

# PROFILE

## Location

College Park, Maryland

## Populations of Focus

LGBTQ+ communities

## Topic Areas

LGBTQ+ mental health, health care, and related topics, such as HIV infection, substance use, and healthy relationship dynamics



**University of Maryland Prevention Research Center staff take a break from working to smile for the camera.**

“ UMD-PRC is the first and only PRC to explicitly focus on mental health needs of LGBTQ+ populations.... We bring a unique perspective to fighting unequal access and other barriers to quality health resources and promoting tools to enable LGBTQ+ persons to have equal support in striving to live healthy lives.”

## **Bradley Boekeloo, PhD**

*Center Director*  
UMD-PRC

The [University of Maryland Prevention Research Center \(UMD-PRC\)](#) is one of 26 Prevention Research Centers (PRCs) supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the 2019–2024 funding cycle. Each PRC is funded to establish and maintain their center and to conduct a core research project. PRCs may receive supplemental funding to conduct additional research projects and activities.

UMD-PRC is committed to providing research, service, and training focused on mental health issues among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) communities. Its mission is to eliminate health disparities and related social injustices experienced by LGBTQ+ people. UMD-PRC seeks to address these issues by developing and sharing education and practice tools, guidance, and programs that improve access to high-quality mental health and health care for LGBTQ+ communities.

UMD-PRC is a central resource for education, expertise, and materials on LGBTQ+ mental health care that can be used by members of LGBTQ+ communities, allies, clinicians, policy makers, and investigators. It works with LGBTQ+ partner organizations to promote evidence-based training and has developed educational tools to help facilitate affirmative mental health supports for LGBTQ+ people.



The UMD-PRC website banner highlights an educational focus on LGBTQ+ awareness.

## CORE RESEARCH

Each PRC uses a community-engaged approach to conduct one primary applied public health prevention research project called a core research project. Project activities include design, development, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination. PRCs use at least 50% of their CDC funding to conduct the project in partnership with communities.

### **Sexual and Gender Diversity Learning Community (SGDLC) Project**

UMD-PRC's core research project for the 2019–2024 funding cycle is focused on increasing effective mental health care for every LGBTQ+ community member. It is supported, advised, and led by a diverse community advisory board of LGBTQ+ community members, therapists, researchers, policy experts, and scientists.

The [SGDLC](#) project uses assessment tools to determine if local mental health organizations and therapists have the educational skill set to address the needs of LGBTQ+ people. The results will be used to guide further development and implementation of training programs.

The project also provides educational training on current best practices for LGBTQ+ clients that includes self-assessments, workshops, clinical consultations, and technical assistance. Participants can provide feedback and suggestions on how to address any challenges they have experienced while applying the training to actual practice.

Both the assessments and the training program are virtual, which allows them to be used anywhere. They focus on organizational issues, such as the LGBTQ+ sensitivity of health care forms, staff- and client-related policies, the clinical environment, and therapist sensitivity and ability to apply training.

## HIGHLIGHTED PUBLICATIONS

[Disparities in mental health care access among persons differing in sexual identity: nationally representative findings](#)

[Differences in health care access and satisfaction across intersections of race/ethnicity and sexual identity](#)

[The availability of LGBT-specific mental health and substance abuse treatment in the United States](#)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### Principal Investigator



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### Department

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For more information on UMD-PRC and ways to get involved, visit [University of Maryland Prevention Research Center](#).

## ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

PRCs may receive supplemental funding to work on additional research projects each funding cycle. These Special Interest Projects (SIPs) focus on a variety of health topics or gaps in scientific evidence. PRCs can also conduct additional research as part of SIP [Thematic Research Networks](#), which are groups of PRCs working together on related health topics.

## 2021

### PRC Vaccine Confidence Network (PRC VCN)

In April 2021, CDC funded a 12-month award to all 26 PRCs to form the PRC VCN in support of the agency's [Vaccinate with Confidence](#) strategy for COVID-19. As part of this network, UMD-PRC is working to promote vaccine confidence and uptake and reduce disparities in several rural Maryland communities by partnering with CenterLink, a national organization that supports LGBTQ+ communities. The goal is to reduce the incidence of COVID-19 in the United States.

UMD-PRC's strategy includes developing and distributing culturally sensitive messages and organizational resources and building relationships with state and local health departments.



An LGBTQ+ woman proudly displays her proof of COVID-19 vaccination.

CDC Prevention Research Centers (PRCs) conduct innovative public health research at the community level. The PRC Program is a network of academic research centers in the United States that work with their communities to identify public health problems and develop, test, and evaluate solutions that can be widely shared and applied within the public health system. PRCs research a wide range of health topics and focus on populations experiencing health disparities.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRC PROGRAM

Visit [www.cdc.gov/prc](http://www.cdc.gov/prc) or contact [prcprogram@cdc.gov](mailto:prcprogram@cdc.gov).



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention