

# **2024 Rhode Island Trans Health Conference Session Details**

## **Breakout Session 1 - 10:15 am - 11:00 am**

### **1. Foundations of Gender Diversity & Affirming Care - Ayiti-Carmel Maharaj-Best, MD (she/her)**

#### *a. About the presenter:*

- i. Ayiti Maharaj-Best (she/her) is a family doctor who serves as the Medical Director of Planned Parenthood of Southern New England, where she leads the Gender Affirming Care and Primary Care programs. Dr. Best's career focuses on closing health disparities by providing trauma-informed, anti-racist care to individuals, training health professionals and designing systems that make healthcare more accessible and empowering.

#### *b. Presentation description:*

- i. This workshop is a great place to start for conference attendees who are newer to providing gender affirming care. This workshop will cover the basics of gender identity and sexual orientation. It will briefly discuss different options for gender affirming care. Time will be held for questions.

#### *c. Learning objectives:*

- i. Gain understanding of current terminology around gender identity and sexual orientation
- ii. Understand the basics of gender affirming care
- iii. Identify common options for gender affirming hormone therapy

### **2. Gender Euphoria and Queer Joy: Tapping into the Positive - Allie Scheer, LICSW (they/them) and Denise Crooks, LICSW (she/her)**

#### *a. About the presenters:*

- i. Allie is a clinical social worker with strong interests in gender care, trauma, and social justice. They began their career in NY but have been living and working in RI for the past 5 years. They started with Thundermist as a clinician on the Trans Health Team and currently oversee the Behavioral Health department at the West Warwick location.
- ii. Denise Crooks, MPH, LICSW (she/her/hers) is a therapist within Lifespan's Psychiatry department with a focus on providing care to members of the LGBTQ+, kink, and consensually non-monogamous communities. She is also Co-Director of the LGBTQ+ Health and Advocacy Scholarly Concentration at Alpert Medical School. In addition, Denise enjoys advocating for legislative change to improve the lives of LGBTQ+ Rhode Islanders.

#### *b. Presentation description:*

- i. Much of our focus in providing gender care is on gender dysphoria. While this is a clear need in our work we have noticed that much less attention is paid to helping clients tap into gender euphoria as a means of coping, affirmation, and resiliency building. The power of community and queer joy has also suffered through the pandemic and loss of physical communal spaces. We would like to draw attention to the important therapeutic benefits of drawing from these resources.

- c. *Learning objectives:*
    - i. Define and give three examples of gender euphoria and micro-affirmations
    - ii. Name two ways that increasing experiences of gender euphoria and micro-affirmations can improve mental health
    - iii. Name two ways to support clients in increasing gender euphoria
- 3. Update on Legal Issues in Transgender Health Care Access - Shield Laws and Beyond - Polly Crozier, Esq. (she/her)**
- a. *About the presenter:*
    - i. Polly is the Director of Family Advocacy at GLAD which is a legal organization that works in New England and nationally. Polly works primarily on youth and family issues, including access to transgender health care, protections for families, and school issues, and she is the GLAD liaison to RI.
  - b. *Presentation description:*
    - i. This session will share updates on key legal issues in the area of accessing transgender health care with a focus on shield / provider protection laws in the United States and an update on efforts in Rhode Island to pass a shield law.
  - c. *Learning objective:*
    - i. Understand the status of shield laws passed in the US, the key features of shield laws, and the status of the shield bill in RI

## **Breakout Session 2 - 11:10 am - 11:55 am**

- 1. Overview of HIV/STI Prevention for Nonbinary and Gender Diverse Individuals in Rhode Island - Philip A. Chan, MD (he/him)**
- a. *About the presenter:*
    - i. Dr. Philip A. Chan, MD, is an Associate Professor at Brown University. Dr. Chan is Chief Medical Officer at Open Door Health, the state's only community-based LGBTQ+ clinic. Dr. Chan also serves as Consultant Medical Director for the Rhode Island Department of Health.
  - b. *Presentation description:*
    - i. This session will review the current state of HIV/STI's in Rhode Island, as well as approaches to address and prevent HIV/STI's among gender diverse and nonbinary individuals including recent advances in pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and doxycycline as post-exposure prophylaxis (DoxyPEP).
  - c. *Learning objectives:*
    - i. Understand the trends in HIV/STIs in Rhode Island including among gender diverse and non-binary individuals
    - ii. Implement current HIV/STI prevention approaches with gender diverse and non-binary individuals
    - iii. Understand how to use doxycycline as post-exposure prophylaxis to prevent bacterial STIs
- 2. Empowering Intimacy: Navigating Supportive Conversations in Trans Relationships - Nikole Barnes, LICSW (she/her) and Elyana Kadish (she/her)**
- a. *About the presenters:*
    - i. Nikole Barnes(she/her) is a Black, queer therapist with over 15 years of experience and received her Masters of Social Work from Columbia University. In her private practice she engages in trauma-informed care, with a specialization in working with LGBTQAI+, BIPOC, and emerging adult populations.

