



ASSOCIATION OF PSYCHIATRIC SOCIAL WORK PROFESSIONALS

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POSITION STATEMENT OF APSWP CONDEMNING CONVERSION TREATMENTS

Homosexuality has been declassified as a mental illness since 1973 by the American Psychiatric Association (in DSM II) and by the World Health Organisation since 1992 (in ICD-10). Gender incongruence too is no more classified as mental illness in the ICD-11. Despite of the fact that neither homosexuality nor 'transgenderism' are mental illnesses, these have been sought to be treated as such and cure/ conversion treatments continue in some parts of the world including India. The Yogyakarta Principles on application of Human Rights Law in relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity consider conversion treatments to be a form of medical abuse.

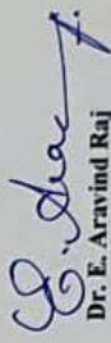
Research globally and in India has repeatedly pointed towards serious negative consequences of conversion treatments that include lowered self-esteem, increased self-hate, guilt, shame, feelings of being dehumanized, internalised homo negativity and trans negativity, suicidal ideations, self-harm and death by suicide of young LGBTQ persons subjected to these forms of harmful and unethical treatments.

In this context, the APSWP condemns in the strongest terms any form of conversion treatments aimed at 'curing' sexual orientation and gender identities of LGBTQ persons. The APSWP reiterates the position that is widely accepted among mental health professionals globally that Psychiatric Social Work Professionals must strive to,

- Educate themselves on affirmative mental health care approaches to work with and support their LGBTQ clients
- Include LGBTQ affirmative mental health approaches in Psychiatric Social Work training and curriculum
- Engage in participatory research with involvement of the LGBTQ community members and develop robust, competent and evidence-based affirmative practice models for LGBTQ communities in India
- Advocate for rights of LGBTQ clients within the mental health systems in the country


Dr. Sobinidha
President


Dr. Ketki Ranade
Vice President


Dr. E. Aravind Raj
General Secretary

Registered Office:

Association of Psychiatric Social Work Professionals (APSWP)
#5, 9th Main, Nataraja Layout, JP Nagar 7th Phase, Bangalore, Karnataka – 560078
email: apswp.india@gmail.com