The Attitude of Medical Practices Toward LGBT Older Adults Before and After Intervention

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Background

- Between 2-8% of the population aged 65 and older identify as LGBT1
- Negative experiences at the hands of healthcare professionals are a primary barrier to care faced by older LGBT adults2
- Training healthcare professionals with the film, Gen Silent, is one way the knowledge gaps and biases of healthcare professionals have been addressed3,4
- Utilizing the survey previously validated by Porter et al., our primary outcome was to measure significant changes in health professionals’ knowledge, perceptions, and attitudes toward LGBTQ older adults after viewing Gen Silent5

Materials and Methods

- Participation was voluntary
- No incentive was offered to participate
- All answers were anonymous
- Pretest and posttest questions included: 16 Likert scale questions, 7 true/false responses, and 2 yes/no responses, job title, practice site, and previous LGBT training
- Pretest surveys were piloted by healthcare providers to ensure question clarity
- Data from pre- and postests were analyzed for all participants who viewed the entirety of Gen Silent using a paired t-test

Results

- Four primary care practices participated in this study.

Professional roles of study participants (N=31)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>N (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical Student</td>
<td>14 (45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Assistant</td>
<td>7 (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>4 (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician</td>
<td>2 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Coordinator</td>
<td>1 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Interpreter</td>
<td>1 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Coordinator</td>
<td>1 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient Service</td>
<td>1 (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did participants receive previous LGBT training? (N=31)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Previous LGBT Training</th>
<th>N (%)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12 (39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>19 (61)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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I am aware of policy disparities between heterosexual and LGBT older adults.

Likert scale questions which exhibited significant change

Pretest mean | Posttest mean
--------------|--------------
I know that LGBT older adults face additional barriers to care compared to their heterosexual peers.

Discussion

- Training using Gen Silent can effectively alter primary care professionals’ perception, attitude, and knowledge of LGBT older adults
- Nearly all questions exhibited changes between pre- and posttest responses
- Physicians and medical students exhibited greater knowledge of LGBT-specific issues and more positive attitudes towards LGBT older adults

Limitations

- Small sample size
- Lack of control group
- Uncertainty about long term efficacy

Future opportunities

- Increase number of participants
- Expansion to other specialties
- Use of longer interval follow-up survey

Conclusions

- While limited, the results of this study indicate that primary care practitioners would benefit from training specific to the aging LGBT population
- Utilizing Gen Silent as a training modality would likely be effective
- Expanding this work to more primary care practices and other specialties may help improve care for LGBT older adults
- Utilizing follow-up surveys with longer intervals would allow for assessment of long-term efficacy of this training

References