

ABSTRACT

- Nursing students need to be prepared to care for diverse patient populations, including those from sexual and gender minorities.
- We conducted a national survey of graduating nursing students to assess their perceived preparedness and comfort level pertaining to the care of LGBTQ+ patient.

SIGNIFICANCE

- The LGBTQ+ community is considered a minority group with unique health needs including higher rates of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, substance abuse, smoking, depression, anxiety, weight control issues, and violence .
- Until recently guideline of LGBTQ+ health topics to include in nursing curricula did not exist.
- Nursing students are often ill-prepared to care for LGBTQ+ patients or uncomfortable with caring for the LGBTQ+ community as they enter the workforce.
- The purpose of this study was to conduct a national survey of graduating nursing students to assess their perceived preparedness for and comfort level with providing care to the LGBTQ+ population.

METHODS

- Multisite descriptive correlational design.
- Sample: Part-time or full-time prelicensure nursing students graduating from their nursing program.
- Tool: Modified version of *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Medical Education Assessment (LGBT-MEA)*.
- Email with the electronic survey link was sent to the deans/directors inviting their graduating nursing students to participate in the study.
- Tests: An independent samples *t*-test, Pearson correlations and one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs).

RESULTS

- The majority of participants reported that they were cisgender women, identified their race as White, and identified their sexual orientation as heterosexual.
- Approximately half of the participants were graduating from baccalaureate programs.
- Over 90% of participants indicated that they knew someone who identified as LGBTQ+.
- The **content areas most frequently offered** were HIV, other sexually transmitted infections, mental health, and safe sex practices. The **least frequently offered content areas** were gender-affirming surgery and geriatric care.



- **Areas in which participants felt most prepared** were HIV, safe sex practices, mental health among the LGBTQ+ population, and other sexually transmitted infections .
- **Areas in which participants felt least prepared** were nonsurgical transitioning, gender-affirming surgery, and geriatric care among the LGBTQ population.
- The largest proportion of participants felt *somewhat prepared* to care for LGBTQ+ patients, and most participants indicated that their training had not affected their level of preparedness.
- Most participants indicated that they felt comfortable caring for LGBTQ+ patients but did not attribute their comfort level to their nursing training.
- Most participants had not had an opportunity to care for LGBTQ+ patients during their clinical rotations .

DISCUSSION

- The results indicate that although some LGBTQ+ health topics are being covered in prelicensure nursing programs, many topics require further attention.
- Nursing programs should examine their current curricula to determine whether LGBTQ+ health care topics are covered sufficiently and inclusively, and should evaluate students' perceived preparedness in order to determine content areas that may need reinforcement.
- Clinical sites that specialize in LGBTQ+ care or are specifically associated with LGBTQ+ communities should be investigated to allow students more opportunities to enhance their knowledge and confidence.
- Nursing faculty should examine their own knowledge and comfort level as they prepare to incorporate LGBTQ+ health care topics into their curriculum.
- Nursing programs and faculty are accountable for ensuring the inclusion of LGBTQ+ content in their curricular offerings.
- Lack of and ineffective inclusion of LGBTQ+ content in the curriculum has led students to seek the information elsewhere.
- Future research:
 - Explore undergraduate nursing faculty knowledge of and comfort with teaching LGBTQ+ content.
 - Similar studies with nurse practitioner (NP) and doctorate of nursing practice (DNP) students.

REFERENCES

Scan for Research Article with Reference List

