

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

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B. Cassidy, DNP, RN, MSN, CPNP-PC, Braxter, B., PhD, RN, NMW, FAAN, T. Tartavouille, DNS, APRN, CNS-Bc, Davis, A., PhD, RN, CNE, CHSE

Problem Statement The LGBTQIA+ community is a vulnerable population facing stigma and discrimination in healthcare settings. Lack of nursing curricular guidelines on LGBTQIA+ health exists emphasizing the need for targeted educational strategies.

Purpose This collaborative project between two public universities introduces best practices in LGBTQIA+ health, advances advocacy, and evaluates clinical competency in nursing students. The goal is to promote cultural competence among nursing students through implementation of an innovative educational strategy on caring for LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Background/Significance The Institute of Medicine and Healthy People 2030 highlight reduction of barriers to care related to associated stigma and lack of training for healthcare providers about LGBTQIA+ health. The American Nurses Association emphasizes delivery of culturally competent care and advocacy for LGBTQIA+ patients. Studies have reported a wide variation in nursing curriculum on LGBTQIA+ health.

Methods This IRB-approved project utilizes an exploratory pre-post longitudinal design to examine knowledge, attitudes, and clinical preparedness of nursing students towards LGBTQIA+ individuals and their health needs; a valid and reliable tool (LGBT-DOCSS) is administered at baseline, post-educational strategies (Learning Module, Advocacy Program, Simulation), before graduation, and six months post-graduation. Descriptive statistics summarize sample and t-tests examine changes in knowledge, attitudes, and clinical preparedness. Phase 1, completion of an online learning module has been completed. An Advocacy Program™ in phase 2 facilitates respectful communication skills. During Phase 3 a simulation activity evaluates cultural competency skills in nursing students.

Results In phase 1, significant improvements in knowledge, clinical preparedness, and overall score ($p < 0.05$) were found in 69 BSN students from both universities who completed the learning module and both surveys.

Discussion/Conclusion This integrated content on LGBTQIA+ health will be sustained in undergraduate nursing curricula and implemented in graduate programs at both universities, supporting the critical need to improve healthcare training that promotes health equity in this marginalized population.

This project is IRB approved by the University of Pittsburgh and Louisiana State University Health New Orleans as educational Research with exempt status.

Key words: LGBTQIA+ Health, Nursing Education, Cultural Competency