

IMPACTING

The Critical Healthcare and Wellness Needs
of At-Risk LGBTQ Youth and Young Adults



Ruth Ellis Health & Wellness Center Capital Campaign



ABOUT RUTH ELLIS

The Ruth Ellis Center is named in honor of the life and work of Ruth Ellis, a respected and loved member of the Detroit LGBT community. Often recognized as the first “out” African American Lesbian activist and the first woman to own her own printing company in the City of Detroit, Ruth paved the way for many to follow. During the 1930s and 1940s, Ms. Ellis provided shelter, physical support and spiritual affirmation to those whose race, sexual orientation or both set them apart from the dominant culture.

The Center’s work with homeless, runaway and at-risk youth and young adults in our community is built upon her model of responsibility to oneself and one’s community. Ruth lived to be 101, seeing Ruth Ellis Center come to being just before her passing in 2000.

OUR MISSION

To provide short-term and long-term residential safe space and support services for runaway, homeless and at-risk lesbian, gay, bi-attractional, transgender and questioning youth (LGBTQ).





The next level of Innovation TO IMPACT HEALTH

Over our fifteen-year history, the Ruth Ellis Center has emerged as a national innovator in addressing the needs of lesbian, gay, bi-attractional, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth and young adults experiencing homelessness and other barriers to success. What began as a 500-square-foot safe space in Highland Park, MI has evolved into a 10,000-square foot multi-faceted organization, providing outreach and safety-net services, individual, family and group counseling and case management, skill building workshops, HIV prevention programs and the only residential foster care program for LGBTQ youth in the Midwest.

The purpose of this capital campaign is to develop a health & wellness center accessible to all at-risk youth and young adults and specifically tailored to support the needs of LGBTQ young people. With your support, discrimination, lack of access to care, and lack of cultural competence will no longer be reasons why LGBTQ youth are denied their right to efficient and effective health care. We invite you to read this case statement to understand more fully the critical healthcare needs of the young people who come to REC for help and support.

WHY

build a health & wellness center?

Research tells us that LGBTQ individuals face health disparities linked to social stigma, discrimination, and denial of their civil and human rights. In particular, family rejection of a child based on their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression has profound negative effects on the child's wellbeing (see page 7). Discrimination against LGBTQ youth has been associated with high rates of psychiatric disorders, substance abuse, and suicide. (HealthyPeople.Gov)

The young people served by the Ruth Ellis Center also experience significant barriers to accessing health care and integrated behavioral health services; including: 1) accessibility (transportation, hours of operation, insurance and system navigation); 2) depression and anxiety as a result of multiple traumas; and 3) numerous social barriers such as HIV stigma, fear of rejection, and mistrust of mainstream health providers.

As a result, a high percentage of LGBTQ youth are not connected to any kind of primary or mental health care, or are not compliant with prescribed treatment regimens. There is a critical need for LGBTQ-competent primary care and behavioral health services to improve overall health and wellbeing.

LGBTQ YOUTH EXPERIENCING HIGH LEVELS OF FAMILY REJECTION ARE:

8.5times
more likely to have attempted suicide,

6times
more likely to experience depression,

3.5times
more likely to be using illegal substances,


3.5times
more likely to engage in high-risk sexual behaviors

than LGBTQ youth growing up in more accepting families.

Dr. Caitlin Ryan, Supportive Families, Healthy Children, Family
Acceptance Project, San Francisco State University

WHY renovate the current facility?

THERE ARE TWO PRIMARY REASONS FOR BUILDING THE HEALTH & WELLNESS CENTER IN OUR CURRENT FACILITY:



1 Expanding fully integrated primary care, mental health and substance abuse services is a critical step forward in both meeting the needs of youth and the financial sustainability of the Ruth Ellis Center overall. LGBTQ young people served by the Ruth Ellis Center feel safe at this location and trust the staff. In addition, co-locating these services at our current site follows the best-practice recommendations of the Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Incorporating primary health care services into an established behavioral health setting is the most effective way to increase access, engagement and adherence to treatment.



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Henry Ford Health System (HFHS) has supported the location of these vital services in Highland Park. CEO Nancy Schlichting determined that the services Ruth Ellis Center youth need cannot be provided by any hospital department alone. The US Department of Health and Human Services has designated Highland Park as a physician shortage area and a medically-underserved area, supporting the need for specialized services in this location. Three HFHS leaders have been involved in the planning process.




There have been many times when I have walked into a clinic and was misgendered. Not only is it hurtful and frustrating, it doesn't make me feel confident in their ability to provide me with appropriate healthcare. At Ruth Ellis Center my identity is affirmed and respected."

