



# Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Science

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## DPT Class of 2016 Alumni Published in Journal of PT Education

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DPT Alumni Nicole Copti, DPT and Raad Shahriari, DPT, Class of 2016, have just been published in the Journal of Physical Therapy Education. They are first authors, along with faculty members Linda Wanek, PT, DPT and Amber Fitzsimmons, PT, DPTSc, MS, on the position paper entitled "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Inclusion in Physical Therapy: Advocating for Cultural Competency in Physical Therapist Education Across the United States." [1]

This position paper discusses how people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ) should be considered in the dialogue to improve cultural competency within physical therapy education. This would improve both care for our patients as well as the classroom learning environment for LGBTQ students. Patients who are LGBTQ have health care needs and considerations that are specific to them and they typically face discrimination

and bias, insensitivity of providers, a lack of knowledge about LGBTQ health care issues among providers, and decreased access to care, leading to worse health outcomes for this community. This paper shines a light on these populations and provides examples, going into detail regarding the current discrimination faced by this community. We also address how LGBTQ health care disparities have not been well researched or discussed in the profession of physical therapy. The paper stresses the importance of creating safe learning environments for students who are LGBTQ and enrolled in health care professional education programs, and provides recommendations to health care educators for improving cultural competency and outcomes for patients who are LGBTQ, from curriculum content to active training in understanding the unconscious (implicit) bias.

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#### **Links**

[1] <http://aptaeducation.org/members/jopte/index.cfm>