

Meeting date: 12/10/2022

GLADD Representative in attendance: Dr Duncan McGregor

GLADD Statement at General Medical Council (GMC) Strategic Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum (SEDIAF), October 2022

An issue of concern that I would first like to raise is a disturbing question in the September sitting of MRCS Part A which reinforced incorrect and harmful stereotypes around homosexual and bisexual men and needle-stick injuries. Given GMC's overall responsibility for standards of training, I would expect that the GMC are involved in this investigation.

I had initially intended to in this meeting invite the GMC to sign as a supporting organisation to GLADD's Medical Schools Charter on the abhorrent practice of so-called 'Conversion Therapy'. Sadly, the letter I had prepared and the document itself have not been circulated by the GMC to this forum ahead of today.

However, I am having reservations. Since initially sending this request to the GMC, further issues have come to light. Earlier this year, a young trans person complained to the GMC that a psychiatrist had offered them trans conversion therapy - a practice which the UN has noted can amount to "torture". This young person has been in contact with me, and has given full consent for me to share some details with this forum.

The case has been refused further investigation by the GMC, where the GMC ignores, overlooks and accepts:

Potentially identifying details of the case that were discussed in the forum have been redacted to maintain anonymity.

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These are all referenced openly in the GMCs letter to the young man in their explanation as to why they will not investigate this further.

On the 10th of December 2021, the GMC released a statement, signed by Professor Colin Melville, Medical Director and Director of Education and Standards for the GMC, outlining the GMCs organisational views on the practical of so-called 'Conversion Therapy'.

From the statement, I quote:

"We would take very seriously any allegation about a doctor engaging in so-called 'Conversion Therapy' and our guidance clearly sets out that any such therapy is inconsistent with our standards."

A further quote:

"We would be extremely concerned about any allegation of a doctor engaging in so-called 'Conversion Therapy' with any patient, whatever their age."

A further quote, on the topic of consent to conversion therapy:

"Even if it were possible for a patient to 'freely consent to such counselling, it would not be ethical for a clinician to provide it."

A final quote, describing so-called 'Conversion Therapy' as:

"something that no doctor could ethically provide."

These are all extremely strong statements in an official document from the GMC. I hope that you can see my concern as to how the issues that I have previously laid out with the case of the young trans man are at total odds with the firm statement by Prof Melville.

So as the only advisor on this forum representing people of minority sexual orientation and gender identity, I have to ask: If the GMC cannot maintain this most basic assurance to my community; why should I still come here? Why should I lend my organisations good name and support to the GMCs work, when it's platitudes are but hollow words and empty promises?