

Cultural Competence and the LGBTQ+* Communities

** (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer)*

TRAINING GOALS

- Define and understand LGBTQ+ terminology as it is understood in the LGBTQ+ community.
- Review health disparities of LGBTQ+ populations and gain insight into how to close the LGBTQ+ disparities gap.
- Explore practice tips for patient encounters.



SOME LGBTQ+ TERMINOLOGY

Orientation

- **Sexual orientation:** A person's emotional, sexual and/or relational **attraction** to others. Usually classified as heterosexual, bisexual, and homosexual (i.e., lesbian and gay).
 - Orientation describes how people position themselves on the spectrum of attraction and identity.
 - It is distinct from gender identity or gender expression.
 - Transgender people exhibit the full range of sexual orientations, from homosexual to bisexual to heterosexual.

LGBTQ+ are five distinct communities with different cultural identifications and health priorities.



SOME LGBTQ+ TERMINOLOGY (Continued)

Orientation (continued)

- **Bisexual:** One whose sexual or romantic attractions and behaviors are directed toward both sexes to a significant degree. Bisexuality is a distinct sexual orientation.
- **MSM:** Men who have sex with men. Usually identify as gay.
- **WSW:** Women who have sex with women. Usually identify as lesbian.



SOME LGBTQ+ TERMINOLOGY (Continued)

Gender Identity

- **Transgender:** Describes people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from that typically associated with their assigned sex at birth.
- **Genderqueer:** Describes people who sees themselves as outside the usual binary man/woman definitions.
 - Having elements of many genders, being androgynous or having no gender.
 - Also **Gender Non-Conforming (GNC)**.
- **Bigender:** Describes people whose gender identity encompasses both male and female genders. Some may feel that one identity is stronger, but both are present.



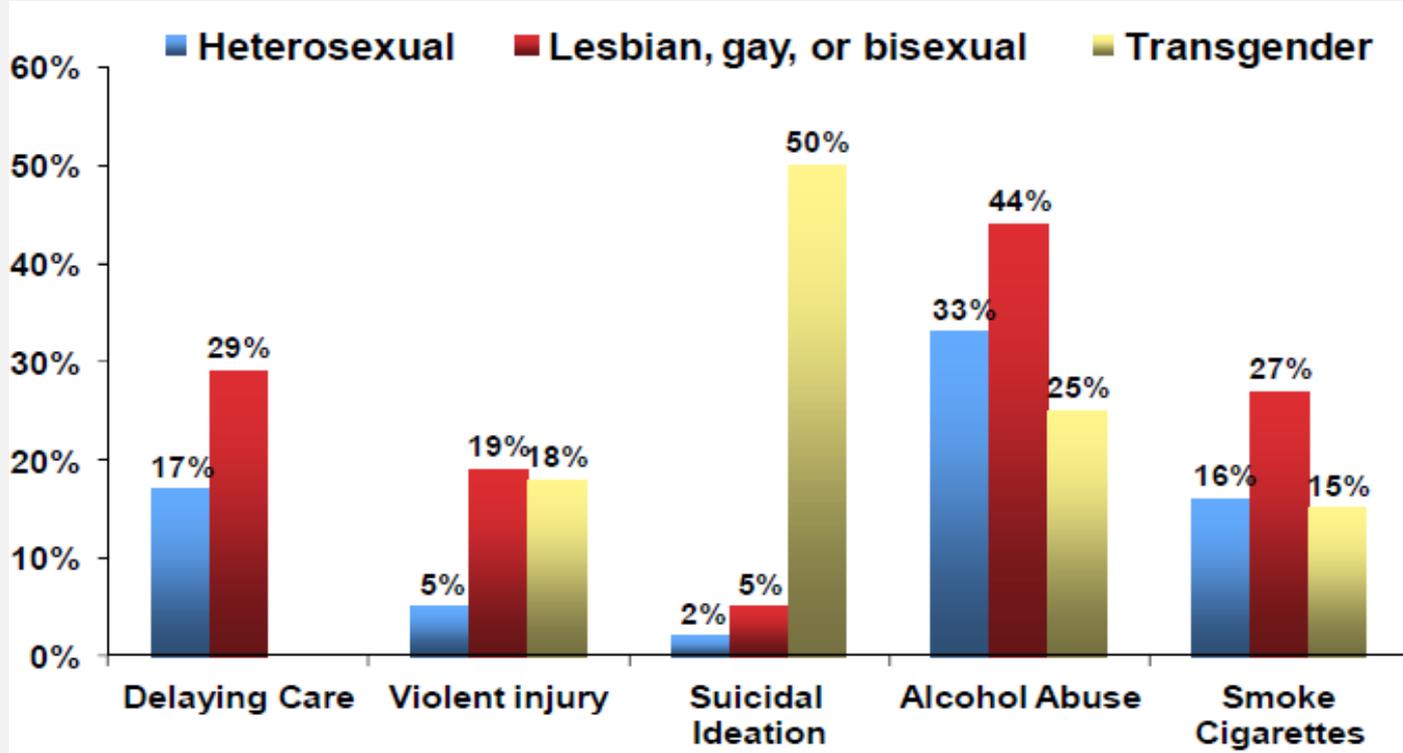
SOME LGBTQ+ TERMINOLOGY (Continued)

