

Provider Perspectives: Gender Affirming Care Restriction in Florida

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Background

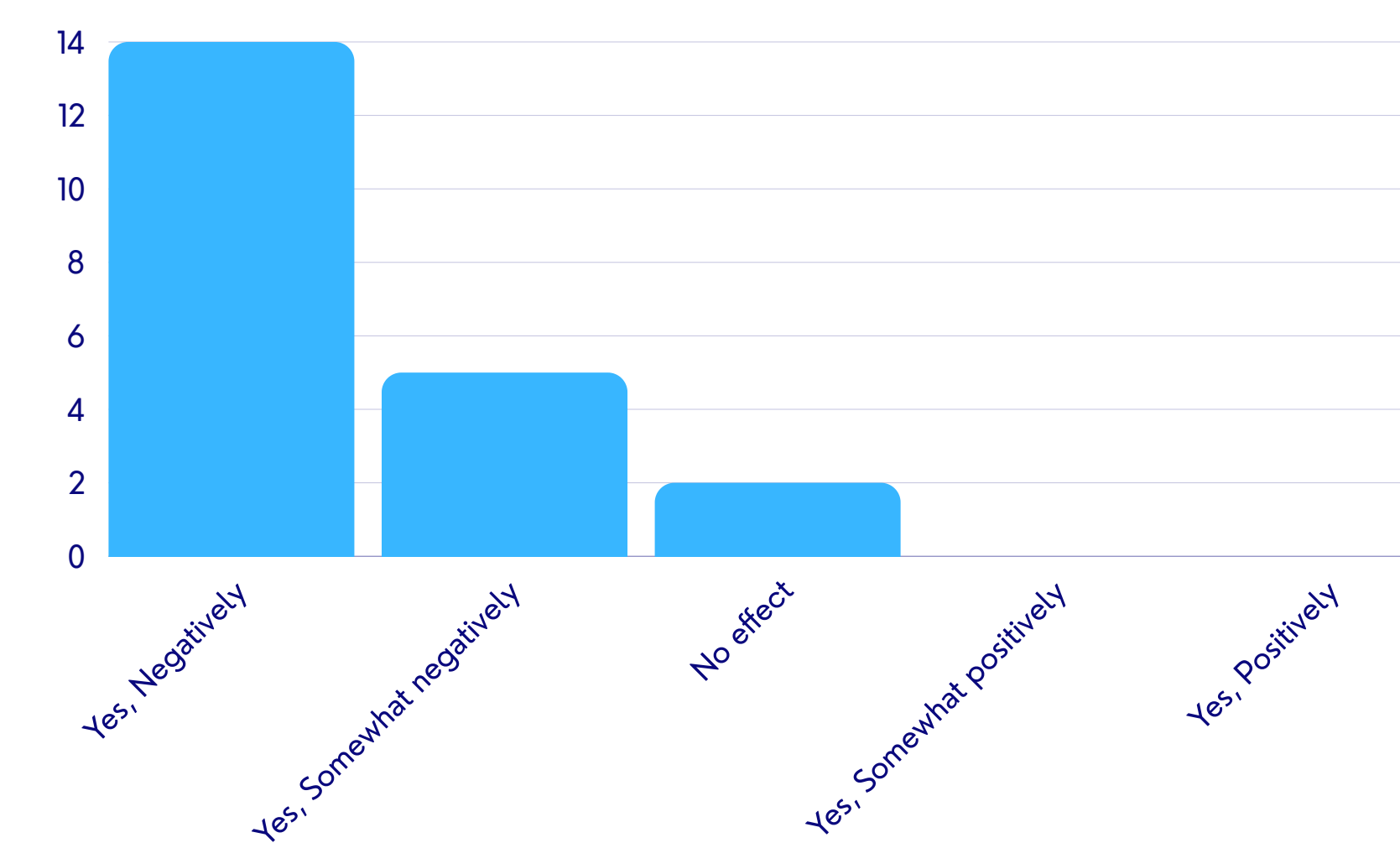
Florida, one of the 23 states that restrict gender affirming care, began to restrict care in 2022. In 2024 laws deigned to criminalize and restrict providers, ban gender affirming care for minors, and to hinder the process for adults by creating additional requirements when seeking care were passed.

Hypothesis

With this research, I wanted to answer the question it felt like legislators didn't ask. How would this impact providers of gender affirming care in the field and patients they serve?

Analysis

Have these laws impacted your practice?



What effect have these laws had on your practice?

- We used to provide gender affirming care daily with at minimum three full APRN/PA schedules with availability Monday through Friday. Since then we have limited availability with 2 part-time MDs.
- I stopped providing gender affirming adult care/mental health. Too risky. Refer out.
- Most of my trans client dropped off my caseload due to not feeling safe in the state. Many have just straight left the state. I always affirm that this is a safe space but they're worried about how much farther these laws will go and how that could impact their lives.
- Created fear for clients and providers to seek and provide care

