The major sociological perspectives on health and medicine all recognize these points but offer different ways of understanding health and medicine that fall into the functional, conflict, and symbolic interactionist approaches. Together they provide us with a more comprehensive understanding of health, medicine, and society than any one approach can do by itself (Cockerham, 2009). Cockerham, W. C. (2009). As conceived by Talcott Parsons (1951), Parsons, T. (1951). The social system. New York, NY: Free Press, the functionalist perspective on health and medicine emphasizes that good health and effective medical care are essential for a society’s ability to function. Situating epidemiology, Gender Perspectives on Health and Medicine: Key Themes. Advances in Gender Research Series. Volume 7. Marcia Texler Segal, Vasilikie Demos and Jennie Kronenfeld (eds.). Social Determinants of Health Stream, Ontario Rainbow Health Partnership Project. Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights Ontario/Rainbow Health Network.