

Anti-LGBTQ+ restrictions and legislation linked to host of negative health effects

May 7 2024, by Amy McCaig



Credit: Unsplash/CC0 Public Domain

In January 2024 alone, more than 280 anti-LGBTQ+ bills were

introduced in the U.S. As this type of legislation and policies are becoming more prevalent across the country, [a paper](#) from researchers at Rice University concludes that the negative effects are felt profoundly not just by members of the LGBTQ+ community but by those who work in roles supporting them.

The article "Understanding and Addressing the Health Implications of Anti-LGBTQ+ Legislation" is published in a recent edition of *Occupational Health Science*. The study is an anthology of expert opinions and evidence analyzing the negative effects of policies and laws targeting the LGBTQ+ community. It also examines the impact on individuals working in fields that serve LGBTQ+ people.

Lead author Eden King, the Lynette S. Autrey Professor of Psychological Sciences at Rice, said she and her fellow researchers wanted to take a closer look at the impact of rising anti-LGBTQ+ discourse and legislation throughout the country, especially in states like Florida and Texas.

"We were interested in sharing what the science tells us about the potential implications of laws and policies that are being enacted," King said.

King and her fellow researchers report that there are significant physical and mental health implications linked not just to LGBTQ+ individuals affected by these laws and discourse, but also to those working in health care and [educational settings](#) that provide service to this community.

These negative health implications can include anxiety, depression, [substance abuse](#), cardiovascular conditions, cancer and more. The paper suggests that these [negative health effects](#) can occur following legal, organizational or even supervisory changes.

Ten to 20 years ago, when some of the laws were becoming more supportive and protective of the LGBTQ+ community, researchers documented fewer mental health issues and negative effects, King said. A prior review of research cited in the paper concluded that laws protecting LGBTQ+ rights result in LGBTQ+ people with improved mental and [physical health](#), higher employment and wages, improved job experiences, better educational environments, less social stigma and discrimination and diminished housing discrimination.

King said the onslaught of new bills attempt to remove gender affirming care and create other [health care](#) restrictions for LGBTQ+ youth; allow for the misgendering of youth; censor school curriculum (including banning books and preventing conversations on LGBTQ+ topics); force outings of transgender people in schools; prevent the requirement of staff-related training on gender, sexual diversity and other forms of diversity training; ban transgender individuals from public accommodations; prevent public drag performances; and ban LGBTQ+ marriages.

"The consequences of further dismantling the enormous progress that has been made toward LGBTQ+ rights have enormous implications for the people living in the U.S.," the paper's authors write.

"In this anthology, we have attempted to summarize and alert readers to the implications of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, particularly within the context of occupational health psychology. We anticipate increased stigmatization at the individual and societal level, and negative physical and mental health-related consequences that vary across subgroups in the U.S. and beyond."

King said she and her fellow researchers hope their work will raise awareness on this topic and promote action preventing the further dismantling of the basic civil rights of LGBTQ+ people.

More information: Eden King et al, Understanding and Addressing the Health Implications of Anti-LGBTQ+ Legislation, *Occupational Health Science* (2024). [DOI: 10.1007/s41542-024-00174-2](https://doi.org/10.1007/s41542-024-00174-2)

Provided by Rice University

Citation: Anti-LGBTQ+ restrictions and legislation linked to host of negative health effects (2024, May 7) retrieved 29 June 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2024-05-anti-lgbtq-restrictions-legislation-linked.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.