

## Advisory Committee on LGBTQ Issues

The Advisory Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) Issues is a board-appointed group of physicians from around the country with experience, expertise, and interest in LGBTQ health and wellbeing. In addition to providing counsel to the Board of Trustees, the Advisory Committee:

- Advises and consults on the full scope of the AMA LGBTQ initiatives.
- Serves as an ambassador, amplifying related efforts, opportunities, and outcomes.
- Provides a forum for member involvement, mentoring, leadership development, and networking for LGBTQ+ physicians, medical students, and allies.
- Works to improve health equity, LGBTQ+ patient health outcomes, and increase health care workforce diversity and inclusion.
- Engages other sections and AMA partners, medical societies, and other organizations with mutual interests to explore new opportunities to amplify AMA policy and enhance education efforts around LGBTQ+ health.

Members of the 2020-2021 Advisory Committee include:

Magda Houlberg, MD—Chair | Internal Medicine and Geriatrics | Illinois  
Frank Dowling, MD—Vice Chair | Psychiatry | New York  
Shilpen Patel, MD—Immediate Past Chair | Radiation Oncology | California  
Jacques Ambrose, MD—YPS Liaison | Child & Adolescent Psychiatry | Massachusetts  
Maya Green, MD—Member at Large | Family Medicine | Illinois  
Hunter Pattison, MD—RFS Liaison | Emergency Medicine | California  
LeAnne Roberts, MD—GLMA Liaison | Obstetrics & Gynecology | Iowa  
Brianna Sohl—MSS Liaison | Medical Student | Michigan

BOT Liaisons:

Willarda Edwards, MD, MBA—BOT Liaison | Internal Medicine | Maryland  
Willie Underwood, MD, MSc, MPH—BOT Liaison | Urology | New York

In June 2021, Jacques Ambrose, MD, and Brianna Sohl will be concluding their terms on the committee. The Advisory Committee is grateful for their service and leadership and looks forward to their continued engagement and support in the future. Joining the committee will be James Ding (MMS representative) and Carl Streed, MD (YPS representative). We are looking forward to their contributions.

## Strategic Priorities

The Advisory Committee and staff have made significant progress on its 2020-2021 strategic priorities which include:

- Strengthening alignment and integration of LGBTQ+ health initiatives across AMA sectors.
- Awareness building and education on issues of intersectionality.
- Analyzing existing AMA LGBTQ+ policy identify needed actions and gaps
- Networking and mentorship opportunities for LGBTQ+ medical students.
- Collaboration and partnership with AMA internal and external and stakeholders to advance enterprise LGBTQ+ equity goals.

To support these priorities, the Advisory Committee is collaborating with the Minority Affairs Section to launch educational events focused on the intersection of race, sexual orientation, and gender identity. The first in what is planned to be a series of webinars will take place on June 24. *(See more information below under Education.)*

In addition, the Advisory Committee has initiated collaborative work with the Medical Student Section's Standing Committee on LGBTQ Issues. Projects include networking and mentorship aimed at helping LGBTQ+ medical students navigate engagement in the AMA as well as in their continuing education and career paths. A project to identify and analyze existing LGBTQ+ policy is also under discussion.

Through its liaison from GLMA, the Advisory Committee is working with the LGBTQ Health Section Council to support collaboration, information sharing, enhanced communication, and strategic policy making.

## Strategic Partnerships

Collaborating with well-respected and influential partners is an important part of advancing the AMA's LGBTQ+ health priorities. The Advisory Committee continues to strengthen internal collaboration and existing external alliances while working to forge opportunities with new partners through its work with:

- Building the Next Generation of Physicians (BNGAP)
- Callen-Lorde Community Health Center
- CenterLink
- Family Equality Council
- Howard Brown Health
- Human Rights Campaign (HRC)
- GLSEN
- GLMA
- Populations Committee: National Academies of Sciences Engineering, and Medicine
- Medical Student Pride Alliance
- National Center for Lesbian Rights
- National Center for Transgender Equality
- National LGBTQ Task Force
- OutCare Health
- PFLAG
- SAGE Care
- The Fenway Institute
- The Trevor Project
- The Williams Institute
- Whitman-Walker Health

## Education

### **Foundational Concepts in LGBTQ Health: From Principle to Practice**

June 6, 10-Noon CT

*Sponsored by Advisory Committee on LGBTQ Issues and LGBTQ & Allies Caucus*

To help center equity for LGBTQ+ patients, medical students and physicians can learn how to overcome barriers and seize opportunities inside and outside the clinical environment through greater awareness, identification of best practices, and knowledge of resources. Well-known LGBTQ+ health and medical education expert Jessica Halem will lead participants through a lively and engaging exploration of how they can make a difference as advocates for LGBTQ+ health and well-being.

Register [here](#).

### **Black & LGBTQ+ | Health at the Intersection of Race, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity**

June 24, 7 pm CT

*Sponsored by the Advisory Committee on LGBTQ Issues and Minority Affairs Section*

Bianca Wilson, PhD, the Rabbi Zacky Senior Scholar of Public Policy at the Williams Institute will share her recent research and report on Black LGBTQ+ Americans and LeAnne Roberts, MD, Maya Green, MD, and Christopher Harris, MD will reflect on the findings and discuss with participants LGBTQ+ health and well-being at the intersection of race.

