

## Letter to Editor

# Understanding Diversity in Nursing Homes: Do Some Transgendered Individuals Also Have Tetragametic Chimerism and if so, would this Influence How They are Perceived by Care Givers?

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Long-term care facilities are home to a diverse group of individuals who come with different backgrounds and life experiences [1]. There has been considerable news coverage of issues facing transgendered individuals, including those who need nursing home care [2,3]. Transgendered people have special concerns when it comes to moving into a nursing home. Most transgendered individuals do not undergo complete surgical transition. This precludes them from being able to remain in the closet during caregiving or medical procedures, raising the question as to whether caregivers would be respectful of their differences.

News stories about transgenderism brought to mind the topic of tetragametic chimerism [4,5,6,7,8]. Tetragametic chimerism is when there is an amalgamation of two different zygotes to create single embryo and thus producing one individual. In other words, these chimeric individuals are fraternal twins inhabiting the same body. The two zygotes contribute to different tissues within the individual. The zygotes may be of the same genetic gender or different genetic genders. Could this explain why an individual's mind identifies as one gender, while their body appears to be of a different gender? If so, would this facilitate a healthier perception and understanding of transgendered individuals by care givers and greater sensitivity in care?

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