



ANAC Stands Against Political Attacks on Human Rights and Healthcare

Introduction:

The mission of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (ANAC) is two-fold: professional development and education for members of the HIV healthcare team and advocacy for the rights and welfare of people with HIV globally. Founded in 1987, we stood against fear and misinformation and raised awareness about the struggles faced by the communities we served. Today in our current political climate, the communities we serve are still facing discrimination, new attacks on their rights and threats to their healthcare. ANAC members witness the intersection between human rights, social justice and health outcomes in the patients we serve and in their communities. We call attention to three fundamental aspects of human rights that intersect with health and health equity.

Racial Equity

ANAC believes that structural and systemic racism are issues that actively harm and disenfranchise Black people, Indigenous people, people of color and their communities. An anti-discrimination lens that actively works to create equity, not just equality, is necessary to dismantle the growing disparities related to racism that exist within healthcare. Intentional investments and approaches to anti-racism in healthcare and nursing is critical. Evidence-based, culturally responsive prevention and treatment programs are central to person-centered care and are imperative to reach the public health goals of ending the HIV epidemic.

LGBTQ+ Rights

ANAC believes that all people regardless of gender identity or sexuality deserve care and that any denial of life-saving services including HIV prevention and treatment, emergency services, mental health supports or gender affirming treatment is not only unethical but is morally reprehensible. Whole person care dictates the need to understand and address the myriad of risks caused by discrimination that LGBTQ+ individuals may face including violence, depression and increased risk for suicide. LGBTQ+ supportive healthcare contributes to a world where people can feel safe and affirmed in their identity.

Reproductive Rights

ANAC believes that reproductive rights are human rights, and that restriction of such rights particularly impact low-income, racial and ethnic minority women and other marginalized people. Reproductive rights include prenatal services, safe childbirth, access to contraception and to legal and safe abortion. They are central to an individual's autonomy and the ability to make decisions regarding the development and timing of their own family structures. Gender equity cannot be achieved without a full scope of reproductive rights for everyone across the gender spectrum.

Conclusion

We place the highest commitment to achieving health equity, reducing health disparities and respecting human dignity. This is the legacy of HIV nursing, and we continue that commitment today. As people do not live single issue lives it is important to emphasize the intersectional approach that we must take to achieve health equity for all, regardless of race, gender, gender identity, age, sexual identity, socio-economic or immigration status. We stand with our colleagues throughout the globe who continue to provide care in hostile environments. Hateful rhetoric, harmful policies and discriminatory legislation cannot be tolerated or accepted. ANAC will continue to stand with and for patients, families, communities and each other in the fight for the care of all people, to eliminate needless suffering and promote human dignity.