WHAT critical health needs will be met?

For LGBTQ youth, having access to a successful patient-centered “medical home” will end invisibility in health care by addressing their most complex issues in a cost effective manner informed by the best evidence available. The “medical home” model provides a home-base for medical and non-medical care, including centralized medical records and intensive coordination of services among significant others/family and community partners providing related services. Health needs addressed will include:

- ✓ Targeted Primary Healthcare Services
- ✓ Infectious Disease
- ✓ Individual, Family and Group Counseling
- ✓ Substance Use Prevention & Treatment
- ✓ Healthcare for Transgender Women
- ✓ Dental

(See page 12 for program descriptions)

A close-up photograph of a smiling Black woman with dark hair, wearing a white knit beanie and large silver hoop earrings. She is wearing a white denim jacket over a dark top. A hand is resting on her shoulder. The image has a warm, orange-red tint. A white text box is overlaid on the left side of the image.

LyKyra Dawson is a program participant in REC's TransJustUs Retreat. This two-day HIV prevention curriculum was developed by the Ruth Ellis Center in partnership with the CDC and is tailored to the needs of African American transgender women in Detroit. The curriculum is the only one of its kind and more than 100 transgender women have completed it.

WHAT services will be provided?

The primary goal of the health & wellness center will be to improve the health and wellness of LGBTQ youth and young adults experiencing homelessness and other serious risks. This will be accomplished by providing the following integrated behavioral health and primary health care services:

WELLNESS NAVIGATOR/CASE MANAGER: will assess health concerns, underlying mental health and/or substance abuse issues, and stressors. The case manager will assist in scheduling appointments in the health & wellness center and provide follow up support, guidance and referrals to needed specialty services and treatment. Seamless coordination of access to all needed services is the unique opportunity provided in a fully integrated setting.

PREVENTION AND PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SERVICES: will be provided based on the assessments completed by the case manager. Services will be provided by a nurse practitioner in conjunction with family practice interns and volunteer physicians. The exact range of services provided on site will depend on the specialization of practitioners available. Referrals will be made for specialty services.

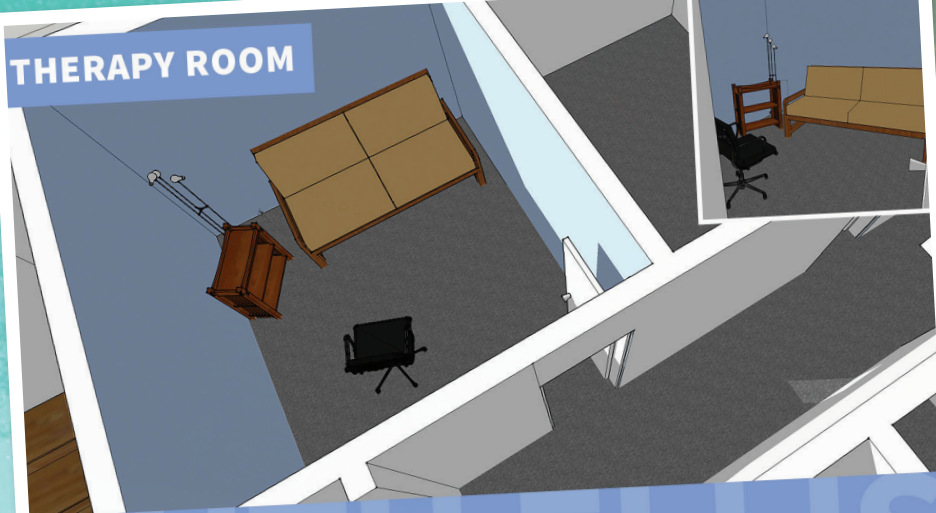
INFECTIOUS DISEASE SERVICES: STD testing will be provided through a collaborative agreement with community-based organizations who specialize in these services. Health care services will be provided in partnership with the Infectious Disease Department at Henry Ford Health System.

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING: will be provided by qualified mental health professionals within the clinic to assist youth in effectively coping with the identified needs including risk reduction; mechanisms for monitoring symptoms and treatment adherence; decision support; patient education; and assistance in obtaining additional therapy as needed. Services will be provided to individuals, groups and families.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELING: will be provided by licensed substance abuse counselors within the clinic to conduct assessments and individualized treatment plans. Services will be provided on an outpatient basis only.

