

APA Official Actions

Position Statement on Conversion Therapy and LGBTQ+ Patients

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Issue:

Practices to change sexual orientation or gender identity/gender expression are commonly referred to as conversion therapies. Despite a lack of empirical supporting evidence, conversion therapies were mostly unquestioned within mainstream medicine prior to the removal of homosexuality per se from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual in 1973. Following widespread societal acceptance of LGBTQ+ individuals and a growing body of evidence of the potential harms and lack of efficacy of conversion therapies, leading professional health care bodies have concluded that conversion therapies lack efficacy and may carry significant risks of harm.

APA Position:

APA opposes the practice of “reparative” or conversion therapies that are based on the a priori assumption that diverse sexual orientations and gender identities are mental illnesses. APA encourages psychotherapies which affirm individuals’ sexual orientation and gender identities.

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