

S O U T H D A K O T A

Foundation for Medical Care

Best Practice Briefs

Prioritizing Mental Well-Being of Youth
in the Black Hills

Community Health Center of the Black Hills

Kara Roland, RN, BSN (they/them)

Iris Clinic Nurse



As part of the queer community for the past few years, both personally and professionally, Kara Roland, RN, BSN, recognized Western South Dakota is a challenging place to find sensitive care for the LGBTQ population.

Their passion and professional goal is to make a positive impact by providing holistic care to this underserved community.

Mental Healthcare for LGBTQ+ Youth in the Black Hills

Community Health Center of the Black Hills - Iris Clinic
Presented by Kara Roland, RN (they/them)



Iris Clinic - Overview

- Primary care for LGBTQ+ youth (up to 21 years old) in the Black Hills area
- Begun by Dr. Amanda Diehl in June 2020
- In-person clinic appointments are available two days per month, but the nurse Kara is available full time
- Funding comes through CHCBH

Iris Clinic - Continued

- Sensitive environment, staff training clinic-wide
- Guidance through LGBTQ+ specific challenges
 - Measuring for chest binders
 - Connections to support groups and ways to make friends
 - Honest discussions about Kara's own experiences
 - Working with families to get medications which would not otherwise be affordable - puberty blockers and HRT
- “Be that adult.”
 - Transgender youth who have one supportive adult in their lives are 40% less likely to attempt suicide

S2BI Screening

- S2BI screening - integrated into CBCBH pediatric mental health in March 2021 by Shiela Szymonski, CNP
- Initially addresses any use of tobacco, alcohol or marijuana
- Secondarily address any use of other drugs
 - Prescription drugs not prescribed for them
 - Illegal drugs (cocaine, ecstasy)
 - Inhalants (nitrous oxide)
 - Herbs or synthetic drugs (salvia, bath salts)
- SBIRT - Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment

Conclusion

The Iris Clinic exists to provide care to LGBTQ+ youth in a sensitive environment. We are deeply involved in the lives of our patients. It is an honor to be a part of this.

Thank you for letting me present to you today.

Please reach out with any questions!

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Trevor Project Study - https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Trevor-Project-Accepting-Adult-Research-Brief_June-2019.pdf