



Promoting Sexual Health among Gay and Lesbian Individuals

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WHO Definition of Sexual Health (2002, 2006)

Sexual health is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being related to sexuality;

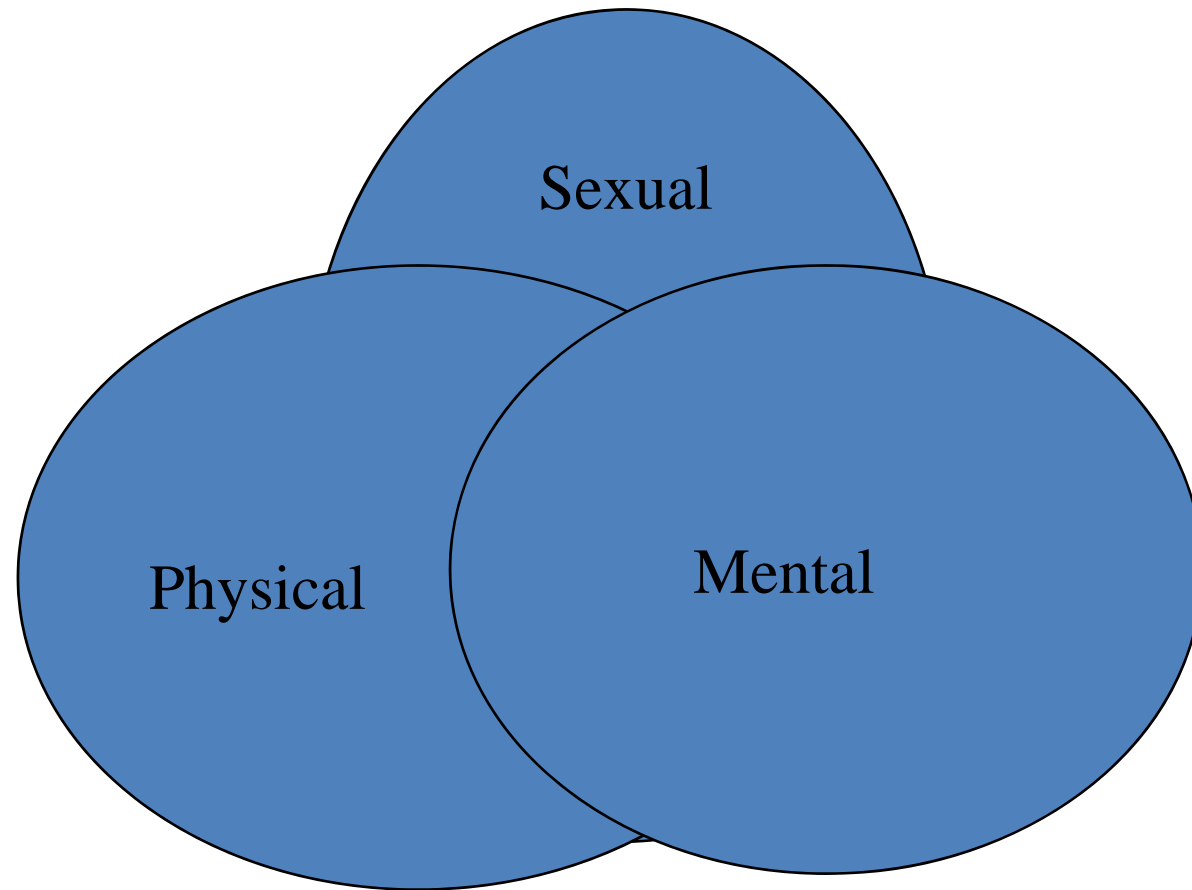
it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity.

Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships,

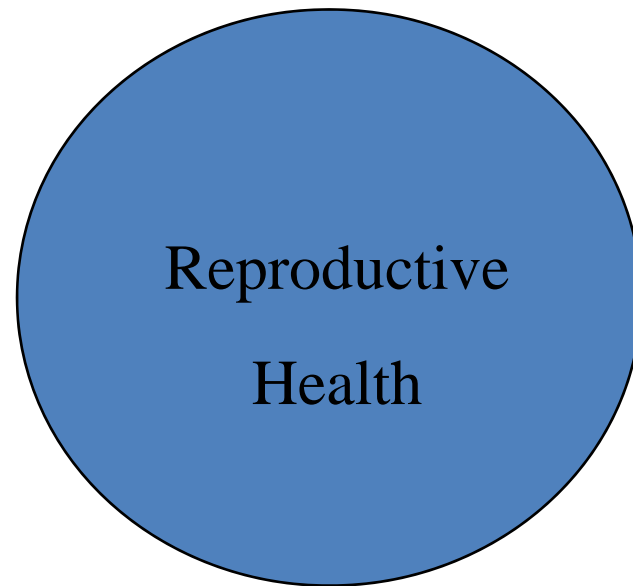
as well as the possibility of having **pleasurable** and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence.

For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled.

