Gender Dimensions

Role of the nurse on issues of diversity in the human gender

L.A. County College of Nursing and Allied health N233Medical Surgical and Psychiatric Nursing

Learning Objectives

- Describe health disparities affecting gender diversity individuals
- Explain LGBTQ definitions and concepts
- Describe ways to overcome barriers to providing health care to LGBTQ

Required Readings

- Lecture handout /notes

Healthy People 2020

Why LGBTQ Health ?

- Eliminating gender diverse disparities and enhancing efforts to improve their health are necessary to ensure gender diverse individuals can lead long, healthy lives.

Healthy People 2020's Goal

- To improve the health, safety, and well-being of LGBTQ individuals.

What are the issues?

- Understanding gender diverse individuals health starts with understanding the history of oppression and discrimination these communities have faced

Health Disparities Linked to Societal Stigma

- High rates of psychiatric disorders
- Substance abuse
- Suicide
- Experiences of bullying, violence and victimization

Effects of Stigma on Health

- Daily stressors caused by stigma and discrimination can lead to adverse mental and physical health outcomes
- Internalized stigma can cause self-harm and unhealthy risk behaviors
- Fearing discrimination by health care providers affects access to care

LGBTQ Health Disparities Healthy People 2020

- LGBTQ youth are:
- 2 to 3 times more likely to attempt suicide
- More likely to be homeless (20-40% of homeless youth are LGBTQ)
- At higher risk of HIV and STDs

LGBTQ Health Disparities Healthy People 2020

- LGBTQ people smoke tobacco at much higher rates than the general population (30% vs 20%)
- LGBTQ people also have higher rates of alcohol and drug use

LGBTQ Health Disparities Healthy People 2020

- Gay and bisexual men and transgender women are at much higher risk of HIV and STDs, especially among communities of color
- Lesbians are less likely to access preventive services for cancer
- Lesbians and bisexual female are more likely to be overweight or obese

LGBTQ Health Disparities Healthy People 2020

- Transgender people experience higher rates of victimization and suicide attempts
- Older LGBTQ adults face additional barriers to health care because of isolation, fewer family supports, and a lack of social and support services

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity are not the Same

- All people have a sexual orientation and gender identity
- How people identify can change
- Terminology varies

Sexual Orientation

- Sexual orientation: how a person identifies their physical and emotional attraction to others
- Attraction/Desire
- Behavior:

Sexual Orientation

- Individuals may identify as: straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer or other
- Men having sex with men (MSM)
- Men having sex with men and women (MSM/MSMW)

Sexual Orientation

- Women who have sex with women (WSW)
- Women who have sex with women and men (WSWM)

Gender Identity and Gender Expression

- Gender identity
- A person's internal sense of their gender (e.g.: male, female, both
- All people have a gender identity
- Gender expression= external characteristics
- How individuals express themselves through mannerisms, speech patterns, dress, hairstyles, etc.

Reviewing Terminology

- Gender Identity
- What your internal sense tells you your gender is
- Sexual Orientation
- Whom you are physically and emotionally attracted to
- Whom you have sex with
- How you identify your sexuality

Experiences Shape Expectations

- LGBTQ people experience discrimination or prejudice from health care staff when seeking care

- Negative experiences are reasons why LGBTQ people do not seek medical care

Experiences Shape Expectations

- Diverse gender individuals report they look for “clues” when arriving at a health care facility, such as the way they are greeted by staff.
- Gender neutral restrooms

What are the Barriers?

- Negative attitudes
- Stigma
- Bias
- Ignorance
- Fear
- Lack of supportive policies

Barriers

- Don’t feel safe disclosing
- Concerns about negative reactions
- Concerns that disclosing will impact treatment negatively
- Concerns regarding confidentiality
- Concerns with lack of privacy

Barriers lead to:

- Health related conditions going undiagnosed
- Reduced adherence to prescribed treatment
- More likely to forgo needed medical treatment
- Lower patient retention
- Missed opportunities for patient education

So what do we do?

- Inclusiveness
- Acceptance
- Communication
- Guidance
- Referrals
- Confidentiality
- Policy change

Communication Tips

- Get to know your patient as a person (e.g., jobs, partners, children, living circumstances)
- Use inclusive and neutral language, for e.g.,
- Instead of: “Do you have a wife/husband or boy/girlfriend?”
- Ask: “Do you have a partner?” or “Are you in a relationship?” “What do you call your partner?”

Communication Tips

- Listen to how people describe their own identities and partners--use the same terms, if comfortable
- Each individual is unique: If you know one LGBTQ person, you only know one LGBTQ person!
- Ask the person by how they want to be addressed

Our Challenge: Do ask Do tell

- Quality Care for All, Including diverse gender People
- Data collection
- Clinical education
- Consumer education
- Patient centered care

Overall

- No judgment
- No judgment
- No judgment