

Disability Justice & Mental Health Access

Equality New York (EQNY) believes that disability justice is integral to LGBTQ justice. EQNY will fight for disabled LGBTQI New Yorkers from a “nothing about us without us” perspective. This especially includes psychiatric and intellectual/developmental disabilities.

POLICY PRIORITIES

Develop a bill to ban conversion therapy on adults under guardianship

This bill would ban the use of conversion therapy on those over the age of 18 and under legal guardianship.

The current New York State conversion therapy ban forbids conversion therapy on minors under 18. However, it leaves out adults who are under a guardianship because of a mental or intellectual disability. They could be currently forced into conversion therapy. The District of Columbia recently passed such a ban and is the only jurisdiction to do so. New York State would be the second entity and first state to pass this legislation.

Develop a bill to help discontinue the use of police and other armed officers in mental responses

This bill would stop the abusive force used by police and armed officers in mental response throughout New York State.

A majority of people shot by law enforcement nationally are disabled, often with mental illness. Currently, armed law enforcement is untrained to deal with anyone experiencing a mental health crisis. Inadequate training or understanding of mental health leads to police violence. We must pass reform requiring unarmed crisis personnel to be the response to mental health crises.

Further data collection on Kendra’s Law and involuntary commitments based on LGBTQ identity

This change will enhance and support better data collection on Kendra’s Law.

We know that outpatient commitments due to mental illness authorized under Kendra’s Law are racially biased and impact disproportionately New Yorkers of color. We need to know more about whether LGBTQ people are being disproportionately targeted by the mental health court system.



Kendra’s Law (New York Mental Hygiene Law § 9.60) allows courts to order certain individuals with serious mental illness to stay in treatment for up to a year while continuing to live in the community.

Save the 340B Safety Net

This budget request will reverse the April 1, 2021 Medicaid pharmacy benefit carve-out from managed into a fee-for-service model.

The Medicaid drug carve out will be a huge cutback for organizations and hospitals who serve those with low income and living with HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS has historically, and still to this day, disproportionately affected the LGBTQI community. Tens of millions in 340B savings will be stripped from the trusted HIV providers. In the midst of a pandemic, it must be seen as thoroughly unreasonable to take away life saving services and surely will be delaying the advancement and progress made through the End the AIDS Epidemic (ETE).

Citations can be found at www.equalityny.org/policypriority/