Aleda E. Lutz VA earns “LGBTQ Healthcare Equality Top Performer” designation in HRC Foundation’s Healthcare Equality Index

WASHINGTON - March 27, 2018 - Today, the Aleda E. Lutz VA in Saginaw, MI, announced their “LGBTQ Healthcare Equality Top Performer” designation from the Human Rights Campaign Foundation (HRC), the educational arm of the nation’s largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) civil rights organization. The designation was reported in the 11th edition of the Healthcare Equality Index (HEI). A record 626 healthcare facilities actively participated in the HEI 2018 survey. Among the HEI participants, 95 earned a “LGBTQ Healthcare Equality Top Performer” designation.

“Our VA strives to provide the very best quality care to all Veterans, and this honor supports these efforts,” stated Dr. Barbara Bates, Chief of Staff.

“With some of our biggest battles still ahead of us, it is crucial that institutions continue to demonstrate that the march toward full equality is not slowing down,” said HRC President Chad Griffin. “The 626 participants in this year’s HEI continue this march in partnership with the LGBTQ community. For the past decade, the HEI has been the roadmap to closing the gap in ensuring equal care to LGBTQ patients and their families, and we urge every healthcare facility to join us in this continuing effort to provide inclusive care to all.”

The 11th edition of the HEI marks the second year participants were given a score based on how many LGBTQ-inclusive policies and practices they have in place. HEI participants are given scores in four criteria which represent how many policies and best practices from each section they have implemented: foundational elements of LGBTQ patient-centered care, LGBTQ Patient Services and Support, Employee Benefits and
Policies, and LGBTQ Patient and Community Engagement. Participants who receive the maximum score in each section for a total score of 100 points earn the coveted status of “2018 LGBTQ Healthcare Equality Leader.” Participants who score between 80 and 95 points earn the status of “2018 LGBTQ Healthcare Equality Top Performer.”

In the 2018 report, an impressive 418 facilities earned HRC’s “LGBTQ Healthcare Equality Leader” designation given to facilities which receive a score of 100 points. With 82% of participating facilities scoring 80 points or more, healthcare facilities are going beyond the basics when it comes to adopting policies and practices in LGBTQ care.

In addition to active survey participants, the HRC Foundation proactively researched key policies at more than 900 non-participating hospitals. Of the hospitals who did not participate in the HEI but were scored based on research, only 63 percent have patient non-discrimination policies which include both “sexual orientation” and “gender identity,” and only 53 percent were found to have an LGBTQ-inclusive employment non-discrimination policy. The equal visitation policy, at 93 percent, is the only one which comes close to matching the rate of the participating facilities.

*The Human Rights Campaign Foundation is an education arm of America’s largest civil rights organization working to achieve equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people. HRC envisions a world where LGBTQ people are embraced as full members of society at home, at work and in every community.*

The Aleda E. Lutz VAMC in Saginaw, Michigan operates an 81-bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation Community Living Center, with an additional 8-bed acute medicine and telemetry wing. It provides care to over 36,300 Veterans in a 35-county geographic area, from mid-Michigan to the Mackinac Bridge. Veterans also receive care at one of our nine VA Community Based Outpatient Clinics located throughout Michigan. More information about this VA can be found at [www.saginaw.va.gov](http://www.saginaw.va.gov).

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