LGBTQ Cultural Competency Training for Medical Students on the West Virginia University School of Medicine Family Medicine Clerkship

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Background

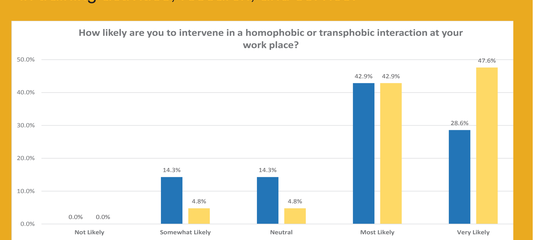
- When compared to straight, cisgender individuals, LGBTQ individuals experience higher rates of depression, anxiety, suicide, substance use disorders, obesity, cardiovascular disease, HIV, and AIDS, among other health disparities. In the current literature, the aforementioned disparities within LGBTQ community have been described as consequences of emotional and/or behavioral responses in an effort to minimize the impact of the following stressors: emotional, verbal, and/or physical trauma in the context of societal, interpersonal and/or individual stigma.

- A study in the 2011 Journal of the American Medical Association consisting of a survey of medical education deans across the United States and Canada showed a median of five hours devoted to LGBTQ care in medical school curricula. Curriculum mapping of the West Virginia University School of Medicine shows that it sits at the national average—it has five dedicated hours. In an effort to address the needs of the LGBTQ community and combat these health disparities, this project adds an additional three hours dedicated to LGBTQ medical curriculum at the West Virginia University School of Medicine.

Objectives

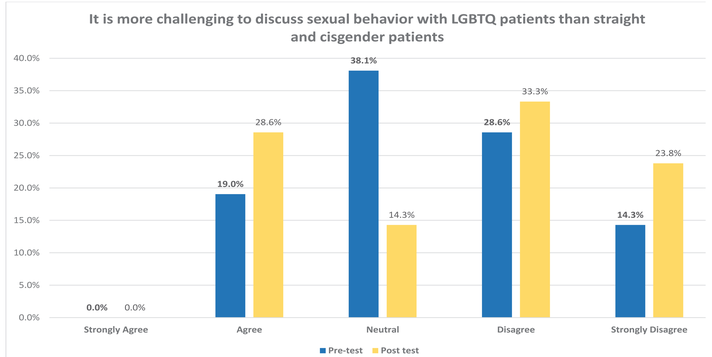
- The goals of the training are to:
  - Increase knowledge about LGBTQ healthcare needs
  - Increase LGBTQ-affirming attitude
  - Increase LGBTQ affirming behavior

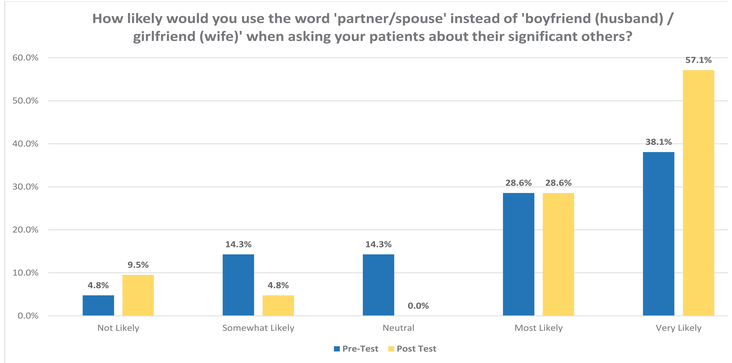
These goals are in line with promoting inclusivity of the LGBTQ community both in the healthcare setting and in society as a whole. The training session aligns with AUCDs core values both by promoting the LGBTQ community as a natural part of the human experience across all ages, cultures, and identities and by promoting cultural competence in training activities, research, and service.



Methods/Description of the Program

- A literature review was performed using MedEdPortal and the National LGBT Health Education Center in order to create the training, standardized patient cases and evaluations.
- The purpose of this training is to increase participant knowledge and understanding to promote positive, culturally competent attitudes and behaviors towards LGBTQ patients. The training session is structured as a 1.5-hour interactive didactic session using Microsoft Powerpoint with an audience response system followed by a 1.5-hour simulation center session with standardized patient encounters and debriefings. Pre and post-session assessments are used to measure participant achievement of training goals.
  - Who: All third-year medical students who rotate through the Family Medicine Clerkship, required for all MD students
  - Data collection: pre and post curricular evaluation surveys via *LearningSpace*
  - Data analysis: Likert scale





Findings/Results

- Two workshops reaching, one-third of third-year medical students, were conducted.
- 21 participants completed both the pre- and post-test measures.
  - The percent of students who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement "It is more challenging to discuss sexual behavior with LGBTQ patients than with straight and cisgender patients" increased from 42.9% at pre-test to 57.1% at post-test.
  - The percent who noted that they were most likely or very likely to use the words "partner/spouse" instead of "boyfriend (husband)/girlfriend (wife)" when asking their patients about their significant other increased from 66.7% on the pre-test to 85.7% on the post-test.
  - The percent who noted they would most likely or very likely intervene in work place homophobic or transphobic interaction increased from 71.5% on the pre-test to 90.5% on the post test.
  - Following the standardized patient (SP) encounters, SPs were asked to assess student learning:
  - Did the learner create an environment in which Standardized Patients disclosed sexual health issues/questions?
    - 95.2% Yes
    - 4.8% No
  - Did the learner address sexual partners appropriately (e.g., are you currently sexually active, man/women/both, number of partners)?
    - 100% Yes
  - Did the learner address sexual practices (e.g., type of sex: anal/vaginal/oral)?
    - 57.1% Yes
    - 42.9% No

Conclusions

- Participants can increase their knowledge and understanding to promote positive, culturally competent attitudes and behaviors towards LGBTQ patients by completing the 3-hour training.
- This data shows that while participants understand the importance of talking about sexual behavior with all patients, they still struggle discussing the details of sexual behaviors needed to fully obtain a patient's sexual history.
- By increasing knowledge about LGBTQ healthcare needs, LGBTQ-affirming attitudes, and LGBTQ affirming behavior, we can begin to decrease societal, interpersonal, and/or individual stigma to combat LGBTQ health disparities

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