



COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

Position Statement on Conversion/Reparative Therapy

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and its Council on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression (CSOGIE) join several other professional and educational organizations (e.g., National Association of Social Workers, American Psychological Association, American Psychiatric Association, and American Counseling Association) in opposing the practice of therapies that attempt to “change” or “repair” the sexual orientation or gender identity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) individuals. Commonly referred to as *conversion* or *reparative* therapies, these treatments not only are associated with psychological harm,ⁱ but also violate the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers.ⁱⁱ Furthermore, CSWE is opposed to teaching social work students to use conversion therapy approaches in its accredited programs, because these approaches are incompatible with the Education Policy on which the Accreditation Standards are based. CSWE now offers curriculum materials developed by CSOGIE to help facilitate discussion on this important topic. These resources support social work faculty and students in (a) affirming and celebrating the diverse identities of LGBTQ individuals, (b) helping LGBTQ people manage and cope with oppression, (c) advocating for an end to discrimination and prejudice toward LGBTQ people, and (d) being active participants in creating policies to protect LGBTQ people from oppressive social conditions.

ⁱSubstance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2015). Ending conversion therapy: Supporting and affirming LGBTQ youth. (HHS Publication No. (SMA) 15-4928). Retrieved from <http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA15-4928/SMA15-4928.pdf>.

ⁱⁱNational Association of Social Workers. (2008). *Code of ethics*. Retrieved from <https://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>.