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# The Value of LGBTQ+ Healthcare Navigation

*A Case Study with*



# Eidos LGBTQ+ Health Initiative at the University of Pennsylvania: Case Study

## Eidos & Included Health Study the Value of LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation

**Company:** Included Health

**Headquarters:** San Francisco, CA

**What they do:** Included Health is a new kind of healthcare company that combines people and technology to guide and deliver care differently. It is a leading healthcare service for the LGBTQ+ community, providing specialized virtual care, navigation, and advocacy to employers and health plans in all 50 states. The company was created in 2021 through the merger of Grand Rounds Health and Doctor On Demand and subsequently rebranded following the acquisition of Included Health, a healthcare platform focused on LGBTQ+ health.

**LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation** is the company's solution for LGBTQ+ members and their families. The cornerstone of this service is a team of Care Coordinators, a diverse group of LGBTQ+ people and allies trained to help members find inclusive medical providers and utilize insurance benefits.

### Challenge

The company had substantial data about members and healthcare navigation but struggled to analyze and unlock insights hidden in the data.

### Solution

Included Health selected the Eidos LGBTQ+ Health Initiative at the University of Pennsylvania as a research partner to evaluate their LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation data because of Eidos' reputation for academic rigor and commitment to social good. From **June 1 to December 15, 2023**, Eidos and Included Health collaborated on a groundbreaking study that shows how navigation assistance improves access to healthcare for the LGBTQ+ community.

### Included Health needed a rigorous study to understand

- How does LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation improve care, and why?
- What are the barriers to care for the LGBTQ+ population?
- Who receives the most benefits from LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation?
- Which products and services most impact members and why?

The company also recognized it had unique data on LGBTQ+ medical care that could lead to improvements in healthcare that benefits LGBTQ+ communities — groups traditionally underserved by health research.

## Mapping the Data

Included Health gave the Eidos researchers an impressive dataset collected from **July 1, 2022, to June 29, 2023**. This included a mix of both quantitative and qualitative data that the researchers used in two separate analyses.

- **4,703** LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation cases were collected between January 26 and July 31, 2023.
- **354 (7.5%)** cases with member-reported outcome survey results.
- **13,940** anonymized online chat transcripts from **2,136** members. All personally identifying information was redacted using a proprietary algorithm.

## Advanced Research Methods

Eidos prepared a research plan to analyze the sizable quantity of data, including leading-edge methodologies such as natural language processing, statistical analysis and thematic analysis of explicit and implicit content. As part of this research plan, they decided to break the study into two analyses: quantitative and qualitative.

## Assembling an Expert Interdisciplinary Academic Team

One of the most valuable assets Eidos delivered was access to experts in LGBTQ+ health research. The lead researchers have expertise in personalized health, health equity, and medical access and were uniquely qualified to conduct this research.

Research assistants also took part in analyzing and coding the data. By creating opportunities for ambitious up-and-coming researchers to learn from world experts in LGBTQ+ health, Eidos is building the pipeline for future LGBTQ+ research initiatives.

Expert Researchers	Research Assistants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Seul Ki Choi</b>, PhD, MPH, Research Assistant Professor, Eidos LGBTQ+ Health Initiative, School of Nursing</li><li>● <b>Patrina Sexton Topper</b>, PhD, RN, MS, Advisory Board, Eidos LGBTQ+ Health Initiative</li><li>● <b>José A. Bauermeister</b>, MPH, PhD, Faculty Director, Eidos LGBTQ+ Health Initiative, School of Nursing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Arianna Hall</b>, MPH, Eidos LGBTQ+ Health Initiative</li><li>● <b>Emmanuel Fernandez</b>, School of Nursing</li><li>● <b>Andrew Pregnall</b>, MSc, Perelman School of Medicine</li><li>● <b>Xandro Xu</b>, School of Arts &amp; Sciences</li></ul>

## Measuring Impact Through User Survey Data

After Included Health finished assisting a member with a service request, the company emailed a brief survey. Eidos researchers took **4,703** completed service requests or “cases” from **January 26 to July 31, 2023**. They merged this information with the members’ brief survey responses. A total of **354 cases** had the member-reported outcomes from the brief survey and were used in the study.

Data showed that Care Coordinators made finding and getting care easier through reducing stress, providing referrals, sharing information, clarifying policies and processes, and helping members prepare for the visit.

