

W6 Educational Strategy to Increase Nursing Student Knowledge, Attitudes and Clinical Preparedness when Caring for LGBTQIA+ Individuals

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Background:

Delivering culturally competent care to underrepresented groups is essential to addressing health disparities among vulnerable populations. The LGBTQIA+ community continues to face health inequities due to stigmatization and discrimination. LGBTQIA+ youth are 34% more likely to experience bullying or physical violence, and 29% are more likely to attempt suicide, compared to just 6% of their heterosexual peers. Additionally, young gay and bisexual men represent 8 out of 10 new HIV diagnoses in the U.S. Lack of standardized curricular guidelines for LGBTQIA+ health in nursing education contributes to gaps in preparing healthcare providers to deliver inclusive and affirming care for youth.

Purpose: The University of Pittsburgh and Louisiana State University Health New Orleans collaborated to implement an innovative educational strategy using a scaffolded approach across 4-year BSN curricula. The goal of this IRB approved study was to integrate LGBTQIA+ health into the undergraduate curriculum and expand to graduate curriculum, supporting the delivery of culturally competent inclusive care for all individuals.

Design: A pre-post longitudinal design used the validated LGBT-DOCSS tool to assess changes in nursing students' knowledge, attitudes, and clinical preparedness over time. Upon receiving IRB exempt status approval from both Universities, a convenience sample was recruited preceding enrollment in clinical courses. Prior to participation, students reviewed an information sheet and provided implicit consent by accessing the baseline survey. An introductory module followed by advocacy training and exposure to virtual simulation formed the study's protocol.

Results: The sample was typically white heterosexual females. Significant improvements were found across Knowledge ($p < .001$), Attitudes ($p = .0038$), Clinical Preparedness ($p < .001$), and Overall scores ($p < .001$).

Conclusion: This study supports health equity and addresses disparities found with gender-diverse youth. Including evidence-based LGBTQIA+ education in pediatric-focused advance practice provider curricula has the potential to improve health outcomes for this vulnerable population.

IRB approval exempt status from both Universities

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Key words: LGBTQIA+ health, Nursing Education, LGBTQIA+ youth