# Controversy erupts over NEJM editor's perceived bias amid family ties



An ongoing controversy has emerged surrounding editor Debra Malina of the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM), as criticisms are directed towards her perceived promotion of 'woke' perspectives and the implications of her daughter's non-binary identity on the journal’s editorial decisions. Malina, who has been with NEJM for over two decades, currently oversees the Perspective essay section of the prestigious medical journal, which has come under scrutiny for its stance on gender-affirming care and trans rights.

Concerns have been raised regarding Malina's familial connections and their potential influence on editorial policy. Malina's daughter, who identifies as non-binary and works as a therapist in Brooklyn, New York, reportedly specializes in various identities and lifestyles including trans identities, and charges upwards of $350 for a 50-minute session. Dr. Leor Sapir, a political science expert with a doctorate from Boston College, has stated that several researchers within the scientific community have expressed apprehension about what they describe as a conflict of interest, given Malina's family situation. "Researchers have conveyed concerns about Malina's conflict of interest, given her family situation," Dr. Sapir noted.

The debate intensified when it was revealed that in 2020, Malina's daughter was published in the NEJM, arguing that healthcare professionals must "confront their own transphobia." In the wake of this piece, it has been reported that some researchers feel that their work challenging the prevailing views on gender-affirming care has been systematically sidelined. Dr. Sapir relayed that a colleague experienced rejection of a letter to the editor that aimed to dispute a pro-gender-affirming care article, further underscoring the tension surrounding the journal’s editorial leanings.

Sapir articulated his concerns in a piece for the City Journal, asserting that Malina ought to recuse herself from decisions on topics that pertain to her daughter's practice. His correspondence to NEJM's editorial board on February 2, 2023, advocated for this step as a measure of integrity. However, NEJM's editor-in-chief Eric Rubin publicly disagreed with Sapir’s perspective, maintaining that while financial conflicts are prohibited for editors, personal opinions alone do not necessitate recusal. “I do not consider pre-existing opinions without financial conflicts to be grounds for recusal whether for Perspectives or research articles,” he elaborated.

The NEJM's editorial direction, particularly on the matter of gender-affirming treatments, has also attracted the attention of other scientists. Dr. Colin Wright, a Ph.D. holder in evolutionary biology, previously wrote about the journal's perceived deviation from scientific neutrality, characterising it as surrendering to "woke political correctness." In his assessment, Wright noted the journal's endorsement of an initiative to limit gender designations on birth certificates, which he believes aligns with a broader ideological agenda rather than scientific rigor.

Moreover, various commentators have voiced their frustrations regarding the journal's approach to socio-political matters within the field of medicine. Wesley Smith, an academic, expressed dissatisfaction at the suggestion that medical education incorporate left-leaning social justice principles, alleging that NEJM has "repeatedly" published works that challenge conservative viewpoints.

The ongoing discourse surrounding NEJM's editorial policies and the implications of Malina's connection to a prominent advocate within the trans community continues to fuel debate within medical and scientific circles. As the NEJM faces increasing scrutiny, it remains to be seen how these dynamics will affect its future publications and the broader field of medical journalism. Daily Mail has reached out to the NEJM for comment regarding these allegations.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.city-journal.org/article/new-england-journal-of-medicine-transgender-activists> - This article discusses the controversy surrounding Debra Malina and the New England Journal of Medicine's editorial direction, particularly regarding gender-affirming care and trans rights. It highlights concerns about potential conflicts of interest and editorial bias.
* <https://education.med.wustl.edu/app/uploads/2024/02/Joy_nejmms2311042.pdf> - Although not directly addressing the controversy, this article from the New England Journal of Medicine touches on broader themes of well-being and systemic issues in medicine, which can be related to the ongoing debates about editorial policies.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This source is mentioned as the origin of the article discussing the controversy surrounding Debra Malina and the New England Journal of Medicine's editorial policies.
* <https://www.massgeneral.org/doctors/doctor.aspx?id=040001> - This link could provide background information on Massachusetts General Hospital, which is relevant to discussions about medical research and publication standards, though it does not directly address the controversy.
* <https://www.bostoncollege.edu/schools/cas/departments/political-science/> - This link provides information about Boston College's political science department, which is relevant to Dr. Leor Sapir's background as a political science expert.