

Nursing research explores challenges for pregnant same-sex couples

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Research indicates pregnant same-sex couples are facing systemic challenges with maternal healthcare because of policies, procedures and practices that assume parents are heterosexual couples.

[Assumptions](#) and language often have an impact on an individual's healthcare experience. The research indicates that members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual and queer (LGBTQ) community can feel anxiety, fear, and uncertainty in "heteronormative" settings—those that are rooted in traditional heterosexual views. Language on patient intake forms, assumptions about the child's parentage and use of incorrect pronouns when addressing the parents are some of the ways the current system can make people feel out of place. Research shows that [nurses](#) and other health-care providers are well-intended, caring professionals. The current issues are systemic rather than driven by personnel.

According to Dr. Lisa Goldberg, associate professor, School of Nursing, "When a woman comes into birth there are assumptions made that she's heterosexual. Many of the policies, procedures and documentation within hospital settings are really directed around being a straight woman."

Provided by Dalhousie University

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