Since working with Included Health, I am ...	Agree or strongly agree
Better able to find healthcare providers who understand my needs	92%
Feel less stressed about using healthcare services	89%
Better able to find, understand, and use information to make decisions	88%
More prepared to engage with healthcare providers	87%
Less likely to avoid care	86%

## LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation Impact Score

The research team used the survey results using statistical methods to create a unique composite score called the **LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation Impact Score**. A score of **4** or higher indicates a positive impact on healthcare access. Included Health received a **4.4**, evidencing the overall efficacy of their solution.

The team also merged data from two different sources: the member intake form and the survey to understand how member characteristics impact their LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation Impact Score. While LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation impact scores varied by member characteristics, the variation was minimal. Furthermore, the highest LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation impact scores were among members who did not provide their demographic information on the intake form. This makes it difficult to interpret differences and highlights an area for future research when more data is available.

## In-depth Analysis of Online Chat Conversations

The first challenge was filtering out data to narrow the scope of the analysis to focus on gender-affirming care. Eidos researchers narrowed the data to **1,353** chat transcripts

between 469 members and Care Coordinators by searching for key terms related to medically necessary gender-affirming treatments and gender (e.g., gender dysphoria, gender identity, gender affirmation, transgender, and non-binary).

The company anonymized the transcripts and removed personally identifiable information before sharing the data. However, this made some transcripts difficult to interpret. Researchers also needed to use their training and experience to clean up the data and identify the usable records within the dataset.

Eidos researchers uploaded the chat records to Dedoose, a cloud-based software, to analyze one-on-one service request chats. A team of research assistants combed through the records to code data and develop themes over several cycles, ensuring the results' credibility.

Eidos researchers also conducted sentiment analysis combining traditional qualitative analytic techniques and a natural language processing (NLP) feature in NVivo, a mixed methods research software. NLP results compared conversations among all LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation members and a subset of conversations about medically necessary gender-affirming care. The researchers found that conversations about gender-affirming care expressed more positive attitudes and feelings overall.

## **Key Service Components**

1. Research plan, project management, and schedule
2. Analyzing the qualitative data for themes by coding the transcripts in the conversational data
3. Conducting a sentiment analysis with natural language processing
4. Analyzing the quantitative data using statistical methods
5. Preparing a report for publication
6. Preparing a presentation and executive summary with the findings and ideas for future research

## **Results**

Eidos identified how navigators help individuals overcome barriers to quality, inclusive medical care. This highlights the value of successful LGBTQ+ healthcare navigation. The study also found evidence that healthcare navigation resources can make it easier for people to find a primary care provider, receive gender-affirming care, and access related services like mental health and community support. Ultimately, navigation has the potential to reduce health disparities among LGBTQ+ communities.

## **Next Steps: A Model for Impactful Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

The six-month collaboration between Eidos and Included Health is a model partnership between an industry-leading technology company and a unique university think tank

with a shared mission: transforming LGBTQ+ healthcare. This partnership generates valuable evidence-based insights that Included Health can use to credibly differentiate itself in the crowded healthcare market and improve its service offerings.

This model also has the social benefit of expanding knowledge about LGBTQ+ community health. Specifically, the research sheds light on structural obstacles to gender-affirming care so that providers, health plans, policymakers, social businesses, community organizations, and researchers can address these issues and make changes that improve care for LGBTQ+ communities.

Eidos will publish and communicate the findings, amplifying the impact of this work to inspire new research and innovations. Collaborations like this can improve health and wellness for the LGBTQ+ community and their families and, ultimately, help create a more just society.

## Key Benefits of Working with Eidos

- Move your vision forward with help from experts in LGBTQ+ healthcare and access to an interdisciplinary team combining academic rigor and real-world know-how.
- Prove the efficacy of your product with studies conducted by experts who use best practices.
- Turn your data into innovative insights with robust analysis.
- Amplify your findings by publishing and sharing results with the Eidos network.
- Demonstrate your social commitment to DEIB and the LGBTQ+ community meaningfully.
- Sleep easy, knowing you are in good hands with turn-key project management.

### CONTACT EIDOS



[www.penneidos.org](http://www.penneidos.org)



[eidos@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:eidos@nursing.upenn.edu)



[@penneidos](#)