

Queer Reproductive Health with the Maternal and Child Health Coalition

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Although I have been volunteering with the Maternal and Child Health Coalition for a while, this was my first semester as an intern. When my supervisor asked me what kind of project I wanted to pursue, I knew that I wanted to work on a project that combined my passion for LGBTQIA+ health with reproductive justice. Throughout the summer, I have been working on this project, and I am excited to continue working with the Coalition during the fall semester.

I started out this project by researching barriers that birthing people who identify with LGBTQIA+ face when seeking reproductive care. After spending a few weeks doing the research to familiarize myself with the reproductive resources available to this community in the city, I began reaching out to LGBTQIA+ organizations to speak to them about how they support their clients. One of the most meaningful conversations I had was with a worker from Crescent Care. In our discussion, I learned about how she pictured the Coalition forming a stronger connection with the LGBTQIA+ community. I am taking my findings from the research and these interviews to create an infographic that clearly lays out the barriers to care and possible ways that organizations can be more inclusive for all individuals.

For my project, I have also been conducting interviews with organizations within the Coalition to learn about how our groups have been creating inclusive environments to serve the LGBTQIA+ community. These interviews have been a great opportunity to learn more about what the Coalition's members are currently working on. In each of these conversations, I have heard about a variety of different ways that our members prioritize caring for their clients and ensuring that every person they serve feels comfortable and welcome.

I still have interviews to conduct and research to complete before this project is done, and I am excited to finish this project during the fall semester. I chose this project because I wanted to see how the Coalition could better serve the LGBTQIA+ community and forge stronger connections with organizations that currently serve this community.