

A welcome move: Bharati Hospital & Research Centre, Pune to start health services for LGBT community

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/pune-news/a-welcome-move-bharati-vidyapeeth-hospital-in-pune-to-start-health-services-for-lgbt-community/story-A8H6AH6XcCK2b8MtG5nJzN.html>

Bharati Vidyapeeth Hospital and Research Centre, Pune has announced to start an all-inclusive medical service for the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) community in the city which will not only have a dedicated outpatient department (OPD), but also a full-fledged super speciality providing services, including counselling, psychiatry, endocrinology, psychology and cosmetic surgery facilities. The hospital that plans to start the health centre early next year is in talks with Samapathik Trust, the city-based NGO that works towards the rights of LGBT community.

Dr Sanjay Lalwani, medical director, Bharati Vidyapeeth Hospital and Research Centre, Pune said, “The health services for LGBT community in our hospital will include OPD, a ward, a team of doctors and super speciality services. We will soon sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Samapathik Trust.”

Talking about increasing medical cases from the segment coming out in the open, Dr Jyoti Shetty, head of the hospital’s psychiatry department, said, “Many members of LGBT community are seeking medical help. Counselling and guidance are needed when it comes to this community where gender dysphoria cases are commonly seen. We are taking efforts to break the stereotype and making all the required medical facilities available for the community. We are also looking at generating public awareness about LGBT community and eradicating stigma.”

Bindumadhav Khire, a gay rights activist and founder of Samapathik Trust, said, “Looking at the issues that the LGBT community is facing and given the rise in people seeking gender reassignment surgeries or treatment in India, this kind of facility is the need of the hour. Many need counselling after they come out as they deal with depression, many need assessment of gender and later need therapy related to sex reassignment surgery and hormonal treatment. We have seen such people running from pillar to post and seeking treatment from different hospitals and most of the times lose their follow-ups. This facility will be a boon to address such cases.”

Khire said that more city hospitals should join this ‘positive’ change and he is in talks with other health centres.