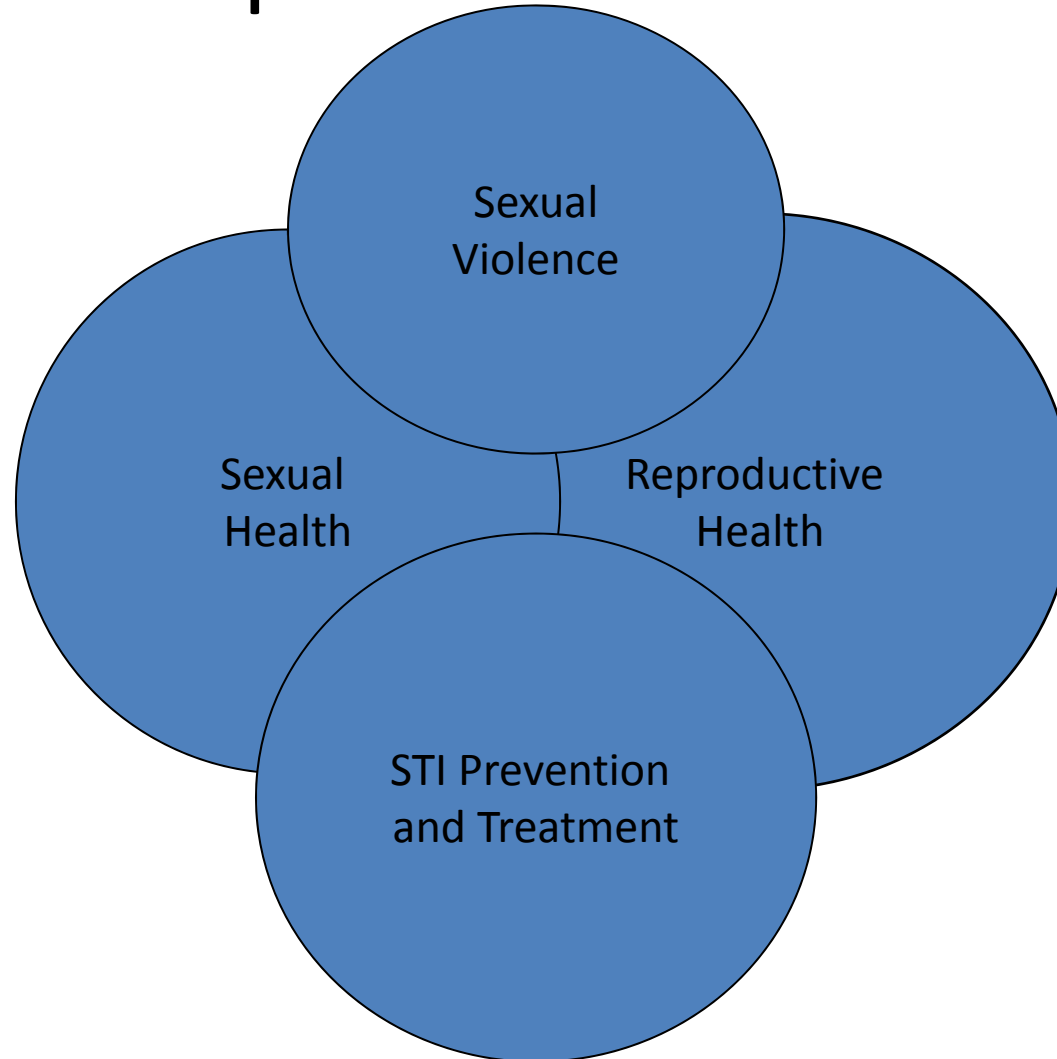
Sexual Health



Sexual and Reproductive Health



Sexual and Reproductive Health



Sexual Health – A Broad Unifying Concept



Sexual Health

It involves...

Physical health – breast cancer,

STI prevention and treatment

Sexual dysfunction and pleasure

Fostering intimacy and relationships

Families and children (assisted reproduction)

Violence prevention

Mental health

Three Paradigms of Mental Health

Illness Model

Gay Affirmative Model

Modern Model

Gay Affirmative Psychotherapy

Based on research which demonstrated that psychological adjustment was highly correlated with the degree of person's openness about his/her sexuality.

Assumptions

Homosexuality is a normal variant of human sexual expression.

Assumptions

Psychological adjustment is greatly influenced by social forces.

Assumptions

The self develops and is shaped by the nature of interpersonal relationships.

Goals

The main goal of gay affirmative psychotherapies is to help an individual clarify who he/she is rather than what he/she wants to be.

Goals

**Clarify who they are
versus what their
parents/culture may
expect of them.**

Goals

**Affirm who they are
and to develop an
internal locus of
control.**

Goals

Help them outline or to define developmental tasks related to the coming process which would help them to be more likely to move through these stages.

The Coming Out Process

Pre-coming Out

Coming Out

Exploration

First Relationships

Integration

- **Coleman (1981/82)**

Strategies

Help clients understand that their coming out experiences are normal developmental issues.

Strategies

Identify developmental tasks and encourage task completion to progress through the various stages of identity development.

A New Model Emerging

Gay affirmative psychotherapy doesn't work for everyone.

Some individuals are born constitutionally with some risks and protective factors that inhibit their identity development.

There are psychiatric co-factors which may inhibit identity development.

Minority Stress

Effects of stigma, discrimination, prejudice, and violence e.g., bullying, religious oppression

Importance of advocating for sexual rights!

Disorders Inhibit Development

Substance abuse

Anxiety disorders

Depressive disorders

Adult attention-deficit disorder

Post-traumatic stress disorder

Other psychiatric disorders

Assumptions of New Model

Personality and psychiatric disorders may be inherent or a function of a complex interplay of bio-psycho-social factors, not just a consequence of stigmatization.

Stigmatization may have its neurobiological effect -- creating personality and psychiatric disorders.

Strategies of the New Model

Careful psychological evaluation.

Less reliance on simple prescriptions of cognitive/behavioral/social change.

Psychodynamic as well as cognitive/behavioral therapies.

Greater use of psychotropic medications as an adjunct to therapy.

Promotion of Sexual Health involves assessing and attending to...

Physical health – breast and anal cancers

STI prevention and treatment

Sexual dysfunction and pleasure

Fostering intimacy and relationships

Families and children (assisted reproduction)

Violence prevention

Mental health