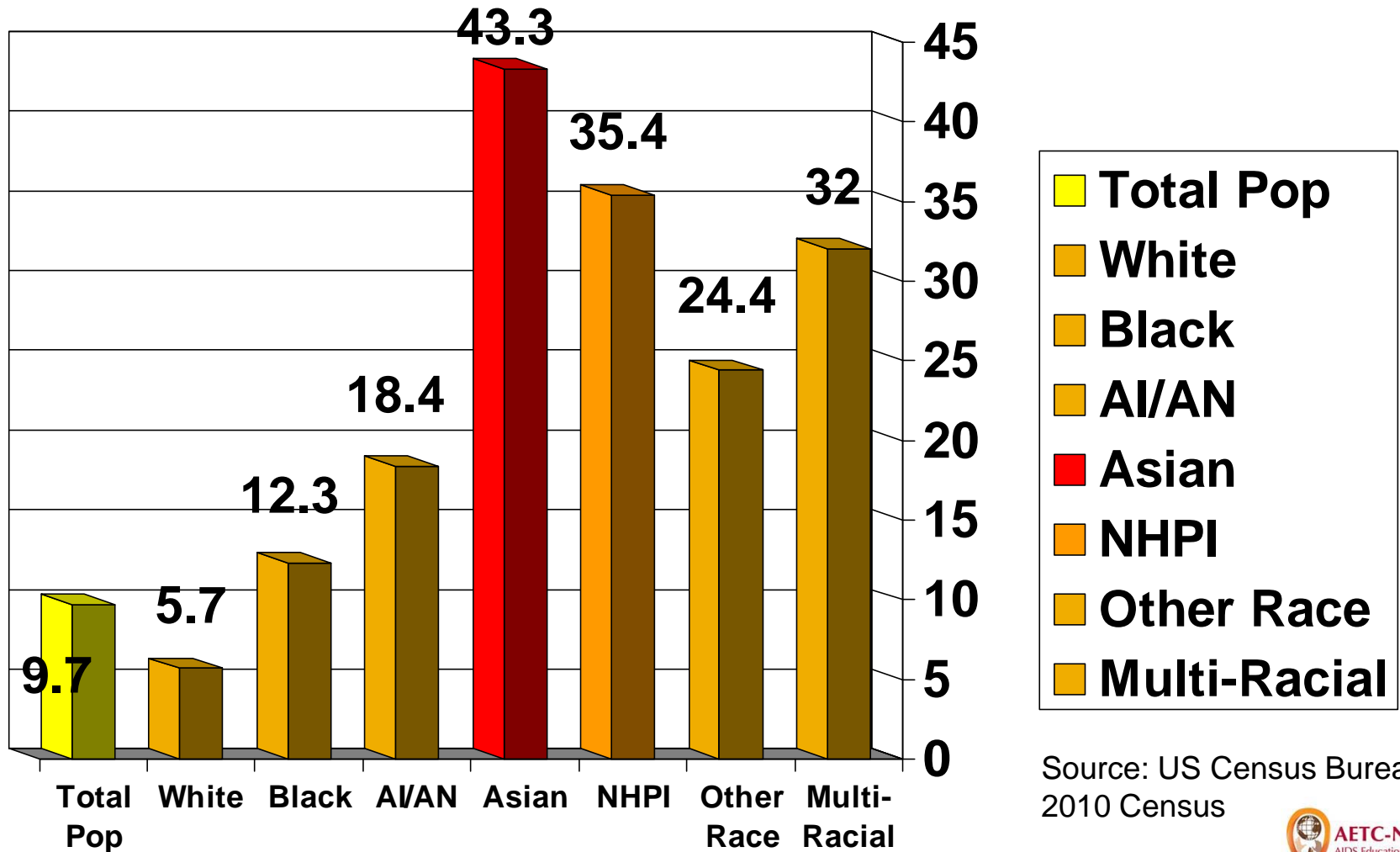


21% of 1,106,400 HIV-infected persons in the United States were undiagnosed in 2006.

Campsmith ML, *JAIDS*. 2009



# Percent Change: 2000-2010





# Where are the AANHPIs?

## States with the Highest Proportion of Asians

Hawaii (38.6 percent)

California (13.0 percent)

New Jersey (8.3 percent)

New York (7.3 percent)

Nevada (7.2 percent)

## States with the Highest Proportion of NHPIs

Hawaii (26.2 percent)

Alaska (1.6 percent)

Utah (1.3 percent)

Nevada (1.2 percent)

Washington (1.0 percent)

## Top 10 States with the Highest Increases of Asians

Nevada (116.5%)

Arizona (91.6%)

North Dakota (91.6%)

North Carolina (83.8%)

Georgia (81.6%)

Arkansas (78.5%)

Delaware (75.6%)

South Dakota (73.8%)

Indiana (73.3%)

Texas (71.5%)

Source: US Census Bureau 2010 Census

# AANHPIs and HIV

- Account for 1% of HIV/AIDS cases in US
- Have the highest rate of increase (4.4%) in new HIV infections in the nation
- Two-thirds have never been tested for HIV (lowest testing rates of all races and ethnicities)
- 1 in 3 A&PIs living with HIV don't know it
- Gay men (MSM) and transgenders are highest risk group
- Infection rates in women are increasing

