‘LGBTQ Equality Leader’ Award Recognizes UHealth’s Commitment to Inclusive Care

For the fourth year in a row, the University of Miami Health System has received the “LGBTQ Health Care Equality Leader” ranking from the Human Rights Campaign Foundation for its deep commitment to serving South Florida’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community.

“This award is the latest indication of our ability to deliver supportive, inclusive care to LGBTQ patients,” said Kymberlee Manni, Ph.D., chief executive officer of UHealth Tower, the flagship hospital for the University of Miami Health System. UHealth also launched Miami’s first transgender support group, Trans-Trend Miami, in early 2017 with The Hub at the LGBT Visitors Center in Miami Beach.

Another important step was the health system’s launch of a Transgender Patient Family Advisory Council (TRANS-PFAC), the first such program in the nation, according to Lauren Foster, director of concierge services, Office of...
Patient Experience.

This multidisciplinary resource program includes patients, families, and health care professionals with monthly meetings.

“Our mission is to help facilitate the delivery of the highest standard of care collaborating with patients and family members to identify opportunities, effect changes, and improve care for the transgender community,” said Foster. “Our guiding principles are delivering care with dignity and respect, sharing information, collaborating and getting active participation from all parties.”

Foster credits Maureen Fagan, D.N.P., FNP-BC, chief nursing executive, for helping to drive supportive care for LGBTQ patients. “We have formed a Patient Family Advocacy group with regular weekly meetings,” she said. “We enjoy hearing their stories about having a great experience at UHealth, and if they tell us about any issues they experienced, we work to improve things here.”

For the past four years, UHealth has received the top ranking in the Human Rights Campaign Foundation’s (HRC) Health Equality Index program. Facilities were assessed on four criteria: non-discrimination and staff training, patient services and support, employee benefits and policies, and patient and community engagement. With an overall score of 100, UHealth was among 406 facilities earning the top designation.

“The health care facilities that participate in HRC’s Healthcare Equality Index are making clear that they stand on the side of fairness and are committed to providing inclusive
care to their LGBTQ patients,” said Alphonso David, HRC president. “Going beyond inclusive non-discrimination policies, these health care facilities are adopting best practices in the areas of LGBTQ patient care and support, employee policies and benefits, and LGBTQ patient and community engagement. We commend them for providing inclusive care for all.”