



Leading Medical Education to Deliver Equitable Quality Care for all People, Inclusive of Identity, Development, or Expression of Gender/Sex/Sexuality

What is eQuality?

eQuality is a curriculum innovation project at ULSOM. The University of Louisville School of Medicine serves as the **nation's pilot site** for training future physicians on the unique healthcare needs of people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning (LGBTQ), nonbinary (NB), or born with differences of sex development (DSD) based on medical education competencies from the Association of American Medical Colleges.

eQuality was established at the University of Louisville School of Medicine in 2014. eQuality also provides periodic trainings for clinical/teaching faculty, residents, staff, and other providers. Longitudinal evaluation of eQuality curriculum was incorporated at the start of the project, and this research is ongoing.

Who develops eQuality?:

The program is overseen by the UofL Undergraduate Medical Education Office, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and LGBT HSC Satellite Office.

What do students experience?

Current students experience an integrated curriculum that treats the care of LGBT, NB, and DSD-affected patients as typical and normal within your patient population. While some educational models place this content as separate from the rest of the curriculum (e.g., in an elective or stand-alone week of learning), eQuality integrates this information throughout the curriculum to reinforce the core stance that a competent physician is skilled in the care of all patients within the community and can approach each patient with sensitivity, compassion, and the knowledge necessary to promote health and wellness.

Current students can expect to learn about the care of LGBT, NB, and DSD-affected patients from a range of teaching faculty and staff across many courses, including the basic sciences. When learning about fetal development, for example, you will learn about differences in sex development. When learning how to take a patient history, you will learn specific skills to communicate effectively with and affirm transgender patients. The information and skills you learn with this curriculum provide insights into the unique needs of the LGBT, NB, and DSD populations, but these skills are transferrable to providing excellent patient care for all patients of all backgrounds.

Does eQuality impact campus climate?

Yes. We work on increasing a sense of belonging and safety for all students, inclusive of LGBTQ students, staff and faculty in a variety of ways:

- We conducted an Institutional Climate Survey in spring 2016 to gauge the environment for LGBTQ issues and experience of LGBT community members on the UofL the Health Sciences Center campus (including ULSOM). Results here: <http://louisville.edu/medicine/ume/curriculum/equality/curriculum/current-and-prospective-students>
- We implemented a highly successful "Ally Campaign in 2017" resulting in a staff/faculty participation in Safe Zone trainings, requests for rainbow flag lapel pins, ally stickers and sign-ups on our Ally List here: <http://louisville.edu/lgbt/faculty-and-staff-allies-at-u-of-l/faculty-and-staff-allies-list-1>

Other markers of our positive climate for the LGBTQ community are:

- The Five Star rating earned by the University of Louisville for LGBT inclusion by Campus Pride.
- The inclusive policies at the University of Louisville protecting LGBTQ people from discrimination.
- Support of several LGBTQ-themed student groups on campus, including HSC Pride on the HSC campus.
- Para-curricular offerings such as the LGBTQ Health Certificate.

Frequently asked questions:

Q: How many hours of LGBTQ content is there?

A: The Project has impacted about 50 hours of content for the first and second year of medical school. What this functionally means, is that a one-hour lecture on screenings includes about 5-10 minutes of content on specific screening recommendations for LGBTQ populations. This doesn't mean we teach 50 hours of LGBTQ, NB, DSD content. We are really proud that we have taken such a comprehensive look at our curriculum to make sure it is inclusive.

Q: Why did the School of Medicine take on this project?

A: LGBTQ, NB, DSD populations have well documented health disparities, many of which are a result of a lack of training for health care providers. We had a great opportunity to do this work at UofL SOM because we have leadership at our school committed to diversity, we have a thriving LGBTQ Center with an office located on the HSC dedicated to issues of health care, and we have an engaged LGBTQ community that supports this project. When the AAMC released their competencies, we were well-situated to take on this challenge, and it was the right thing to do.

Q: How have you gone about including the material in the curriculum? Do LGBTQ topics get woven into the standardized patient encounters?

A: We are using recently released competencies by the AAMC to infuse our existing curriculum with training on LGBTQ, NB, and DSD patient care (DSD stands for differences in sex development). The way we are doing this is unique. Other schools may already teach about these populations, but they often do it in a segmented way, like an optional elective course or one-day training, that sends the message that this is marginalized or unimportant content. What we know is that all doctors will interact with LGBTQ, NB, and DSD patients, so what we are doing is integrating this content wherever it naturally goes, such as teaching about recommended screenings for these populations within the class sessions about screenings. We have developed a brief training manual, the [eQuality Toolkit](#), to help build a foundation for inclusive clinical skills to competently care for LGBTQ, NB patients and individuals born with DSD. We have been the national pilot site to integrate these competencies in years one and two and continue to work to integrate this training into years three and four

We have worked closely with our SP program to develop SP encounters in two ways: in encounters in which students practice using inclusive language but the fact that the person is LGBTQ doesn't require any unique care concerns (for example, a gout case); and other encounters in which the person's LGBTQ status requires both inclusive language and unique care concerns (for example, a teen experiencing bullying in school who needs supportive, appropriate resources).

Q: Are there opportunities for students to get involved with putting together this curriculum?

A: Absolutely! Informally, students regularly provide feedback to our offices to make suggestions for changes and improvement to the curriculum and we take this feedback very seriously. Formally, a current Distinction in Medical Education (DIME) Track student is developing DSD training materials for residents while two former DIME students actively developed sections of the eQuality curriculum, evaluated these sessions, and presented at national conferences on the outcomes.

Q: How can I learn more?

A: The eQuality Project has a webpage within the School of Medicine website with contact information for leaders of this project. You are also welcome to contact the UofL LGBTQ Center for more information about the work they are doing campus wide.

eQuality at ULSOM: <http://louisville.edu/medicine/ume/curriculum/equality>

LGBT Center at UofL: <http://louisville.edu/lgbt>

Director of the LGBT Center at the HSC: Bláz Bush, blaz.bush@louisville.edu