

Inclusivity needed in patient radiology information systems, review suggests

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Outdated and inflexible medical information systems are harmful to transgender and gender diverse (TGD) people, according to a literature review [published](#) in the *Journal of Medical Radiation Sciences* (JMRS). It

found patient record options available to medical practices and hospitals frequently merge sex and gender as a single, binary concept.

Non-inclusive practices like these threaten to disengage TGD people from the health care system. A recent Australian study found 41.3% of TGD people have avoided seeking [emergency care](#) when they needed it, largely due to fear of transphobic harassment.

Most studies analyzed in the literature review propose recommendations to make medical information systems more inclusive. However, researchers made these recommendations without consulting TGD people. There was no evidence to suggest whether the recommendations improved TGD [patient satisfaction](#) and [health outcomes](#).

Carolyn Heyes, President of the Australian Society of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy (ASMIRT) says more meaningful engagement with the TGD community is needed to ensure TGD people feel safe when seeking health care.

"First and foremost, transgender and gender diverse people must be consulted on information system improvements that affect them."

"Care should be about the patient. Making patient information systems inclusive for transgender and gender diverse people is part of treating patients with dignity and respect."

The review gave specific attention to patient information systems in radiology—the field of medical science dealing with X-rays and using radiation to diagnose and treat disease. It recommended the following improvements to patient data collection:

- Systems need to be able to accurately record each patient's used name (which might be different to their legal name) and

pronouns.

- Systems should record both current gender and assigned sex at birth for each patient to discriminate between the concepts of gender and sex.
- Systems should use current and appropriate terminology to avoid discrimination and support inclusivity.

More information: Nathan Ho et al, Improving radiology information systems for inclusivity of transgender and gender-diverse patients: what are the problems and what are the solutions? A systematic review, *Journal of Medical Radiation Sciences* (2024). [DOI: 10.1002/jmrs.808](https://doi.org/10.1002/jmrs.808)

Provided by Australian Society of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy (ASMIRT)

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