- ii. Elyana Kadish (she/her) is a queer, white, New York Jew and a student-centered wellness educator. With her Masters from Clark University, she combines improv comedy and hospitality with her expertise and promotes holistic wellness for young adults in college. Serving as Health Educator at RISD, she leads a multilevel model for student wellbeing. Elyana resides in Providence with her Fiancée and two pets.

b. *Presentation description:*

- i. Explore supportive, appropriate conversations in intimate relationships within the trans experience. Discuss through a multi-marginalized lens, considering race, gender, mental health, and ability. Provide tools for providers to ensure medically accurate, inclusive support. Guide individuals in understanding their role in sexual health and pleasure, asking questions for client comfort and clarity. View clients' sexual behavior holistically through their full identity.

c. *Learning objectives:*

- i. Participate in medically accurate, inclusive, and supportive conversations with their clients about their sexual behavior
- ii. Identify how their clients full identity may impact their sexual relationships, behaviors, and desires
- iii. Lead treatment conversations that build stronger sexual agency in their clients lives

**3. Gender Identity, Hypermobility, and Neurodiversity - Marisa Bergfield, PsyD (she/they)**

a. *About the presenter:*

- i. Marisa Bergfield (She/They) is a clinical psychologist working in health psychology. She identifies as a trauma, grief, and identity therapist who specializes in chronic pain and illness. She is passionate about offering trauma-centered, identity-informed, and culturally sensitive therapy.

b. *Presentation description:*

- i. This presentation will highlight recent research on the relationship between gender diversity, hypermobility, and neurodiversity to improve understanding of patients' lived experiences, the ability to detect co-occurring conditions, and treatment for trans and gender-expansive patients.

c. *Learning objectives:*

- i. Recognize hypermobility (Ehlers-Danlos Syndromes, Hypermobility Spectrum Disorder) and co-occurring conditions
- ii. Understand the relationship between hypermobility, neurodiversity, and gender
- iii. Understand how gender identity impacts patients seeking health care
- iv. Understand how hypermobility impacts gender affirming care

**Breakout Session 3 - 12:05 pm - 12:50 pm**

**1. Bridging the Gap: Navigating the Transition from Pediatric to Adult Care - Ariel Frey-Vogel, MD, MAT (she/her) and Mandy Coles, MD, MAT (she/her)**

a. *About the presenters:*

- i. Ariel Frey-Vogel (she/her) is an internist and pediatrician who is the Director of Child and Adolescent Services at the MGH Transgender Health Program where she cares for gender diverse people of all ages.
- ii. Mandy Coles (she/her) is the Medical Director of the Child and Adolescent Trans/Gender Center for Health (CATCH) at BMC. She works with a multidisciplinary team to support children, adolescents, & young adults across the gender spectrum.

- b. *Presentation description:*
  - i. We will discuss how to prepare parents and young adults for the transition to adult care as a gender diverse person. We will discuss the unique legal and biopsychosocial perspectives at play with an emphasis on maintenance of all of the relationships involved.
- c. *Learning objectives:*
  - i. Conduct discussions with parents of gender diverse soon-to-be adults to help them understand what this means for their child's care
  - ii. Brainstorm with young gender diverse adults how the transition to adulthood will affect them from a medical and biopsychosocial perspective
  - iii. Problem-solve with young gender diverse adults how to successfully make the transition to adulthood in the doctor's office

**2. Considerations for Trans Healthcare Providers Working with Trans Patients - Luke "Tt" Patrick King, LICSW (he/they)**

- a. *About the presenter:*
  - i. Tt is an individual and group LICSW located in Western Massachusetts, specializing in topics of gender, identity, somatics, and trauma in his private practice. He is also an adjunct faculty at the BC School of Social Work, currently teaching group therapy, and anti-oppressive practice.
- b. *Presentation description:*
  - i. This workshop is for trans-identified professionals; through discussion and evidence-based suggestions, this session will focus on the unique challenges and gifts of working across shared identity, focusing on the role of Self-Disclosure, Vicarious Trauma, and Counter-Transference and Bias.
- c. *Learning objectives:*
  - i. Identify specific guidelines for setting appropriate boundaries surrounding self-disclosure to patient sharing a marginalized community
  - ii. Adopt specific strategies for mitigating the impact of vicarious traumatization working with a marginalized community one is also a part of
  - iii. Name risks of provider bias in working with patients similar to oneself, and how to observe and challenge such bias