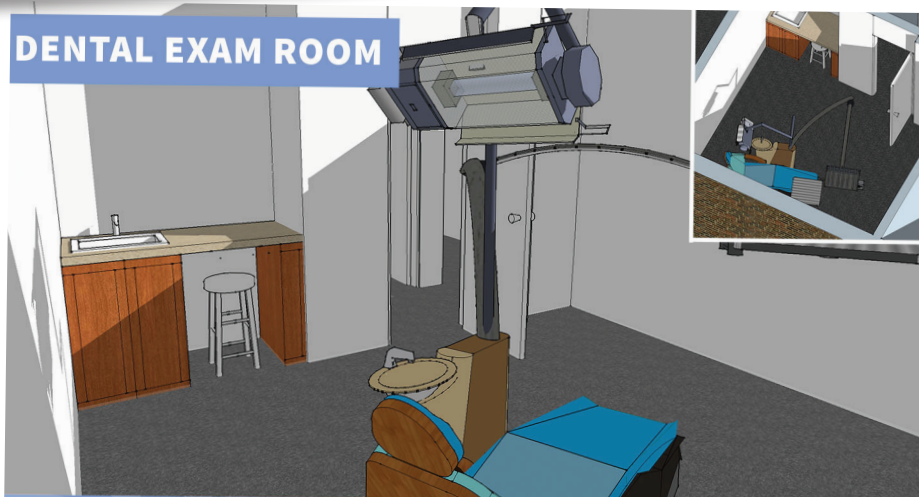
DENTAL SERVICES: including teeth cleaning, examination for signs of oral diseases such as gingivitis, and provide other preventative dental care. Education on ways to improve and maintain good oral health will be provided. Referrals will be made for specialty services.

THERAPY ROOM



RUTHELLIS
HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER

DENTAL EXAM ROOM



RUTHELLIS
HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER



WHO will benefit?

It is estimated that there are between 800-1000 runaway, homeless and at-risk LGBTQ youth in the City of Detroit on any given day. Ruth Ellis Center served more than 50% of those youth last year. While this achievement is significant, it is the remaining 50% of youth, often the most isolated and vulnerable, that will drive our outreach efforts for the health & wellness center.

“ I come to Ruth Ellis Center because they provide me with the resources I need help with like food and clothes. I also know that they respect confidentiality and my info is in safe hands. I feel comfortable here. Having the ability to take care of my health needs too will just makes this place even more important to me.”



HOW was the design developed?

