Collecting Patient Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Data at Brigham and Women’s Hospital

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Terms

**Sexual Orientation**
An individual's self-identified state of emotional, romantic, sexual, or affectional attraction.

*Examples*: straight, queer, bisexual, homosexual, heterosexual, asexual, gay

**Gender Identity**
An individual’s deeply felt psychological identification, which may or may not correspond to the person's body or designated/assigned birth sex.

*Examples*: female, male, transgender, no gender, another gender

**Transgender Individual**
An individual with a gender identity, expression, and/or behavior that is not traditionally associated with birth sex.
Selected LGBT Health Disparities

• Lesbian and bisexual women are more likely than straight women to be overweight/obese.
• Bisexuals have higher rates of smoking and mental health disease compared to gay/lesbian and straight peers.
• Transgender patients may be at greater cardiovascular disease risk due to exogenous hormones.
• All sexual minorities have higher reported rates of being a victim of sexual assault than non-sexual minorities.
• Gay and lesbians are more likely than heterosexuals to be excluded from clinical trials.
• Transgender youth are more likely to use street (rather than MD-prescribed) hormones, share needles for injection, have been arrested/incarcerated, etc.

Most primary care providers do NOT ask about sexual orientation and gender identity.

In 2000, Healthy People 2010 included LGB people as a population with health disparities.

Only two federal data sets included sexual orientation data:
- National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey
- National Household Survey on Drug Abuse

These data sets yielded important evidence regarding substance abuse and mental health disease in LGB people.


Recent Developments in LGBT Health

1. Institute of Medicine publishes report on LGBT health and recommendations on data collection and research.

2. HHS Secretary Sebelius announces actions to improve LGBT health.

3. Healthy People 2020 includes improving lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender health as a specific goal.

4. National study reports limited and superficial LGBT health education in medical school.
"The relative lack of population-based data presents the greatest challenge to describing the health status and health-related needs of LGBT people."

- The Health of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People: Building a Foundation for Better Understanding

**Recommendation 3:** Data on sexual orientation and gender identity should be collected in electronic health records.

**FIGURE 3-1** Publications in LGBT health indexed in PubMed.
• Including SOGI questions on the 2013 National Health Interview Survey (Affordable Care Act §4302 - Minority Data Collection Standards)

• Recognizing LGBT populations as underserved communities in grant review as well as issuing population-specific funding opportunities

• Developing new cultural competency goals for health profession training programs to include LGBT health
Collecting SOGI data at BWH enables providers...
• to provide excellent, competent patient care.
• to study LGBT populations.
• to provide Harvard Medical School students with access to LGBT patients.

Efforts to improve LGBT health include:

- Curbing human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) with interventions that work.
- Implementing antibullying policies in schools.
- Providing supportive social services to reduce suicide and homelessness risk among youth.
- Appropriately inquiring about and being supportive of a patient’s sexual orientation to enhance the patient-provider interaction and regular use of care.
- Providing medical students with access to LGBT patients to increase provision of culturally competent care.
LGBT Medical Education

The 6 least-taught LGBT health topics relate to primary care and transgender individuals.

More than 75% of Deans of Medical Education report their institutions’ LGBT health-related curricula is “fair,” “poor,” or “very poor.”

BWH Mission, Vision, and Values & SOGI Data

Collecting SOGI data fulfills BWH’s Mission, Vision, & Values.

**Mission**
Brigham and Women’s Hospital is dedicated to:
• serving the needs of our local and global community,
• providing the highest quality health care to patients and their families,
• expanding the boundaries of medicine through research,
• educating the next generation of health care professionals.

**Vision**
Brigham and Women's Hospital aspires to transform the future of healthcare, through science, education and compassionate care, locally and globally.

**Values**
• **Quality Patient Care:** Delivering quality patient care is the center of everything we do.
• **Teaching Excellence:** We seek to uphold the highest standards in training health care professionals.
• **Research Leadership:** We continuously seek new ways to demonstrate our leadership role in research.
• **Customer Focus:** Our focus is to serve our customers.
• **Respect for the Individual:** We recognize and value the contributions of every individual.
• **Teamwork:** We work toward a unified approach to developing health care solutions.
• **Embracing Change:** Embracing change will help us to be successful.
• **Operational Efficiency:** We strive for efficient and effective delivery of services.

http://www.brighamandwomens.org/about_bwh/mission.aspx
New Fenway Institute Policy Briefs

**Policy Focus:**

**Why Gather Data on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Clinical Settings**

**Policy Focus:**

**How to Gather Data on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Clinical Settings**

Contact Mitchell Lunn at mrlunn@partners.org for a copy.
Summary

1. The Institute of Medicine report to the National Institutes of Health recommends collecting sexual orientation and gender identity data in the electronic medical record.

2. Sexual orientation and gender identity data enables population-based health studies.

3. LGBT health is a national priority of the US Department of Health and Human Services.

4. Current LGBT health-related medical education is insufficient.

5. Collecting sexual orientation and gender identity data fulfills BWH’s mission, vision, and values in patient care, research, education, and innovation domains.
QUESTIONS?

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