

Assessing Medical Students' Readiness to Provide Care for LGBTQ+ Patients

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Background and Aims

- The lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) population experiences significant health disparities¹.
- Despite enhanced recognition of such disparities, reports of medical school curriculum addressing LGBTQ health remain subpar².
- Identifying gaps in medical school training and education is important in preparing the next generation of physicians, thus we aimed to assess students' knowledge and comfort in providing care for the LGBTQ population in a geographically diverse cohort of medical students in the United States.

Methods

- An anonymous survey was distributed to three geographically distinct medical schools in the U.S. to assess knowledge and attitudes about LGBTQ health.
- Survey results were captured using a Likert-scale and results were quantified using descriptive analyses.

Results

- A total of 300 medical students completed the survey; 55.7% were female, 54.7% were White, and 64.3% were heterosexual.
- The vast majority of students felt comfortable (strongly agree/agree) caring for patients identifying as lesbian (94.4%), gay (96.0%), and bisexual (96.4%); this percentage dropped to 82.3% for non-binary and 71.4% for transgender patients (Figure 1).
- Only 27.0% of students reported confidence in their knowledge of health needs of transgender patients.
- Knowledge questions yielded high percentages of "neutral" responses (Figure 2).
- A majority of students indicated willingness to be listed as an LGBTQ provider (92.0%), agreement with mandatory education on LGBTQ health in medical school (89.7%) and willingness to participate in training on LGBTQ health if provided (90.7%).

Figure 1: Assessment of Medical Student Comfort Participating in the Care of LGBTQ Patients

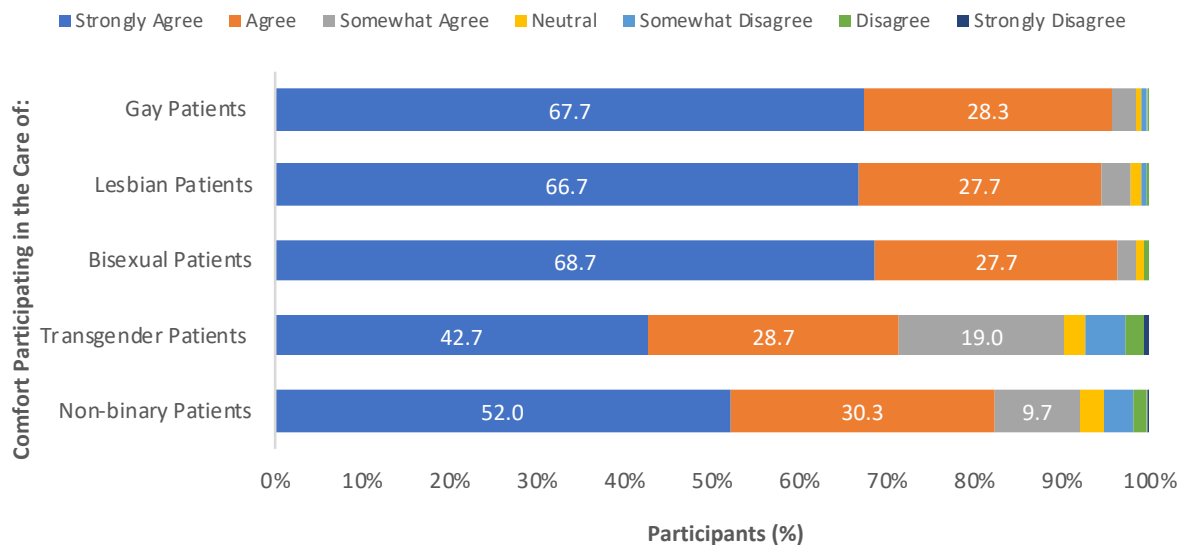
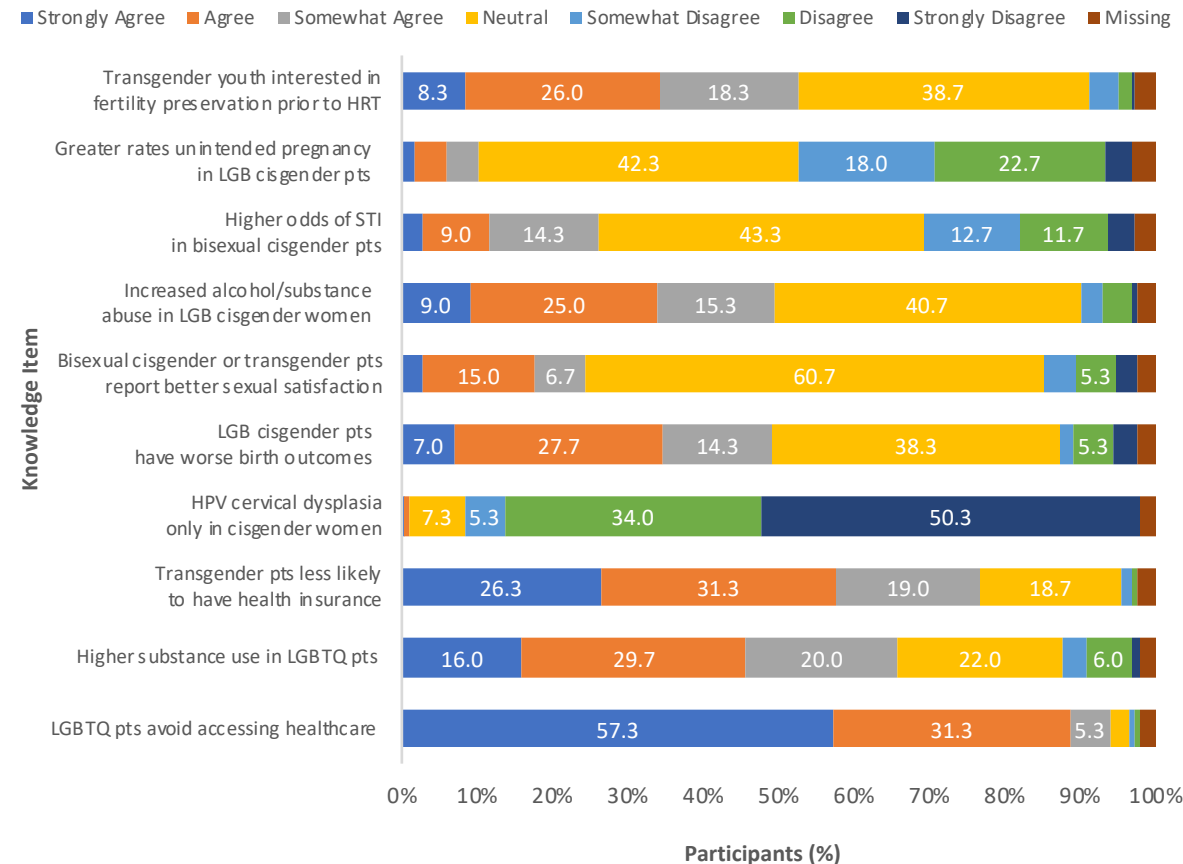


Figure 2: Assessment of LGBTQ Health Knowledge in Medical Students



Conclusions

- Medical students feel comfortable and willing to provide care for LGBTQ patients; however there is limited knowledge about specific LGBTQ health needs.
- More education and training in the needs of transgender and non-binary patients in particular is indicated.

References

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