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## **Health Headlines**

For Immediate Release  
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**James J. Peters VA Medical Center Named as “Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality”  
by National Survey from the Human Rights Campaign**

Bronx, NY – The James J. Peters VA Medical Center (JJP VAMC) has been recognized as a “Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality” by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation, the educational arm of the country’s largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) civil rights organization.

The findings were part of HRC Foundation’s Healthcare Equality Index 2016, a unique annual survey that encourages equal care for LGBT Americans by evaluating inclusive policies and practices related to LGBT patients, visitors and employees.

The JJP VAMC earned top marks in meeting non-discrimination and training criteria that demonstrate its commitment to equitable, inclusive care for LGBT patients, and their families,

who can face significant challenges in securing the quality health care and respect they deserve.

The JJP VAMC is one of a select group of 496 healthcare facilities nationwide to be named Leaders in LGBT Healthcare Equality. Facilities awarded this title meet key criteria, including patient and employee non-discrimination policies that specifically mention sexual orientation and gender identity, a guarantee of equal visitation for same-sex partners and parents, and LGBT health education for key staff members.

“Despite all the progress we’ve made, far too many LGBT people still lack inclusive and affirming healthcare. Leaders in LGBT Healthcare Equality are helping to change that, and, in the process, making the lives of LGBT patients and their families better each and every day,” said Chad Griffin, President of the Human Rights Campaign. “LGBT people have a right to be treated equally in all aspects of our lives, and HRC celebrates the James J. Peters VA Medical Center for its work to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for all patients.”

The Healthcare Equality Index offers healthcare facilities unique and powerful resources designed to help provide equal care to a long-overlooked group of patients, as well as assistance in complying with regulatory requirements and access to high-quality staff training. The Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Health Equity coordinates facility participation in the Healthcare Equity Index. This office is responsible for championing equitable health for all Veterans including Veterans from LGBT communities.

For more information about the Healthcare Equality Index 2016, or to download a free copy of the report, visit [www.hrc.org/hei](http://www.hrc.org/hei). For more information about the VA Office of Health Equity, visit [www.va.gov/healthequity](http://www.va.gov/healthequity). For more information related to the James J. Peters VA Medical Center, please contact Jim Connell, Public Affairs Officer, at 718.584.9000, Ext. 6620.

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