Source: A&PI Wellness Center 2011. HIV and Asians & Pacific Islanders: National Epidemic Fact Sheet. [online] [http://www.apiwellness.org/extras/2011/USA\\_factsheet\\_REV2011.pdf](http://www.apiwellness.org/extras/2011/USA_factsheet_REV2011.pdf)

# Gender Identity

- "Transgender," at its most basic level, is a word that applies to someone who doesn't fit within society's standards of how a woman or a man is supposed to look or act
- Transgender may be used as an umbrella term for people who are "gender non-conforming"
  - Cross-dresser
  - Drag Queen or King
  - Intersex
  - Transsexual
  - Transitioning

One's sense of one's own gender. It is what one feels comfortable expressing. It is unique to each individual. It is a self feeling that one is a man, woman, both, neither, bi-gender, multi-gender, etc.

Source: Gender Identity Project: <http://gaycenter.org>; Life Foundation: [www.lifefoundation.org](http://www.lifefoundation.org)

# History of Transgender People in AANHPI Culture

- Many AANHPI cultures include transgender people in their histories
  - Hijras (India)
  - Paksu mudang (Korea)
  - Mahu (Hawai'i)
  - Waria (Indonesia)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> gender often revered and respected
- Westernization & colonialization increased stigmatization

Source: A&PI Wellness Center 2000. Issues of Transgendered Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.  
[online] [http://www.apiwellness.org/article\\_tg\\_issues.html](http://www.apiwellness.org/article_tg_issues.html)

# Profile of AANHPI Transgender Community

- Limited data on AANHPI TG communities
  - CDC classifies trans women as “men who have sex with men,” or “MSM,”
  - Unclear how data is collected for trans men
- Most studies are on male-to-female trans women and in the Bay Area.
- Nationwide estimates: 27% of transwoman are HIV+
- A study of AANHPI trans women estimates up to 27% may be HIV+

Source: A&PI Wellness Center 2011. HIV and Asians & Pacific Islanders: National Epidemic Fact Sheet. [online] [http://www.apiwellness.org/extras/2011/USA\\_factsheet\\_REV2011.pdf](http://www.apiwellness.org/extras/2011/USA_factsheet_REV2011.pdf)

# Profile of API Transgender Community

- Substance Use
  - High alcohol/drug use during sex
  - Methamphetamines usage high among AANHPIs
- Mental Health
  - 26% AANHPI transgender people were clinically depressed
  - 15% reported a history of attempted suicide
- Violence (among TG of color)
  - Over 1/3 experienced abuse as a child
  - Over 1/5 experienced abuse as an adult

## Sources:

1. Tooru Nemoto, PhD, Don Operario, PhD, JoAnne Keatley, MSW, Lei Han, PhD, and Toho Soma, MPH. HIV Risk Behaviors Among Male-to-Female Transgender Persons of Color in San Francisco Am JPublic Health. 2004;94:1193–1199
2. Tooru Nemoto PhD, Lydia A. Sausa PhD, MEd, Don Operario PhD & Joanne Keatley MSW (2006): Need for HIV/AIDS Education and Intervention for MTF Transgenders, Journal of Homosexuality, 51:1, 183-201

# What is Stigma?

Discrimination      Stereotypes      Self-esteem

Negative Associations

Shame

Misinformation

Social Norms      Labeling

Isolation      "ism"s      Oppression      Silence

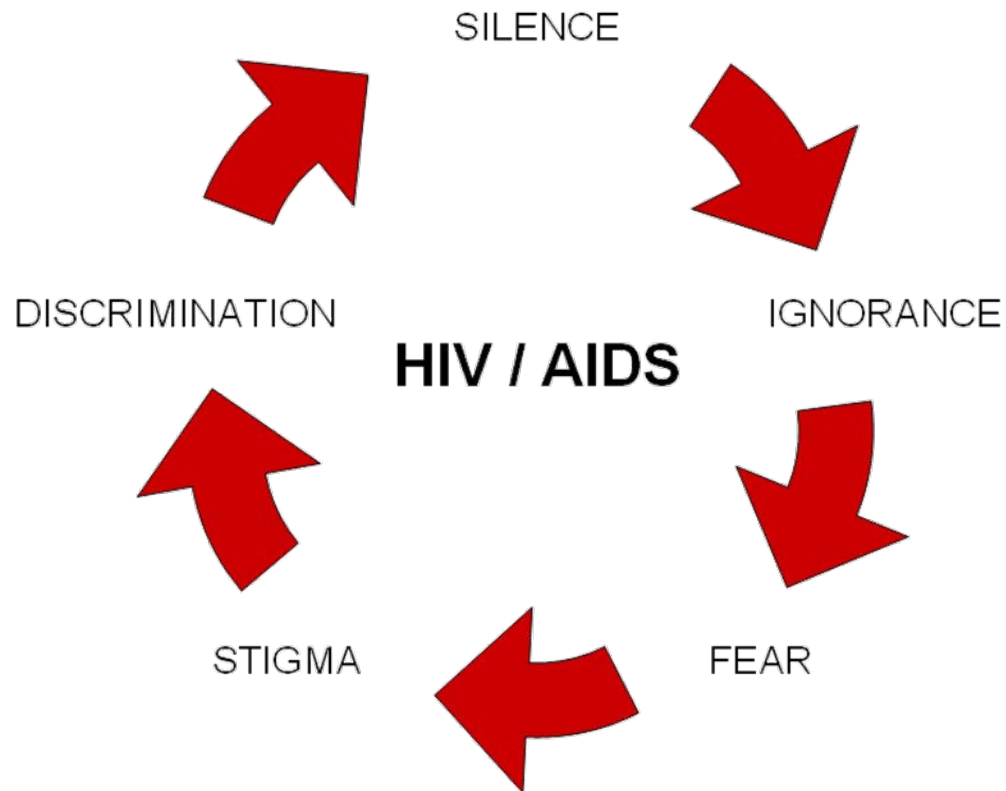
Devaluation      Ostracizing

Rejection

Ignorance      Fear      Institutional



# HIV-related Stigma



Source: <http://pinkarmenia.blogspot.com>

# AANHPI Cultural Factors Affect Health Care Use and Access

- Communal vs. Individual Identity
  - “Saving Face”
- Indirect Communication Methods
- Language barriers
- Deference to Authority
- Taboo Topics
- Traditional Healing

Source: NMAETC BE SAFE Guide

# Barriers to Prevention and Care

- Distrust of providers
- Lack of insurance/money
- Priorities – survival over health
- Immigration Status – undocumented, refugee, asylee
- Language Barriers
- Limited access to facilities (transportation, hours)
- Homelessness
- Employment Discrimination

Source: A&PI Wellness Center 2000. Issues of Transgendered Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. [online]  
[http://www.apiwellness.org/article\\_tg\\_issues.html](http://www.apiwellness.org/article_tg_issues.html)

# TG-specific Health Issues

- HIV/STDs
- Hepatitis B and C
- Substance Use
- Mental Health
- Hormone Therapy
- Silicone Injections
- Sexual Reassignment Surgery
- Conditions associated with biological sex

# What are your Biases?

- What are your own stereotypes about Transgenders?
- What are your own stereotypes about Asians & Pacific Islanders?
- What are your own stereotypes about HIV, sexuality, gender, drug use, and sex work?
- How do you discriminate or stigmatize?



# Strategies for...providers

- Be Client-Centered - Focus on the clients need, not their gender identity and sexual orientation
- Address transgender people in a sensitive way
- Ask open-ended non judgmental questions
- Do not be afraid to let the patient know you don't know
- Establish rapport and build trust slowly
- Maintain confidentiality
- Manage our own discomfort and/or bias
- Be aware of transgender health care issues, including their rights and medical/mental health protocols

Sources: Life Foundation, A&PI Wellness Center, Transgender Law Center

# Strategies for...the workplace

- Provide a safe and welcoming space
  - Materials with images TG people
  - Unisex/gender neutral restrooms
  - Training for *all* staff, including reception
- Provide support groups or 1-1 counseling
- Hire “local” TG staff member
- Interpretation and translation services
- Be a resource!
  - Referrals to Trans-friendly services, transportation vouchers, benefits counseling





# Future Directions

- Cultural and psychosocial factors need to be incorporated to more effectively reach and impact HIV Care within AANHPI Transgender Communities
- Work to eliminate stigma, discrimination and homophobia and use structural-level interventions to effect change and to leverage potential assets for interventions
- Strategies that are responsive to the unique challenges that the AANHPI Transgender Communities face, are needed to encourage members to seek testing and, once aware of their status, to obtain and remain in care.

# Case Study

Angela is a 22 year old Chinese transgender woman. She seems nervous and won't make eye contact. Her English is not very strong. She is currently going through estrogen hormone therapy. She has history of depression and drug use. She is uninsured. She's at the clinic to get a check-up and was referred by a local CBO.

# Case Study: Angela

## Estrogen Hormone Therapy

- Where does she receive therapy? Is she using clean needles?
- Are there side effects?
- How does she pay for it? Is she employed?

## Assess Social Support

- Does she have family? Do they support her gender identity/transition? If not, how does this affect her?
- Where does she get social support from?
- Where does she live?

## Assess Drug Use

- Is she currently using substances? If so, what kind? Assess for HIV/Hep C risk if needles are involved

## Assess Sexual History and Risk

- Has she been tested for HIV/STDs?
- If involved in commercial sex work, ask about use of condoms

# Resources

- Asian & Pacific Islander Wellness Center  
[www.apiwellness.org](http://www.apiwellness.org)
- Life Foundation  
[www.lifefoundation.org](http://www.lifefoundation.org)
- Transgender Law Center  
[www.transgenderlawcenter.org](http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org)



# AETC-NMC

AIDS Education and Training Center  
National Multicultural Center

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