

Researchers Address Bias Against and Unique Needs of Gay/Bi Men

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SOURCE Dr. Jane Ussher, Dr. Janette Perz and Dr. Simon Rosser

New book shows that research on gay and bisexual men with prostate cancer demonstrates cultural bias that most of these patients are unprepared for prostate cancer treatment and its consequences for their sexual relationships that follow. The volume editors, Dr. Jane Ussher, Dr. Janette Perz and Dr. Simon Rosser, represent several of the most highly funded health care academics in Australia and the United States in prostate psychosocial oncology.

NEW YORK, July 31, 2018 /PRNewswire-PRWeb/ -- LGBTQ publisher Harrington Park Press, distributed by Columbia University Press, announces their latest book, "Gay & Bisexual Men Living with Prostate Cancer: from Diagnosis to Recovery."

The book is one of the first of its kind—written specifically for the medical community treating gay and bi men with prostate cancer. The volume editors are international leaders in the blossoming field of LGBT psychosocial oncology: Jane Ussher, Janette Perz and Simon Rosser.

The 20 contributions represent the most current and comprehensive book on the subject published to date, incorporating the tremendous new developments in cancer treatment from the past ten years.

Medical science has conspicuously—and sometimes shamefully—been complicit in focusing historically on straight male Caucasians above all other target populations in health care delivery. Women, racial minorities, and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning/queer (LGBTQ) communities are underrepresented in clinical trials of new medications. This limits our ability to identify their specific needs and to respond to them thoughtfully and rigorously.

The LGBTQ community has been described as experiencing an "ignored epidemic" and characterized as a "growing and medically underserved population" in the area of cancer care.

In no disease is this inequality better encapsulated than in prostate cancer. Of the hundreds of thousands of studies devoted to prostate cancer, only 88 small-scale efforts have focused on understanding the experiences of gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals with prostate cancer.

In one chapter, we hear from a man who wondered whether anyone was listening to him "as a single gay man" when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer

He recalls, "What will happen to my intimacy needs? Why is no one asking me about gay sexual relations after surgery? How will the total absence of semen affect my orgasm? Can you reach orgasm at all without an erection? Will I still be able to call myself a gay man? Will I be attractive to other men any more?"

His worries continue. "These were all such personal questions interconnected with my identity, and I needed answers to reduce my anxiety. Yet I just couldn't bring myself to ask anyone [at the hospital]. I felt embarrassed revealing myself to [the cancer and urology specialists. I was trapped once again in a heterosexual world, just as I had been since childhood."

If we are to make progress toward equality in health care delivery, we must listen to men like him and value his humanity as seriously as we would to any straight male counterpart.

To this purpose, "Gay & Bisexual Men Living with Prostate Cancer" will be indispensable for health care, oncology, and mental health practitioners who seek to address their specific experiences and challenges.

Harrington Park Press, distributed by Columbia University Press, is an academic, scholarly, and professional book publisher devoted to emerging topics in LGBTQ diversity, equality, and inclusivity.

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