

Meeting the Health Care Needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People: Ending Invisibility and Knowing Your Patients

Program Description

Over the years much attention and focus has been on addressing the needs of diverse patient populations, however, it has only been recently that health care has begun to focus on the unique needs and health disparities of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) patients. While members of this community share the same health concerns as the rest of the population, they also face additional challenges and health risks. These unique challenges can include less access to insurance and health care services as well as higher rates of smoking, alcohol, and substance abuse. This group is also at higher risk for mental health issues such as anxiety and depression, sexually transmitted disease, and increased incidence of some cancers.

The research also indicates that LGBT patients often do not receive the same level of care as other patients because of experiences of stigma, lack of awareness, and insensitivity to their unique needs. Thus, these patients face many barriers to equitable care. This workshop will begin to address the cultural competency needed to work with members of this community by increasing the participant's knowledge base on identity development and the discrimination and oppression faced by the LGBT individuals. The presenter will discuss health related issues and the barriers to care often experienced by this specific community. The goal of this workshop is to enable both health and mental health professionals to recognize the impact of invisibility and stigma on the LGBT community and on their health care; to provide a more welcoming environment from which to engage these patients in their care. This workshop will be interactive with thought provoking dialogue around these issues.

Program Objectives

Upon completion of this program, participants will be able to:

1. Demonstrate increased familiarity of issues, health disparities and barriers facing members of the LGBT community;
2. Describe the ways in which discrimination and oppression can impact the overall health and mental health of LGBT individuals;
3. List strategies to engage in LGBT patients in their care that will create a welcoming environment and open interactions.
4. Demonstrate ways to provide more sensitive, affirmative, and culturally relevant and effective treatment to LGBT patients.

Agenda

Available upon request

Target Audience

This program is beneficial for an interdisciplinary audience including physicians, nurses, health and mental health professionals; psychologists; substance abuse counselors, and anyone interested in this topic.

Credit

2-4 hours

Faculty

Avery Cook, MSW, LCSW is the Associate and Clinical Director at Counseling and Psychological Services at UNC-Chapel Hill, where she engages in clinical work with individuals on issues involving gender identities and expression, LGB culture and identity development, as well as anxiety, depression, and crisis intervention. She has been a field instructor with UNC-CH School of Social Work for the past 10 years and serves as a training consultant with the School of Social Work's AHEC Training Partnership; conducting trainings across the state on issues related to gender identity and gender expression.