Register [here](#).

### **AMA EdHub LGBTQ+ Health Content**

The Advisory Committee and staff continue to closely collaborate with the Education Center in the development and launch of the EdHub's LGBTQ+ curriculum. To date, the following open access, free CME content has been completed and launched:

[LGBTQ Health, Diversity & Inclusion Course](#)

[Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Essentials](#) (Howard Brown Health)

[Creating Trans Affirming Spaces—Using Gender Appropriate Language](#) (Howard Brown Health)

[LGBTQ Essentials: Foundations of Care](#) (Howard Brown Health)

[Health Across the Gender Spectrum](#) (Stanford Health)

Content from partners SAGE Care, Fenway Health, and others is forthcoming.

## Policy

### **LGBTQ+ Inclusive Electronic Health Records**

In recent months, the Advisory Committee and staff have worked closely with the Professional Satisfaction & Practice Sustainability and Center for Health Equity teams to develop recommendations for the collection of LGBTQ+ and SOGI data in EHRs. To implement policy H-

315.967, an AMA letter EHR leaders sharing information collection and user experience recommendations to assist with optimizing products to meet the needs of LGBTQ+ patients and physicians in a manner consistent with all applicable legal requirements. In response to the letter, a leader in EHR development reached out to the AMA seeking input and support as they work to implement improvements in this area.

### **LGBTQ Research IRB Training**

In response to Resolution 002 (I-19): *Endorsing the Creation of an LGBTQ Research IRB Training*, the Advisory Committee and staff has collaborated with the Health Services Group to convene a consortium of experts from Howard Brown Health, Fenway Health, Callen-Lorde Community Health Center, Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, and the Institute for Sexual and Gender Minority Health and Wellbeing at Northwestern University to discuss their IRB policies, practices, resources, and training. Guidance and resources from the consortium members are being collected and analyzed to determine next steps in creating training resources.

### **Removing the Sex Designation from Birth Certificates**

In response to Resolution 005-I-19: *Removing Sex Designation from the Public Portion of the Birth Certificate*, the Advisory Committee recommended that our AMA should advocate for removal of sex as a legal designation on the public portion of birth certificates. Noting that assigning sex using a binary variable and placing it on the public portion of the birth certificate perpetuates a view that it is immutable and fails to recognize the medical spectrum of gender identity. The Board of Trustees approved the related report at its last meeting and the matter will go to the House of Delegates in June.

## **Advocacy**

### **Federal**

In collaboration with the federal advocacy team, the Advisory committee worked to identify AMA LGBTQ+ priorities for the new Administration and Congress:

- Expanded access and coverage to quality physical and mental health care for LGBTQ individuals.
- Discrimination protections (medical care, employment, etc.)
- LGBTQ inclusive and supportive data collection.
- Prohibiting the use of so-called “conversion therapy.”

Consistent with these priorities, our AMA has successfully urged passage of the Equality Act, supported confirmation of Dr. Rachel Levine as Assistant Secretary for Health at the Department of Health and Human Services, and has worked with the Administration to restore protections and support for LGBTQ+ persons in health care, employment, and housing.

### **State**

The Advisory Committee consults with the Advocacy Resource Center (ARC) on key LGBTQ+ issues in states and supports efforts by state medical associations to engage on them. The primary focus this year has supporting state medical association efforts to oppose state bills aiming to deny gender affirming care to transgender youth and criminalize physicians who provide such care. Related bills were introduced in 21 states this year, with bills in Arkansas and Tennessee

becoming law. AMA and our partners in the Federation of Medicine have been working hard to stop these bills, and efforts have been largely successful, except for Arkansas and Tennessee. The AMA is currently considering next steps for challenging the laws.

Our AMA issued a letter urging governors to oppose state legislation that would prohibit medically necessary gender transition-related care for minor patients. In addition, a commentary by AMA President, Susan Bailey, MD, calling on state policymakers to expand access to gender-affirming care, not criminalize it, was published in the widely read LGBTQ+ focused magazine, *The Advocate*.

The Advisory Committee and staff have begun work on a new issue brief focusing on such state efforts to deny gender affirming care and to sanction physicians. When complete, the brief will augment the three existing resources which focus on so-called “conversion therapy” (under revision), coverage for gender-affirming care, and transgender individuals’ access to public facilities.

### **Judicial**

The Advisory Committee and staff are apprised of and consulted on potential judicial advocacy related to LGBTQ+ issues. In recent months, the AMA has written or joined amicus briefs for:

- A case challenging the constitutionality of an Idaho law preventing transgender female students from participating in organized sports.
- One of the numerous cases challenging the previous administration’s rollback of the ACA Section 1557 LGBTQ health care protections.
- A case challenging the City of Los Angeles’ eviction moratorium, noting that evictions and homelessness hit the LGBTQ+ population especially hard.

### **Stay Connected**

Stay in the loop on the latest issues impacting LGBTQ patients and physicians by signing up for the Advisory Committee’s LGBTQ newsletter. Create an account [here](#).

The Advisory Committee on LGBTQ Issues [webpage](#) highlights LGBTQ news and topics related to patients and physicians.

Staff: Jim Pawelski [jim.pawelski@ama-assn.org](mailto:jim.pawelski@ama-assn.org)