Gender affirming care in Dermatology: A Review of Literature

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Background and Context

LGBTQ individuals make up an estimated 2-4% of the population and face significant health disparities in the United States. Transgender individuals especially face discrimination which leads to health disparities for this patient population. The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) does not require cultural competency standards for dermatology residents. The American Academy of Dermatology released a position statement in 2019 promoting sexual and gender minority education for dermatology trainees but no overarching, specific changes have been made to dermatology graduate curriculum.

Objectives

- To investigate the published literature in topics in transgender care in Dermatology
- To characterize the types of articles published surrounding Dermatology-specific care for transgender and gender nonconforming individuals.
- To quantify and describe literature pertaining to transgender focused curricular changes for Dermatology residency programs

Research Methods

- A search was performed in Pubmed. The last search was completed on April 6, 2021 and included terms such as LGBT, transgender, sexual and gender minorities, and gender non conforming + dermatology.
- Inclusion criteria included English language publications that included information on transgender or gender non conforming individuals, specific to dermatology in the United States.
- Case reports and case series were excluded.

Results

- 8/57 pertained to resident training or basic dermatology curriculum for medical students.
- 51/57 addressed general dermatology topics pertaining to transgender individuals, including specific considerations in caring for trans individuals, information for providing inclusive care, and prevalence of certain dermatologic conditions.
- 10/57 were cross-sectional, retrospective cohort, or survey studies in transgender patients

Discussion

Promotion of transgender health topics has increased, with a majority of included articles published in the last three years. There are no specific curricular components that have been integrated into medical education on a wide scale, despite AAMC recommendations that have been in place since 2014. There are gaps in knowledge and cultural competency in LGBTQ topics, especially for medical students and residents who are not educated in an inclusive environment. Jia et al noted that 46% of residency programs reported 0 hours and an additional 37% noted only 1-2 hours of sexual and gender minority related content in dermatology Graduate medical education curriculum.

Next Steps/Future Direction

Steps should be taken to close educational gaps, especially in dermatology residency training. In order to provide inclusive care that validates identities of sexual and gender minority patients and promotes regular health maintenance, LGBTQ+ focused cultural competency standards should be considered for ACGME accredited Dermatology Residency programs.

References