

## **Gay Men's Advocacy Organization Moving Beyond just HIV, as Global Focus Turns to Larger Issues of Sexual Health and Human Rights**

*The Global Forum on MSM & HIV (MSMGF) is now MPact: Global Action for Gay Men's Health and Rights*

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Over a decade after The Global Forum on MSM & HIV (MSMGF) was founded, the organization has changed its name to [MPact: Global Action for Gay Men's Health and Rights](#). The Oakland-based organization was originally created to bring the unique challenges of men who have sex with men back into global conversations around HIV, but has gradually expanded their work over the years.

The name change is representative of global shifts in the HIV and international development landscapes to larger issues of sexual and reproductive health and human rights, including the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people. MPact says their focus on men who have sex with men has not changed, but rather their strategies for addressing this community's unique issues has fundamentally shifted over the years as attitudes towards LGBT people have as well.

"We've seen great strides over the last decade in the fight for the rights of LGBTI people. But homophobia and violence are still major concerns, especially with conservatism on the rise. HIV continues to disproportionately affect gay and bisexual men in every part of the world." said Co-Founder and Executive Director George Ayala. "This is because homophobic stigma and discrimination keep our communities from accessing care and taking charge of their sexual health. In order to address issues like HIV, we must take a more holistic approach which more openly takes on criminalization of LGBTI people, proactively promotes equitable access to holistic sexual health services, and strategic mobilizes demand for the latest HIV prevention and treatment tools, including PrEP. Advocacy will remain central to our work."

The agency says their new name better reflects the mission and goal of the organization – to impact the lives of gay and bisexual men around the world. It also signals the need for unapologetically bolder, more forward-thinking solutions to the sexual health and rights needs of gay and bisexual men – solutions that will get us more quickly to the end of AIDS. This July 22<sup>nd</sup>, MPact will host a pre-meeting ahead of the 2018 International AIDS Conference in Amsterdam titled "[Out With It](#)" which focuses on supporting twelve teams of youth-led innovative solutions to the sexual health and rights of gay and bisexual men.

Read George Ayala's full statement here: <http://www.mpactglobal.org/welcome-to-mpact/>

Learn more about the work of MPact at <http://www.mpactglobal.org/>

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