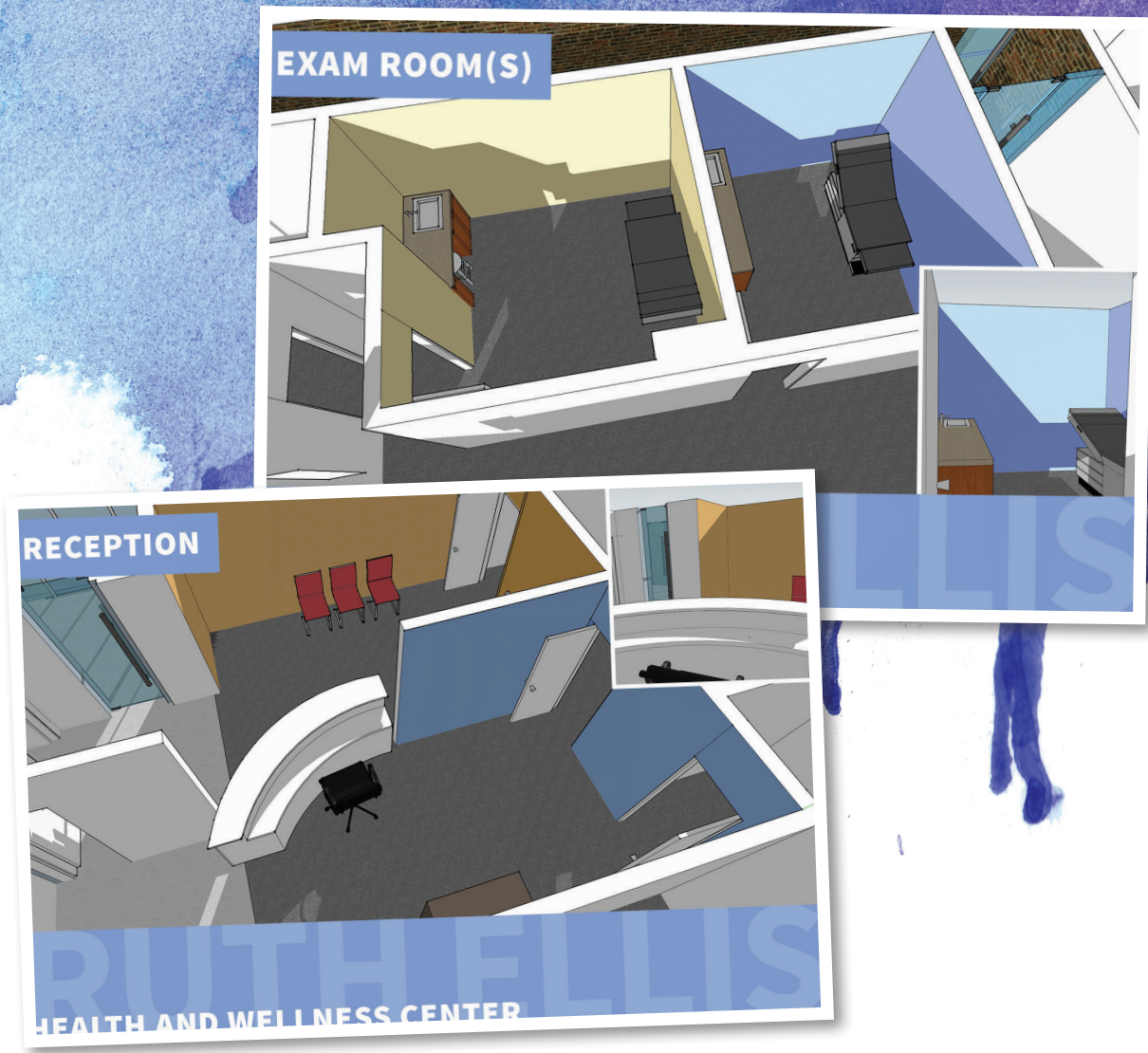
The health & wellness center design was developed and approved in collaboration with the Director of Facilities, Design and Construction and the Operations Director of the School-Based and Community Health Program at Henry Ford Health System. Equally important, Ruth Ellis Center staff members have gathered input from youth and visited other clinics to study successful services and sustainable practices in operation. Stucky Vitale Architects is providing technical services to prepare the specifications for contractor bids. The board has determined that renovating of the current facility is the most viable option for the organization programmatically and financially.

The plan will maximize prior investment in and utilization of the current facility in Highland Park and bring the facility into compliance with ADA regulations to better serve youth participants. A new side entrance will be created to access the administrative space as well as the health & wellness center.

An architectural cutaway drawing of a multi-story building, likely a health and wellness center. The drawing shows various interior spaces including offices with desks and chairs, a large open area with a curved white structure, and a room with three red chairs. The building has a modern design with large windows and a flat roof. The cutaway is shown from an isometric perspective, revealing the internal layout and structure. The drawing is set against a background of a blue sky with white clouds.

ARCHITECTURE: STUCKY VITALE ARCHITECTS

HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER



“The new Ruth Ellis Health & Wellness Center will be at the forefront of addressing health disparities in the LGBTQ population. I am so pleased we can help the Ruth Ellis Center develop the plan for a health & wellness center that will truly be a lifeline for those in need of physical and mental health services.”

– Nancy Schlichting, Henry Ford Health System CEO





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I am both excited and relieved to know that the Ruth Ellis Center is expanding their program by adding a health and wellness center. As a patrol officer for 15 years in the City of Detroit, I have had the task of working the streets and on several task force where I would come into contact with many LGBT youth. I was always concerned about their safety when interacting with them. Then after learning about their individual stories/journeys, I'd often wondered what services were available to them and if they were aware of them. It will be a huge support for the LGBT youth to know they have a safe place they can go to receive health and wellness care. A place where they won't be judged, treated fairly, and sincerely cared for.”

— Danielle Woods, Police Officer
Detroit Police Department
Office of the Chief (LGBT liaison)

HOW much will it cost?

CONCEPTUAL BUDGET FOR HEALTH & WELLNESS CENTER EXPENSES

Demo and Remediation	\$140,000	9%
Architect & Structural Repairs	\$75,000	5%
Administrative Space	\$175,000	12%
Health & Wellness Center Space	\$400,000	27%
Entrance Atrium and Elevator	\$275,000	18%
Equipment and Furnishings	\$150,000	10%
Capital Campaign Expenses	\$75,000	5%
Operating Capital (3 years)	\$210,000	14%
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TOTAL COST	\$1,500,000	

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**For additional information or to discuss how you can
help make the Health & Wellness Center reality, contact:**

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