Professionals as Targets in the Culture Wars: A European Perspective

Profissionais de Saúde como Alvo da Guerra Cultural: Uma Perspetiva Europeia

Keywords: Culture; Dissent and Disputes; Europe; Health Personnel; Sexual and Gender Minorities
Palavras-chave: Cultura; Dissidência e Disputas; Europa; Minorias Sexuais e de Género; Pessoal de Saúde

I read with both fear and hope the article where Hadland describes the current process of shaping the public narratives in the United States against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ) people. LGBTQ, and trans people in particular, face high levels of discrimination and violence worldwide. In Europe there are significant problems in Hungary and Poland and, even in more liberal countries, both mainstream and social media are increasingly flooded with anti-LGBTQ opinions. The Portuguese Medical Association, for example, still has no initiative specifically targeting LGBTQ individuals or professionals. Furthermore, LGBTQ issues are underrepresented in Portugal’s most influential general medical journal (Acta Médica Portuguesa) with only three articles specifically addressing LGBTQ health-related issues published in the last ten years.

A recent study pointed out that only 13 out of 31 European countries have legislation that offers protection based on gender identity and/or sex characteristics. The increasing politicization of healthcare is potentially dangerous, and may contribute to hinder access to evidence-based care, increasing mental health-related problems, and to decreased well-being among LGBTQ individuals.

The time to act is now. We need the medical community, professional organizations, health and scientific institutions, national governments, and European organizations to act quickly to protect LGBTQ individuals and professionals from harassment and discrimination.

PROTECTION OF HUMANS AND ANIMALS

The author declare that the procedures were followed according to the regulations established by the Clinical Research and Ethics Committee and to the Helsinki Declaration of the World Medical Association updated in 2013.

COMPETING INTERESTS

PM has received grants or contracts from FLAD, Bial Foundation, FCT and Gulbenkian Foundation; consulting fees from Janssen and Angelini; payment or honoraria for lectures, presentations, speakers’ bureaus, manuscript writing or educational events from Janssen, Angelini, Lundbeck, Tecnimede and Biogen; leadership or fiduciary role in other board, society, committee, or advocacy group, paid or unpaid from Sociedade Portuguesa de Comunicação Clínica em Cuidados de Saúde, Liga de Amigos do Hospital de Braga, Alumni Medicina, B.ACIS, Cooperativa Cultural Velha-a-Branca.

FUNDING SOURCES

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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2. ICVS/3B’s. PT Government Associate Laboratory. Braga/Guimarães. Portugal.

Funding Source: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.


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Recebido/Received: 05/10/2022 - Aceite/Accepted: 20/10/2022 - Publicado Online/Published Online: 28/10/2022

https://doi.org/10.20344/amp.19154