

SisTers PGH

Trans-led community center,
resource provider, and shelter
transitioning program



2014 Monongahela Ave
Swissvale, PA 15218
412-297-0548

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SisTers PGH stands with COWC victims

(Pittsburgh - April 30, 2021) -- Last year, during the initial outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Central Outreach Wellness Center (COWC) sent us several cease and desist letters for speaking out for patients who have been harmed, and then silenced, by the center's staff and leadership.

We became an unsolicited safe space for people to grieve during our intake process or for those commenting on social media with more grievances in reference to COWC. The center then took us to court, eventually losing their case against us but continuing to harass us, along with community members trying to heal from the pain they caused, including gaslighting and other white supremacist tactics to erase our work and voices as Black trans leaders.

Just several days ago, a flyer was left in our Swissvale office advertising a vaccine clinic being administered by Central Outreach Wellness Center. Access to vaccines is very important; however, it's also important we lead community members to safe, competent and trustworthy service providers.

TLGBQ community members in Pittsburgh still grieve to this day about the harm caused by COWC staff and leadership. This is why we must not allow more community members to be led astray and used as an opportunity to be patients at Central Outreach.

We will be standing in solidarity with those harmed by the center during the clinic this Saturday, May 1. We will be standing for restorative justice and against the center's tactics, led by Dr. Stacy Lane. We will be standing and speaking truth to power.

When: Saturday, May 1, 2021, 12:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Where: 2028 Noble St. Swissvale, PA 15218

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SisTers PGH update on COWC victim action

(Pittsburgh - April 30, 2021) -- Our previous statement about Center Outreach Wellness Center (COWC) included a plan for SisTers PGH to lead a solidarity action this Saturday with Black trans lives and with patients harmed by the center's practices.

After a long, impactful conversation, our staff and volunteers decided that our mental and physical health as Black trans people is crucial, and we will not be participating in the action.

We are still asking for cisgender and white allies to turn out in support of COWC's numerous victims, but staff and volunteers of SisTers PGH will not be in attendance.

This is when and why we need our allies to step up and be true accomplices. We look to our comrades to speak when our voices are silenced. We look to our comrades to march when we are beaten down. We look to our comrades to protect us when we are affronted by oppressors.

This is about protecting our bodies and souls. We ask our supporters to continue offering strength and solidarity, and to meet tomorrow, **May 1**, at **2028 Noble St.** at **12:30 PM** in defense of Black, trans, and nonbinary lives.

We also are calling upon the Center Outreach Wellness Center to form an advisory council that is community-member-based to address long-standing grievances with the center, as well as to publicly apologize to those harmed by the center staff and leadership. Dr. Stacy Lane must be held accountable for her refusal to listen to victims and for creating an environment of retaliation against patients with real grievances.

Healing starts with accountability. We demand it now.