**3. Cultivating Affirming Treatment for LGBTQIA+ Folks with Eating Disorders - Jamie Bushell, MS (they/them) and Monika Ostroff, LICSW, CEDS-S**

- a. *About the presenters:*
  - i. Jamie "OJ" Bushell (they/them) is in recovery from an eating disorder and co-occurring mental health conditions. OJ writes about the intersectionality of eating disorders, trauma, sexuality, and gender identity/expression to help raise awareness of eating disorders in queer communities.
  - ii. Monika Ostroff is the ED of the Multi-Service Eating Disorders Association (MEDA). Monika works to ensure access to equitable, compassionate, and affirming eating disorders care. Her passion for treating EDs was borne out of her own struggle with severe and enduring AN and life experiences.
- b. *Presentation description:*
  - i. The LGBTQIA+ communities are particularly vulnerable to developing eating disorders. This session will explore foundational eating disorders treatment, anti-fat bias, gender literacy, and how to deliver affirming, quality care to those in the LGBTQIA+ communities.

- c. *Learning objectives:*
  - i. Differentiate between eating disorder diagnoses
  - ii. Identify anti-fat bias in healthcare settings and apply principles of HAES
  - iii. Identify their own biases and avoid using language that will exacerbate eating disorder symptoms in their clients
  - iv. Increase gender literacy and understanding of the intersections between EDs, gender identity/expression, including gender dysphoria and body dysmorphia
  - v. Better serve the needs of trans communities through modifying their practices, including strategies for creating an accessible and inclusive treatment environment

#### **Breakout Session 4 - 2:05 pm - 2:50 pm**

##### **1. The Intersection of Cancer Genetics and Trans/Nonbinary Healthcare - Katherine (Katie) Crawford, MS, CGC (she/her)**

- a. *About the presenter:*
  - i. Katie is a clinical genetic counselor at Women & Infants and Kent Hospital working with the cancer prevention program. She has completed her undergraduate work at Cornell University and graduate studies at Arcadia University. She has published works on cancer genetics and other genomic research.
- b. *Presentation description:*
  - i. In this session we will review when and why a provider may want to refer a patient to speak with a genetic counselor to discuss cancer risks, genetic testing, and/or surgical options. We will cover what a patient and a provider should expect from a cancer genetics consultation.
- c. *Learning objectives:*
  - i. Identify patients that may benefit from meeting with a genetic counselor
  - ii. Understand what the process of a genetics appointment entails and discuss this with patients to prepare them for an appointment
  - iii. Understand what the results of a genetic test means
  - iv. Understand how management of a gene positive may impact options and decisions a transgender or nonbinary patient is making

##### **2. Adapting Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) Curricula for Transgender and Gender-Diverse Youth & Caregivers - Alaina Baker, PsyD (she/her)**

- a. *About the presenter:*
  - i. Dr. Baker is a Clinical Psychologist and Director of the Youth & Family Gender Identity Program at BCSC. She provides care for adolescents with trauma and mood disorders as well as gender-affirming care for trans and gender-diverse youth, caregivers, and LGBTQIA+ community consultation and training.
- b. *Presentation description:*
  - i. Evidence-based treatments for transgender and gender diverse (TGD) youth are limited. Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) fails to address the specific needs of and stressors experienced by TGD youth. This presentation explores adaptations to DBT skills group curricula for TGD youth and caregivers.
- c. *Learning objectives:*
  - i. Apply the Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) biosocial theory to transgender and gender diverse (TGD) youth
  - ii. Provide caregiver psychoeducation on the gender minority stress model (GMSR) and its application to TGD youth in DBT
  - iii. Adapt current DBT skills curriculum for TGD youth and their caregivers

**3. Perinatal Care for Trans and Non-Binary Patients: Experiences and Best Practices - Elliot Harrison-Lee, MPH (he/him)**

- a. *About the presenter:*
  - i. Elliot Harrison-Lee recently graduated with his MPH in Maternal and Child Health from Brown University. His research focuses on transgender fertility, reproduction, and pregnancy; as well as provider education to improve healthcare experiences for transgender birthing parents.
- b. *Presentation description:*
  - i. This session presents information on the experiences and medical needs of transgender birthing parents so providers can better understand how to care for them and the unique challenges they face.
- c. *Learning objectives:*
  - i. Understand the barriers to natal care and fertility preservation that transgender parents face
  - ii. Implement best practices for caring for pregnant transgender patients
  - iii. Use data from multiple studies on trans fertility and pregnancy to inform their practice

