

Has Medicine Failed the Intersex Community?

DSD and Intersex Care: Past, Present, and Future

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Guiding Questions for Reflection

Use these questions to spark discussion or personal reflection before, during, or after the lecture.

Defining Intersex

- What historical, cultural, or structural factors have shaped the experiences of intersex individuals?
- “Intersex” is an umbrella term encompassing a wide range of variations in sex characteristics, experiences, identities, and health needs. What are the benefits of using an umbrella term? What important differences might it obscure?
- How are respect for bodily autonomy, informed consent, and individual language preferences expressions of medical professionalism?

Caring for Intersex Patients

- What can an individual clinician do to provide respectful, patient-centered care for intersex patients?
- What policies, practices, educational approaches, or research priorities should health care institutions examine?
- Where might routine clinical practices unintentionally limit patient autonomy or reinforce assumptions about sex and gender?

This guide accompanies the 2026 Imbasciani-DiSalvo LGBTQ Health Equity Lecture, “Has Medicine Failed the Intersex Community? DSD and Intersex Care: Past, Present, and Future,” presented as part of the Health C.A.R.E (Cultural Awareness, Research, and Education) Series. We invite you to reflect on the evolution of understandings of disorders of sex development (DSD) and intersex care, and how physicians and medical educators can support and advocate for intersex people and patients.

Recommended Resources

Explore these articles and tools to deepen your understanding:

Patient Self-Advocacy Toolkit

This tool is designed to support communication between intersex individuals and healthcare providers. It can help prepare for appointments, set expectations, reduce negative interactions, and advocate for affirming care.

[Read more at interACT](#)

What We Wish Our Doctors Knew

interACT Youth is a group of intersex advocates in their teens and twenties working to raise intersex awareness. We decided it's time we told our own stories and spoke our truths. In 2012, we started a conversation about what we wish our doctors knew.

[Read more at interACT](#)

Affirming Primary Care for Intersex People 2020

This community-informed clinical guide on primary care for intersex people provides an overview of intersex terms and concepts, the health concerns of intersex people, intersex-affirming practices, and resources for further learning.

[Read more at the National LGBTQIA+ Health Education Center](#)

Intersex Explained: Lecture at Stanford Medicine

What do intersex people need from their healthcare providers? What is the history of intersex medical treatment? This lecture by intersex educator Hans Lindahl on intersex people's anatomy, healthcare needs, and history was given at Stanford Medicine's 2021 Women's Health Forum event.

[Watch on YouTube](#)

Providing Ethical and Compassionate Health Care to Intersex Patients

Solid policy that takes into consideration the needs of the community is essential to giving intersex patients the care that they deserve. In the pages that follow, we provide a set of model hospital policies aimed at promoting best practices to ensure appropriate, ethical, and quality care is being provided to intersex patients, and to address bias and insensitivity toward intersex patients and their families.

[Read more at interACT](#)