



The Callen - Lorde Community Health Center is the nation's leading health care center dedicated to serving the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities.

Public Forum Announcement

CRYSTAL-METH AND THE LAW

3/30 from 7-9 pm
LGBT Community Center
208 West 13th Street
3rd Floor Auditorium

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Town Hall Meeting Will Facilitate Dialogue Between Authorities and Members of the Gay Community on Recent Crystal-Meth Enforcement Initiatives

New York (N.Y.) (March 8, 2004) - HIV Forum's Crystal Meth Working Group will hold a public town hall meeting on the highly-publicized law enforcement activities recently focused on crystal meth in New York City. The event will take place on Tuesday, March 30, 2004 from 7-9 PM at the LGBT Community Center's 3rd floor auditorium. The forum, entitled "Crystal Meth and The Law," will be an opportunity for an exchange of information between the public and law enforcement authorities, said Dan Carlson of HIV Forum.

"DEA action in Chelsea and, specifically, at Sound Factory this past weekend makes the need for a community dialogue absolutely critical," said Dan Carlson. He went on to say, "The purpose of this forum is to educate the public about the legal consequences of possession, sale, and use of crystal meth and to give the community some time to share their thoughts about these enforcement initiatives with authorities."

Dr. Bruce Kellerhouse, co-organizer of the event, believes that an exchange of ideas via a forum can help gay men make more informed choices with respect to their crystal use. "Our suspicion is that most gay men have little understanding of the mandatory sentences

they'd face if convicted of selling or possessing crystal meth. As such, the community has a responsibility to make sure that gay men have all the facts about the law and that they understand what is taking place around them in law enforcement," said Kellerhouse.

While HIV Forum is sponsoring and organizing the event, neither The Working Group nor the organization are collaborating with or encouraging further law enforcement activity. The forum is designed to bring the community together with law enforcement in a meeting of the minds about the legal ramifications associated with crystal-meth. As Kellerhouse points out, "We want to make it clear that we don't have a position on the DEA's covert operations or future activities. Our hope for this forum is that individuals will leave with a clearer understanding of the law and of future enforcement plans and that authorities are made aware of public concerns. This is designed as a two-way dialogue."

The format of the forum will consist of 60 minutes each for the panel discussion and audience questions and comments. The 2-hour event will take place on March 30th from 7-9 PM at the LGBT Community Center, 208 West 13th Street, in the 3rd Floor Auditorium.

HIV Forum is affiliated with the Callen-Lorde Community Health Center in New York City.

List of Panelists-

Christopher Giovino- Associate Special Agent - Drug Enforcement Administration, New York Division

Isabelle Kirshner - Defense Attorney, New York City

David Esseks, Chief, Narcotics Unit, US Attorney's Office