

W01-04 - POSITION STATEMENTS BY PSYCHIATRIC ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNING MENTAL HEALTH OF GAY MEN AND LESBIANS

G. Nakajima

OMI Clinic, San Francisco, CA, USA

Objectives: In this workshop, Dr. Nakajima will discuss position statements that the American Psychiatric Association (APA) has taken concerning gay and lesbian issues and mental health.

Method: A review of position statements by the American Psychiatric Association and European psychiatric organizations about gay and lesbian mental health issues.

Results: The APA was the first psychiatric organization to delete homosexuality as a mental illness from its nosology, DSM-II back in 1973. When homosexuality was deleted the APA also passed a resolution affirming the civil rights of gay men and lesbians. These position statements in 1973 were the first of a long number of positions statements that the APA has taken concerning mental health issues for gay men and lesbians. In 1987 the APA voted against keeping egodystonic homosexuality in DSM-III R and currently there is no diagnoses related to homosexuality in DSM-IV. The APA has also taken position statement concerning adoption and co-parenting of same-sex couples as well as discrimination of gay and lesbians in the US military. In the past few years the APA has developed position statements against therapies to change sexual orientation, which is sometimes referred to as "conversion or reparative therapy," and in support of same sex marriage. Some European psychiatric associations including Norway's and the United Kingdom's have followed the APA in passing position statements against conversion therapies.

Conclusions: We will discuss the importance of Psychiatric Organizations to make formal position statements to advance the mental well being of lesbians and gay men.