Gender Identity (continued)

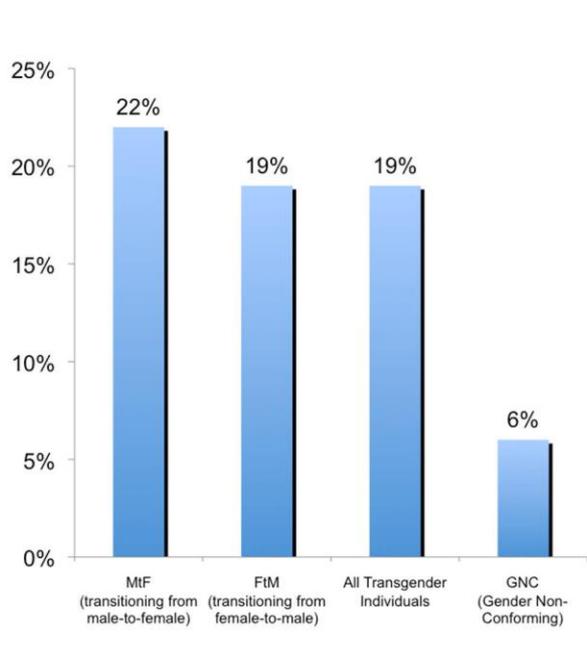
- **MtF:** Male-to-female; a person who was assigned the male sex at birth but identifies and lives as a female. Also, trans woman.
 - MtF persons will still need to have prostate exams according to standard guidelines.
- **FtM:** Female-to-male; a person who was assigned the female sex at birth but identifies and lives as a male. Also, trans man or trans male.
 - FtM persons will need to have breast exams and Pap tests according to standard guidelines.
- **Transsexual:** Medical term for people who have used surgery or hormones to modify their bodies. Some trans people find this term offensive.



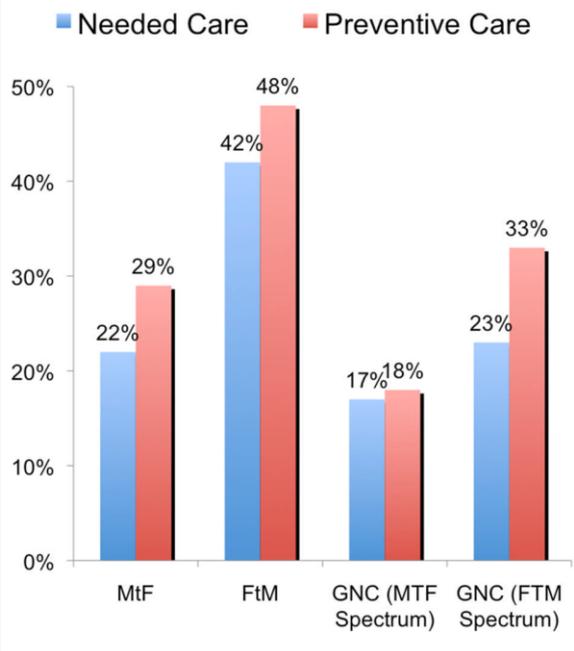
HEALTH DISPARITIES OF LGBTQ+ POPULATIONS



TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS BURDEN DISPARITIES IN LEVELS OF CARE



Refused Care Based on Gender Identity/Expression



Postponement of Care Due to Discrimination by Providers



CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES

Here's What We Wish Our Health Care Team Knew...

- A general understanding of the terms used by us for orientation/identification.

Here's What Your Team Can Do...

- Listen to how patients refer to themselves and loved ones (pronouns, names).
 - Use the same language they use.
- If you're unsure, ask questions.



CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES

(Continued)

Here's What We Wish Our Health Care Team Knew...

- We come to you with an extra layer of anxiety.
- Verbally or physically abused.
- Rejected by families due to our sexual orientation/identity.
- Discriminated against within the health care setting.

Here's What Your Team Can Do...

- A little warmth can make all the difference!
- Signage or intake form verbiage that is safe, judgment-free, and non-discriminatory.
- Policies indicating nondiscrimination for sexual orientation/identity displayed in common areas.



CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES

(Continued)

Here's What We Wish Our Health Care Team Knew...

- The assumptions/attitudes that we are all heterosexual (aka "straight") dissuade us from seeking care in the future.
- Discrimination in health care may delay or defer treatment.

Here's What Your Team Can Do...

- Anticipate that all patients are not heterosexual.
- Use “partner” instead of “spouse” or “boy/girlfriend”.
- Replace marital status with relationship status on forms.



CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES

(Continued)

Here's What We Wish Our Health Care Team Knew...

- We feel our HIPAA rights to privacy are not honored.
- Amazingly, some personnel...
 - Openly discuss our orientation/identity with coworkers.
 - Don't realize or care that we can see or hear them making fun of us with coworkers.

Here's What Your Team Can Do...

- Protect the patient's rights.
 - Sharing personal health information, including sexual orientation, is a violation of HIPAA.
 - Confirm that the patient's rights are protected under the HIPAA Privacy Rule.



CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES

(Continued)

Here's What We Wish Our Health Care Team Knew...

- We may be more sensitive to the use of PPE.
- Some doctors put on gloves after learning about our sexual orientation.
- Some show a reluctance to touch us at all.

Here's What Your Team Can Do...

- Treat patients as you would any other patient.
- If it's not contagious, take the gloves off.
- Acknowledge and use the power of touch.
- Let the patient know that gloves are used for every patient, if true.



CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES

(Continued)

Here's What We Wish Our Health Care Team Knew...

- We've experienced harshness.
 - Many of us have been unkindly ordered around.
 - Some handle us roughly.
 - Some of us have even had people drop things on us on purpose.

Here's What Your Team Can Do...

- Please use common courtesy.
 - If you wouldn't say or do it to heterosexual patients, please don't say or do it to us.



CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES

(Continued)

Here's What We Wish Our Health Care Team Knew...

- We are sensitive to displays of intolerance.
- We have seen doctors being judgmental or showing signs of intolerance, aversion, or disgust.
- Doctors have walked out on us, as in “I can’t believe I have to see THIS patient”.

Here's What Your Team Can Do...

- Show signs of acceptance and welcoming.
- Identify your own LGBTQ+ perceptions and biases as a first step in providing the best possible quality care to us.



CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES

(Continued)

Here's What We Wish Our Health Care Team Knew...

- Check your surprise, embarrassment, or confusion.
 - Many of us do not disclose our orientation because we don't feel comfortable, or we fear receiving substandard service.
 - Your assumptions might be wrong when determining whether we might be LGBTQ+ – most of us don't fit the stereotypes.
- Recognize that “coming out” to you does not mean we are “coming on” to you.

Here's What Your Team Can Do...

- Practice some helpful phrases:
 - “Do you have sex with men, women, or both?”
 - “What pronoun do you prefer I use when referring to you?”
 - “I'm glad you shared that with me. I know that might have been difficult to tell me. Is there anything else in connection with your health care that I should know about?”



CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES

(Continued)

Here's What We Wish Our Health Care Team Knew...

- Transgender patients have specific health concerns.
- May experience more trauma during removal of clothing or pelvic examinations.
- Not all transgender people want to use hormones or surgery to align with their confirmed gender.

Here's What Your Team Can Do...

- Always use preferred name and pronouns, even when we are not in the room.
- The topic of body modification activities should be approached with care.
- Do not let curiosity lead you to examine body parts that are not involved with the medical issue at hand.



RESOURCES AT HEALTHY.NY.GOV

The New York State Department of Health maintains a list of very helpful LGBTQ+-related resources for:

- Affordable Care Act
- Census and LGBTQ+ Demographic Studies
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Gender Identity
- Health Disparities
- HIV/AIDS
- Homelessness
- LGBTQ+ Health Resources
- LGBTQ+ Health Organizations
- LGBTQ+ Curriculum in Schools
- Mental Health
- Legal
- Teen Health



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Thank you

