Improving Nursing Program Climate, Knowledge, and Attitudes toward LGBTQ+ Health and Healthcare

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Purpose

To implement an educational intervention and examine the effects of the intervention on nursing student and faculty perceptions of nursing program climate, knowledge, and attitudes regarding LGBTQ+ health and healthcare.

Purpose & Background

- Increase LGBTQ+ educational content in BSON courses
- Significant health disparities in LGBTQ+ population
- Lack of adequate preparation of nursing students to work with LGBTQ+ patients in U.S.
- Inadequate preparation is correlated with bias and healthcare avoidance by LGBTQ+ persons
- In spring 2018, 104 BSN students wrote letter requesting increased LGBTQ+ curricular inclusion. A portion of this letter is displayed below:

Pre-Intervention Findings

Climate

LGBTQ+ patients deserve the same quality of care from nurses as other patients:

- Faculty: 60%
- Students: 30%
- Staff: 80%

Location of Anti-LGBTQ+ Actions

Students

- Off campus: 20%
- On university campus: 15%
- In nursing school: 0%
- In nursing building: 0%
- During clinical rotations: 0%

Faculty

- Off campus: 10%
- On university campus: 0%
- In nursing school: 0%
- In nursing building: 0%
- During clinical rotations: 0%

Attitudes

When I first meet a patient/person, I assume they are heterosexual:

- Faculty: 50%
- Students: 30%
- Staff: 20%

- Strongly Agree: 30%
- Agree: 40%
- Neutral: 20%
- Disagree: 0%
- Strongly Disagree: 0%

Interventions

- Safe on Campus workshops with pizza and potential extra credit—attended by faculty and students
- Workshop for faculty at CHHS by nationally recognized expert how to include LGBTQ+ content in healthcare curricula (n=15/16, 93.8% BSON attendance)
- Display Pride flags and Safe on Campus certificates throughout BSON offices
- Purchase of books on LGBTQ+ healthcare, Integrating LGBTQ+ content into nursing curriculum
- Co-sponsor with Bronson Hospital for speaking event—how to provide culturally sensitive healthcare for LGBTQ+ individuals and families

Feedback & Results

Faculty feedback (based on informal conversations):

- Increased comfort level and knowledge
- Increase in inclusion in case studies, assigned readings

Student feedback (based on informal conversations and formal written assignments):

- Increased knowledge and comfort
- Increased advocacy (several volunteered at Pride Kalamazoo)

Continued challenges:

- Prioritizing into courses with other necessary content
- Finding relevance (not on licensing exam for nursing)
- Religious / philosophical beliefs that LGBTQ+ identity and/or actions are unacceptable

Next Steps

- Quantitative survey of students, faculty, and staff will be completed in September, 2019 (potential annual survey).
- Safe on Campus training integrated into beginning course for all BSON students

"One thing that I have noticed about myself is that I assume people’s gender and sexuality as being cisgender and straight, which is not always the case. This training has made me a better person and will make me a better healthcare provider in the future."

Olivia Ralph, Samantha Brady, & Ryan Dula