Methodology

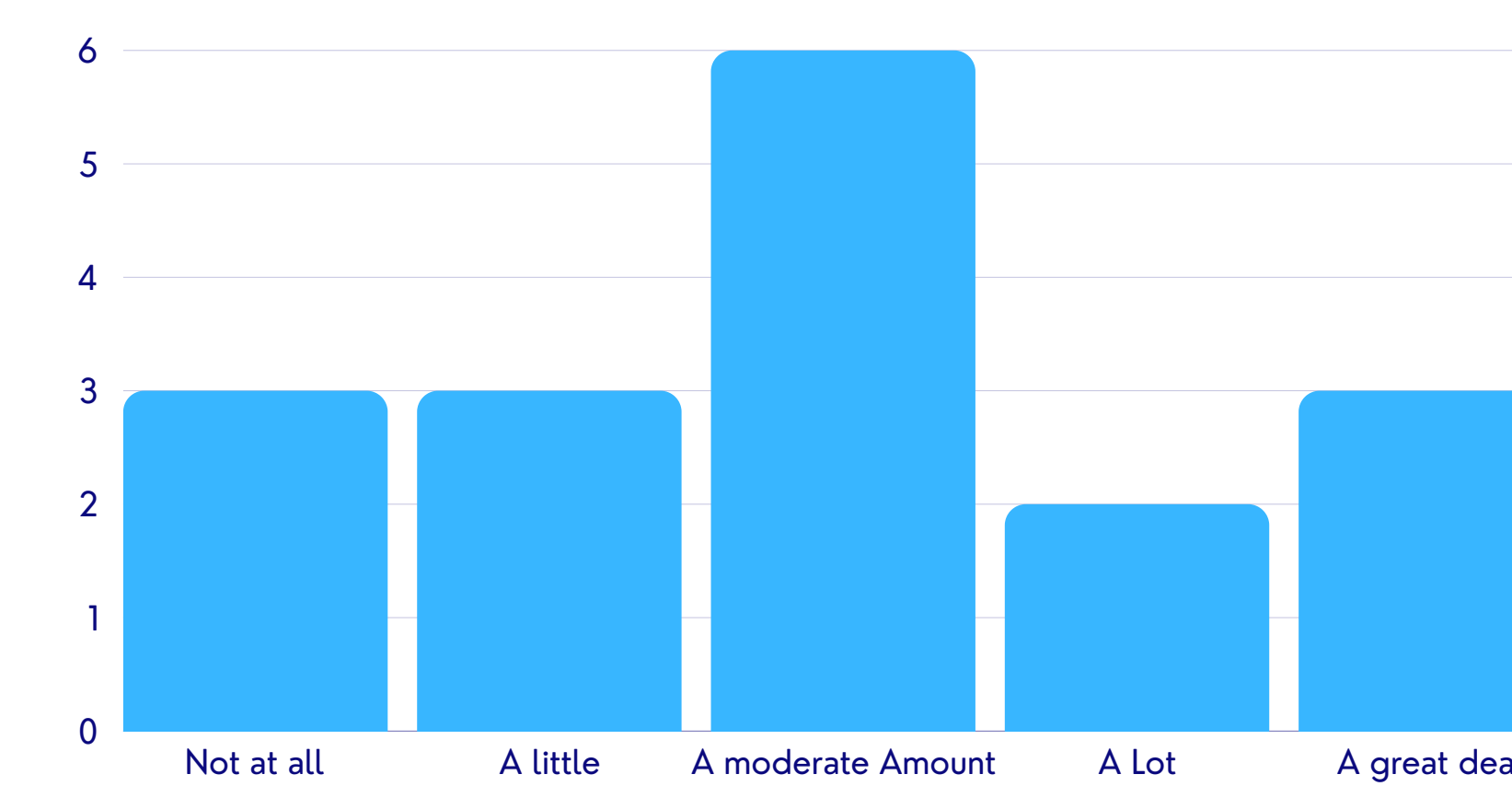
The structuring of this survey was built off of the survey by Landon D Hughes et al., 2021, and amended to address Florida specifically with permission from Hughes. Due to the precarious nature of the topic, a qualitative anonymous survey was drafted, my primary questions being:

- How have these laws impacted the provider?
- How have these laws impacted the patients they serve?
- What can be done to adapt and improve the situation?

The survey was updated as the legislative landscape changed, and when completed was sent out. Subjects were recruited via professional contacts, resource and provider lists for trans people, and snowball sampling through subjects' professional networks.

- Participants identified themselves as: 13, white, 1, Asian, 2, prefer not to say, 1 Hispanic, and 1 multiracial
- 12 participants identified as non-Hispanic, 3 identified as Hispanic, and 2 prefer not to say
- 4 participants identify as male, 10 as female, 2 as nonbinary, 1 other, non-specified, and 1 prefer not to say

Have you experienced or do you worry about harassment?



How have these laws impacted your patients? How have they adapted?

- These laws have negatively impacted the physical and mental wellbeing of patients. Many patients have moved out of state as a result of the laws passed. Others have resulted to purchasing medication out of state or on the "black market" without the guidance of a medical professional.
- yes, many have their surgeries cancelled or delayed due to changes in requirements
- Sure! They are sad, frustrated!
- Increased depression, fear, and isolation. Many have looked at moving once they reach 18.

Results/Findings

- The data overwhelmingly suggests that the people involved in providing gender affirming care oppose these laws and have been impacted negatively since they were passed. Participants reported increased fear of harassment, 65% reported feeling more negatively about their job, 35% are considering moving out of Florida.
- Participants reported that patients either cannot or experience difficulty accessing care, and many are considering leaving the state.
- Participants reported that protecting patients rights, appropriate training for providers, and following WPATH standards would be most help TGD youth receive adequate care.

Conclusion

- The findings of this study imply that restricting access to gender affirming care negatively impacts providers and patients and provides no seen benefits. Providers have overall been negatively impacted by this legislation, and report that their patients have been negatively impacted as well. Providers suggest that these laws should be repealed, and more inclusive standards for GAC be put in place.
- The limitations of the current data set are a small sample size affecting generalizability of data. The small sample size may be reflective of the relatively few providers of GAC in FL, their hesitancy to fill out a survey on the matter, and a short window for gathering data.
- There is a need for further studies on providers with larger and more inclusive sample sizes could provide further insight into how different fields have been affected, for studies on the patients affected by these laws, and for studies on both populations as they adapt to these restrict

Acknowledgments

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