**Breakout Session 5 - 3:00 pm - 3:45 pm**

**1. Procedures in the Care of Transgender Youth - Kate Millington, MD (she/her)**

- a. *About the presenter:*
  - i. Dr. Millington is a Pediatric Endocrinologist with an interest in Pediatric Transgender Health Care. She cares for transgender and gender diverse youth in the Gender and Sexuality Clinic in the Division of Adolescent Medicine at Hasbro Children's Hospital.
- b. *Presentation description:*
  - i. This educational session will focus on two procedures in the care of transgender youth, histrelin implant insertion and testosterone pellet insertion.
- c. *Learning objectives:*
  - i. Understand the risks and benefits of histrelin implant placement
  - ii. Understand the risks and benefits of testosterone pellet placement
  - iii. Describe the procedure for testosterone pellet and histrelin implant placement

**2. Trans Self-Compassion & Shame Resilience for Radical Healing - addyson tucker, PsyD (they/them)**

- a. *About the presenter:*
  - i. Dr. addyson tucker (they/them) is a genderqueer psychologist and ADHDer who thrives at the intersections of racial, gender, and body liberation. They love helping queer & trans adults build shame resilience through self-compassion and radical healing. Professionally, addyson's mission is to guide trans-affirming providers to be more intentional, inclusive, and accountable for those impacted by systemic oppression and marginalization.
- b. *Presentation description:*
  - i. After a brief overview of racial, gender, and body liberation, participants will reflect on the ways in which trans & nonbinary communities internalize external shame messages of being "too much" or "not enough." The training will demonstrate how self-compassion can both build shame resilience and offer space to 'hold the hard.' A model of radical healing (French et al., 2019) will build on theories of liberation to help honor lived experiences of trans & nonbinary folks navigating oppressive systems, while also identifying and exploring sources of gender euphoria & radical joy.

- c. *Learning objectives:*
  - i. Identify two or more examples of internalized shame messages that show up for trans & nonbinary adults
  - ii. Name at least one intervention that might be applied through a lens of radical healing for gender liberation
  - iii. Identify two or more ways in which the components of self-compassion might support shame resilience

**3. Providing Trans Inclusive Palliative and Hospice Care: Practical Skills for All Clinicians - Alexis Drutchas, MD (she/her) and Ramón Rodríguez, MD (he/him)**

- a. *About the presenters:*
  - i. Alexis Drutchas is a palliative care physician at Massachusetts General Hospital. She trained in Family Medicine at Brown University and co-founded the RI Trans Health Conference. Alexis was a PCP at Fenway Health, completed the Harvard Palliative Care Fellowship, and remained at MGH as faculty.
  - ii. Ramón Rodríguez grew up in Providence, RI. He graduated from medical school at Columbia University in 2020. He completed his Internal Medicine residency at Brigham and Women's Hospital in 2023 and is currently a Palliative Care Fellow in the Harvard Palliative Care Fellowship Program.
- b. *Presentation description:*
  - i. Research demonstrates that even in the face of serious illness, TGD individuals face discrimination within palliative care and hospice. In this session, we'll explore principles of inclusive palliative and hospice care and highlight unique considerations for TGD individuals facing serious illness.
- c. *Learning objectives:*
  - i. Recognize caregiving demographics for LGBTQ+ individuals and families facing serious illness
  - ii. Identify unique palliative care and hospice considerations for LGBTQ patients and families
  - iii. Describe strategies to enhance LGBTQ-inclusive end of life care

**Town Hall - 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm - Jaye Watts, LICSW (he/him) and Michele Paliotta, LICSW (she/her)**

- d. *About the presenters:*
  - i. Jaye Watts is a licensed independent clinical social worker and the director of the Transgender Health Program at Thundermist Health Center. For 15+ years, Jaye has been at the forefront of ensuring that future generations of transgender individuals in Rhode Island and beyond have fewer barriers to living authentically as themselves. Jaye's advocacy work has shaped many of the current policies supporting gender diverse people in our state. His work to build the first program for trans health in Rhode Island has ensured an entire community has robust and unbroken access to essential care.
  - ii. Michele is a social worker with over 20 years of experience in clinical and community practice. She has experience in a wide range of settings including education, clinical, forensics, child welfare and regulatory compliance. Michele provides corporate, educational and community care clinical consult and training. Topics include LGBTQIA cultural competency, mental health and well-being in the workplace, de-escalation and trauma informed care. Michele's social work practice is firmly rooted in the principles of social justice for all people. Michele earned her Bachelor of Science in Human Services at Northeastern University, and her Master of Social Work at Rhode Island College. Michele practices self-care by spending time in her garden growing vegetables and flowers.
- e. *Presentation description:*

- i. Providers will gather together again at the end of the conference to reflect on what was learned throughout the day. Attendees from interdisciplinary backgrounds will have the opportunity to share their takeaways from the day and positive changes they plan to make in their practice.
- f. *Learning objectives:*
  - i. Set clear goals for improving practice based on what was learned at the conference
  - ii. Reflect on trends seen in practice and how new information acquired can help explain trends