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## Healthcare for Diverse Families

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# Healthcare for diverse families

*The first nursing textbook chapter devoted to care for LGBTQ families was written by two Linfield professors*

One of North America's most widely used family nursing textbooks also just became the first to include a chapter devoted entirely to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer (LGBTQ) healthcare issues.

The sixth edition of *Family Health Care Nursing: Theory, Practice, and Research*, released in February, includes the chapter written by Linfield College professors Aaron Tabacco and Mary Bartlett, along with co-author Judith MacDonnell of Canada's York University. Joanna Rowe, Linfield's interim dean of nursing, is lead editor of the textbook and Melissa Robinson, associate professor of nursing, is a co-editor.

Tabacco was a co-editor of the previous edition of the textbook, one of the most popular nursing primers in the United States and Canada. When the new edition was being discussed, he didn't feel he could take on an editorial role again – he was finishing his doctoral dissertation. He suggested the new chapter instead.

Bartlett was excited to come on board as a co-author. "We need something in nursing education that says, 'this is another kind of family,'" she says. "You have to offer open, affirming and nonjudgmental care."

"As we got into this," MacDonnell recalls, "it was apparent to me that we were covering specialty areas such as trans older people and their families, as well as situations related to clinical issues. There was just such a broad spectrum of what we could cover in the book."

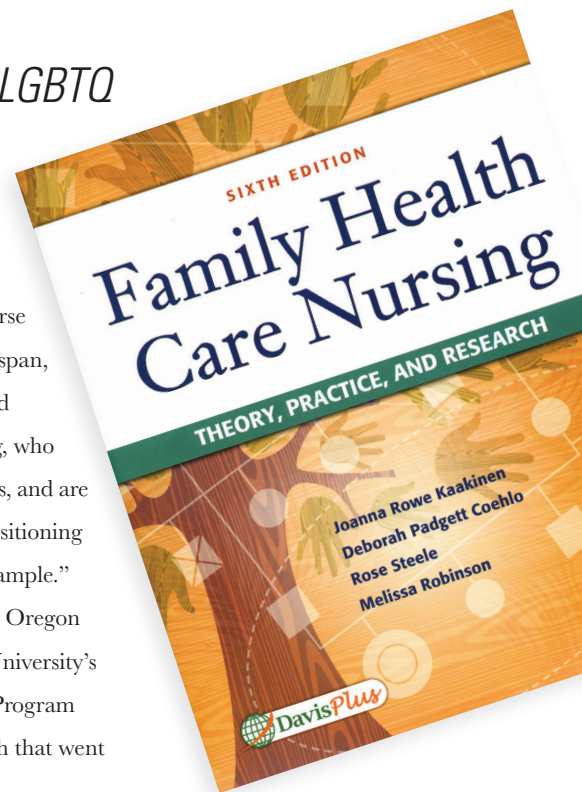
One thing Tabacco hoped to achieve, he said to his co-authors, was "a chapter that traced healthcare across the lifespan."

"This chapter examines gender-diverse families across the lifespan, including couples and families who are aging, who haven't had legal rights, and are now dealing with transitioning into elder care, for example."

Amy Penkin of Oregon Health and Science University's Transgender Health Program applauds the research that went into the chapter.

"It made a solid link to evidence-based practice," she says. "To have an academic text that brings forth [those] practices will shed light on the health disparities for these groups as historically underserved and marginalized."

The new chapter, for instance, highlights the work of the Family Acceptance Project of San Francisco State University. The project's research focused on LGBT youth who are particularly vulnerable to family abandonment or expulsion from their homes and have higher risks for depression, suicide, homelessness, substance use and HIV infection. Using their findings, the project developed interventions aimed at helping to prevent these problems and keep families intact.



– Christian Feuerstein