

Researchers work to improve dermatologic care for sexual and gender minority patients

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University of Minnesota researchers recently published an opinion piece in *JAMA Dermatology* focused on standardizing collection of sexual orientation and gender identity in dermatology clinical settings.

This is one of the first published articles that advocates for standardizing SOGI, or [sexual orientation](#) and [gender identity](#), data collection in a subspecialty clinical setting (i.e. outside of primary care settings such as general internal medicine, family medicine, or pediatrics).

"These [data collection](#) efforts acknowledge the fact that a patient's many identities are really important to all providers because they empower physicians and other healthcare staff to provide higher quality care that is both evidence-based and culturally sensitive," said lead author Matthew Mansh, MD, Resident in the Department of Dermatology, University of Minnesota Medical School and University of Minnesota Health.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people face a number of unique health disparities, including dermatologic-specific disparities. Some examples given in the article include that gay and [bisexual men](#) are more likely to report a history of melanoma, nonmelanoma skin cancer, and indoor tanning. In addition, gay and bisexual men and women with acne are more likely to experience depression and suicidal ideation.

"Understanding the sexual orientation and gender identity of our patients should be important to all providers, including dermatologists. This information can ultimately impact nearly every aspect of clinical reasoning, or the way doctor's "think" in clinic—history taking, physical examination, differential diagnosis, and management decisions during clinical encounters, including the provision of, or referral for, preventative health services that can be enormously important for a person's overall health"

said Mansh. "This information is valuable to all healthcare providers regardless of what specialty they practice."

Sexual orientation and gender identity refers to sexual orientation- an enduring pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or [sexual attraction](#) to persons of the opposite, same, or multiple sexes or genders (eg, straight, gay, lesbian, or bisexual)—and gender identity— an individual's self-perception as male, female, a combination of both, or neither, and may differ from sex assigned at birth, which is typically based on external genital anatomy.

Provided by University of Minnesota

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