



UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL
Newark, New Jersey

*****PRESS RELEASE*****

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UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL EARNS TOP *LGBTQ HEALTH CARE EQUALITY LEADER* DESIGNATION IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION'S HEALTHCARE EQUALITY INDEX

NEWARK, NJ -- Today, University Hospital announced its *LGBTQ Health Care Equality Leader* designation from the Human Rights Campaign Foundation (HRC), the top recognition in the foundation's annual index. This is the third consecutive year that University Hospital has been recognized by the HRC, earning high marks for prioritizing patient and employee non-discrimination policies and training. But this is the first year that the hospital has been honored with this top recognition.

The designation was awarded as part of the HRC's annual [Healthcare Equality Index \(HEI\)](#), a national survey tool that is intended to help LGBTQ patients and their loved ones find facilities that provide equitable and inclusive care. A record 765 health care facilities actively participated in the HEI 2020 survey. Of those included in the HEI, 495 earned the *LGBTQ Health Care Equality Leader* designation.

Every year, HRC recognizes the health care facilities that participate in the HEI for their dedication and commitment to LGBTQ inclusion. HRC is 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.

To meet the needs of LGBTQ patients and loved ones, University Hospital has a Diversity and Inclusion Committee to lead targeted programs, including research initiatives on issues affecting the LGBTQ community. The hospital also has a designated LGBTQ ombudsman available. Patients are addressed by their preferred pronouns and the hospital ensures access to Primary Care, Specialty Care, and Hospital Care for LGBTQ patients and their families.

University Hospital is also proud to be home to the Rutgers Center for Transgender Health, which successfully performed the first male to female and female to male gender reassignment surgeries in the state. This collaborative center offers a full spectrum of medical, psychiatric, and surgical care for transgender individuals, in order to provide a compassionate and coordinated approach to gender affirmation.

“Being recognized by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation is strong validation of our continuous

and ongoing efforts to treat every member of our community with respect and dignity,” said **Franklin Hickey, Chair of University Hospital’s LGBTQIA Committee**. “When people seek care here, we prioritize treating them the utmost equity and respect.”

“At University Hospital, our health providers are not only committed to excellent care for our LGBTQ sisters and brothers; we want to achieve the most welcoming environment in the state,” said **Shereef Elnahal, MD, MBA, President and CEO of University Hospital**. “We continuously seek innovative ways to support this community, and have engaged every level of leadership in the process.”

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University Hospital

University Hospital is part of one of the nation’s leading academic medical centers and is the Level 1 Trauma Center for Northern New Jersey. Located at University Heights in Newark, University Hospital is a principal teaching hospital of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences and a regional resource for advanced services across many medical specialties. For more information about University Hospital, please visit www.uhnj.org.