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HealthEast named as "Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality" by national survey

ST. PAUL (July 2013) - HealthEast Care System is the first Minnesota health care network/system to be recognized as a "Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality" in the [Healthcare Equality Index 2013](#), an annual survey conducted by the [Human Rights Campaign Foundation](#), the educational arm of the country's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) organization. HealthEast earned top marks for our commitment to equitable, inclusive care for LGBT patients and their families, who can face significant challenges in securing adequate health care.

"We are honored to be recognized on a national level as being an organization that values diversity and actively seeks out opportunities that support and promote a diverse and inclusive workforce and provides patient-centered, equitable care for all," says Liz Anderson, System Director – Equitable Care.

This work has been championed by HealthEast's Equitable Care Action Team and employee volunteers including Laurie Kilfoy, an RN at St. John's Hospital, and Laurie Kivel, Patient Registration Manager, St. John's Hospital. Laurie Kilfoy notes: "We are grateful to have this index which provides tools to navigate through the ongoing process of equitable care for our LGBTQ community. Becoming a Leader has required a true collaborative effort across departments, disciplines and facilities. Senior leaders listened and then worked with those of us with direct patient contact helping us to 'hardwire' equitable care for our LGBTQ patients and families. The Healthcare Equality Index ties in well with HealthEast's vision of optimal health and well-being for our patients, our communities and ourselves."

The 2013 HEI survey asks health care organizations whether they meet four foundational criteria for LGBT patient-centered care known as the "Core Four." These criteria include:

- Patient non-discrimination
- Equal visitation
- Employment non-discrimination
- Training in LGBT patient-centered care

HealthEast was one of a select group of 464 health care facilities nationwide to be named "Leaders in LGBT Healthcare Equality." Facilities awarded this title meet key criteria for equitable care, including non-discrimination policies for LGBT patients and employees, a guarantee of equal visitation for same-sex partners and parents, and LGBT health education for key staff members.

HealthEast is an integrated, non-profit health care organization of Minnesota's top-rated hospitals, clinics, outpatient services, home care, transportation and other holistic health services, which has a rich history of caring for generations of families in the Twin Cities East Metro for more than a century and is focused on optimal health and well-being for our patients, our communities and ourselves.