



*The Maryland State Medical Society*

**News: For Immediate Release**

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## **MEDCHI, THE MARYLAND STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY, RECOGNIZES PRIDE MONTH**

ANNAPOLIS, June 8, 2023 - Earlier this month Governor Wes Moore issued a [proclamation](#) recognizing June as Pride Month in Maryland. “Pride Month celebrates the contributions, resilience, courage, and joy of our LGBTQIA+ family, friends, and neighbors and serves as a powerful reminder of the challenges and discrimination that queer people face in their daily lives, including barriers to healthcare, housing, education, and employment,” the proclamation reads.

Ever since 1999, when then President Bill Clinton first declared June as “Gay & Lesbian Pride Month.” June has historically been what the LGBTQ+ community recognizes as Pride Month, when members of the community come together to celebrate the progress made for social acceptance of gay and gender diverse people.

In celebration of this tradition, it is expected that many LGBTQ+ Marylanders will be participating in Pride-related events throughout the month, including parades, block parties and festivals across the state in recognition of Pride Month.

The Maryland Department is using Pride Month as an opportunity to launch an awareness campaign called “Get Your Pride On” to encourage Maryland citizens to include health checks as part of June’s LGBTQIA+ celebrations. The campaign includes ads on dating apps and on public transportation such as bus shelters that serve to remind LGBTQ+ people to stay current on their vaccinations and to get tested for STIs and other diseases.

According to recent data issued from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), STIs are disproportionately higher in the gay population, particularly among men. In 2021, 36% of primary and secondary syphilis cases were among bisexual and gay men. In addition, 36% of gonorrhea cases were among gay, bisexual and other men who had sex with men that year.

Other groups that are particularly at risk of STI transmission include adolescents and adults under 25 years old as well as certain racial and ethnic groups such as Black, Hispanic and Native communities, according to the CDC.

MedChi has always been committed to addressing and reducing the health inequities faced by the LGBTQ+ community. For example, MedChi’s policies support a broader and more inclusive sex education curriculum in the school system. Studies have found that many schools are unsafe and unwelcoming for most LGBTQ+ students, which can have negative impacts on health and well-being.

In May of 2022, MedChi adopted policy in support of the expansion of the state’s coverage of gender-affirming care to meet current standards of care and in support of granting equitable access to high quality care for all transgender residents.

Speaking for MedChi, CEO Gene Ransom stated that “we applaud [Governor Moore’s proclamation](#), as it celebrates the contributions, resilience, courage, and joy of LGBTQIA+ Marylanders, and recognizes the progress made towards full equality and equity for the state’s LGBTQIA+ community”.

#### About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. Formed in 1799, it is still the largest physician organization in Maryland today. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients, and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit [www.medchi.org](http://www.medchi.org).