

## Equitas Health Statement on Findlay Ohio Hate Crime

7/20/2020

Last weekend, anti-LGBTQ+ activists defaced the “Rainbow Ohio” street painting in Findlay, Ohio by spray painting it with the words “straight pride.” The painting at the intersection of South Main Street and West Main Cross Street was a project of LGBTQ+ Spectrum of Ohio organized as a kick off to this year’s Pride month.

Equitas Health stands with LGBTQ+ Spectrum of Findlay in condemning this as an act of bigoted hatred. We also recognize that this is not an isolated incident. These hateful letters scrawled across the pavement in Findlay, Ohio align with efforts in cities and towns across the country aimed at dividing us against our common interests.

We will not be divided.

Those who would divide our community along any line they can, do so by having us believe there is not enough to go around: not enough space, not enough resources, not enough jobs, not enough freedom. They will tell us that making room for the visibility of LGBTQ+ folks means that straight people must live in the shadows, that suggesting Black Lives Matter means that no one else matters, that welcoming asylum seekers into our country is to take jobs from hard working Americans, and that healthcare for all means a reduction in the overall quality of care. They will conflate this myth of scarcity with assertions that to require people to wear masks in order to protect the health of the community is an impingement on their freedoms.

We reject this assertion at every turn. There is room on our streets for Black, brown, and white bodies to move freely and safely among each other. There is room in the largest economy in the world for workers of all backgrounds and skill levels. There is room in our hearts and minds to modify our behavior in order to protect the health of our community. And there is room in Findlay, Ohio and in all communities for all people—queer, straight, trans, cis—to live openly and proudly together.