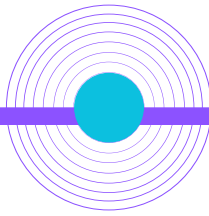




EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



BACKGROUND

The City of Miami has a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and more or other identities (LGBTQIA+) population of 20,228 residents, and it is growing. Research indicates that LGBTQIA+ individuals experience unique health challenges, needs, and disparities. Yet, the availability of local data regarding the intersection of social determinants of health and sexual orientation and gender identity is scarce, making it challenging to create inclusive policies that address the social determinants of health and offer solutions for reducing chronic diseases within this population. Additionally, the current socio-political climate is increasing fear and creating a sense of lack of safety and isolation for the LGBTQIA+ population.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Accelerate Change Together (ACT) initiative aims to improve the health of the City of Miami’s LGBTQIA+ population. Funding was provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to developing an Accelerator Plan that will provide the framework for governmental and organizational policy, systems, and environmental changes with the ultimate goal of reducing the population’s chronic disease burden. This project focused on impacting the social determinants of health priority areas of Built Environment and Social Connectedness. Creating physically and socially safe places for LGBTQIA+ people and increasing a sense of belonging, inclusion, and integration with the larger community have been shown to positively impact physical and mental health. Various activities, including focus groups, a multilingual community survey, and community outreach have provided community feedback for inclusion in the Accelerator Plan. A diverse, multi-sector Leadership Team helped inform project direction and implementation, while an equally diverse Collective assisted with the development of the Accelerator Plan. This process followed UHP’ 8-Steps Process for Developing Strong Community Action Plans.





PROJECT OUTCOMES

The Accelerator Plan includes 16 policy, systems, and environmental change (PSE) recommendations that will greatly impact the health of the LGBTQIA+ population as well as that of the population of the City of Miami as a whole. These could be implemented individually or singularly, but simultaneous implementation of several recommendations would have a compounding effect. The recommendations were developed based on the qualitative data provided by the focus groups, input from the Collective, and the community survey data. The top themes that emerged from the community survey were:

- **Increased visibility** of available LGBTQIA+ programs and services.
- **Meaningful allied leadership** from elected officials that extends beyond Pride Month.
- **Dedicated/safe space** where people feel welcomed and where they can safely participate in recreational and daily life activities.

Recommendations in the Accelerator Plan were arranged by focus area (outdoor public spaces; indoor public spaces; public transit; and safety and inclusion) and ranged from providing LGBTQIA+ training to City of Miami employees and improving engagement with the LGBTQIA+ community to increasing inclusive communication and programming. Some of the Accelerator Plan recommendations include:

- Establish and adopt comprehensive LGBTQIA+ inclusive sporting and recreational programming within the City of Miami. (Outdoor Public Spaces)
- Increase access, visibility, and utilization of available LGBTQIA+ services and resources. (Indoor Public Spaces)
- Establish and adopt an LGBTQIA+ Inclusive program within the City of Miami's Transit to increase the sense of belonging experienced by LGBTQIA+ patrons. (Public Transit)
- Improve the City of Miami's relationship with the LGBTQIA+ community by developing a policy to establish year-round allyship among elected officials and department leaders. (Safety and Inclusion)

This Accelerator Plan was designed for the community by the community with the intent to positively impact members of the City of Miami's LGBTQIA+ community across racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines, and ultimately impact all individuals who live, work, learn, and play within the City.