



SRNT

SCIENCE MATTERS

SRNT Position on Binary Gender Definition, November 2018

SRNT is an international organization with a mission to *stimulate the generation and dissemination of new knowledge concerning nicotine in all its manifestations - from molecular to societal*. Among our shared values are respect for the worth and dignity of individuals, inclusiveness and social justice, respect for pluralism and diversity, and respect for all persons, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, abilities, age or national origin.

We learned recently that the US federal government plans to redefine the legal meaning of gender by using “biological sex” as a strict definer of gender identity. This constitutes a conflict with the scientific and medical communities’ current knowledge of gender identity.¹ Through the work of many of our members and community partners, we know that cigarette smoking and other forms of tobacco use disproportionately affect the health of transgender and non-binary individuals.^{2,3} We also know that increased tobacco use among transgender and non-binary individuals is closely related to their experiences of gender minority stigma, discrimination, and stress at the individual, interpersonal, community, and policy levels.⁴⁻⁸ Thus, the proposed action by the federal government may contribute to tobacco-related health disparities. Furthermore, the binary definition, if implemented, will make it very difficult, if not impossible, to compare future findings with those from the previous studies.

SRNT believes that these proposed discriminatory policies and actions are inconsistent with the Society’s core mission and shared values, and will hinder generation and dissemination of knowledge that is important to sexual and gender minority populations. We encourage SRNT members to continue to conduct research and work to address and ultimately eliminate tobacco-related health disparities among vulnerable populations including transgender and non-binary individuals, and collect sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) information using recommended best practices.⁹

We understand that many of us may be hurt, upset, concerned, and alarmed by this proposed action. We want to emphasize that the Society is dedicated to providing a safe, inclusive, respectful and supportive environment for all transgender and non-binary members of our community. We do not condone any form of discrimination. We are committed to serving the public good, the best interests of our members, and the profession at-large. This goal can only be achieved by fostering an environment that is based on fair, equal, and just treatment for all.

If you have any questions or concerns, we encourage you to reach out to the following helpful resources:

SRNT Health Disparities Network

[Monica Webb Hooper](#)

[The Trans Lifeline](#) is a 24/7 peer support service run by trans people, for trans and questioning callers. Hotline number: 877-565-8860

[The National Center for Transgender Equality](#)

[GLAAD](#)

References:

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