Beliefs and Behavior of Nurses Providing Healthcare Services to Gay and Lesbian Individuals

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Purpose

To assess nursing beliefs and behavior when providing healthcare services to gay and lesbian individuals using the Gay Affirmative Practice (GAP) scale.
Background

- LGBT- not a single group or population
- Healthy People 2020
- Health Disparities
- Nursing and sexual orientation and gender identity questions
Significance

- Provides opportunity for nurses to reflect on the potential impact of their beliefs on to their behavior with lesbian and gay patients
- Change- with same-sex marriage legal in the United States, nurses will have patients and families who are openly gay
- Policy and Law are changing rapidly, but public opinion, beliefs and behaviors may not be (Chapman et al., 2011)
Conceptual Framework: A Model for Nursing Gay Affirmative Practice

**Research Questions**

**Research Question One:**
What are the demographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, education level, and years of employment) of nurses who provide healthcare to lesbian and gay individuals?

**Research Question Two:**
What are the beliefs and behavior of nurses who are employed in a hospital system in the Southwestern region of the United States as determined by the Gay Affirmative Practice Scale?

**Research Question Three:**
What percentage of nurses reported they could benefit professionally from a course in cultural competence in the care of LGBT?
Assessing your beliefs and behavior working with lesbian and gay individuals is a first step in becoming culturally competent.

This is one of the first research studies to assess registered nurses’ Gay Affirmative Practice with potential lesbian and gay patients.
Methods

- Descriptive non-experimental design
- Urban setting, multiple sites, 3,500 nurses
- Convenience sample
- Anonymous Qualtrics survey
Survey Instruments

- Demographic Survey
- Gay Affirmative Practice Scale (30 items)
  - Belief Domain (15 item)
  - Behavior Domain (15 item)
Data Analysis

- Frequencies and percentages of the demographics
- Mean scores of the GAP scale
- Percent of willingness to take a cultural competence course
Research Question 1: Demographic Results

70 survey responses in varying degrees of completion
89% were female, 91% Caucasian, 90% heterosexual, 84% Christian, average age 49
40% BSN and 36% MSN;
71% have a nursing certification;
86% have friend or family member who is gay or lesbian
71% had a cultural competence class in nursing school
61% perceived a cultural competence course would benefit them professionally
Research Question 2: GAP Score Results

- GAP scores (n = 61)
  - Mean GAP score was 110
  - Range of 36 (n=1) to 150 (n=1)
  - 19 GAP scores below 100, 3 below 75

- Mean Belief score of 63 (n=65)
  - Range 21-75

- Mean Behavior score of 49 (n=63)
  - Range 15-75
Research Question 3: GAP scores with past cultural competency course and perceived benefit of course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Previous Course</th>
<th>Perceived Benefit</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>70–150*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>36–140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>97–146**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>82–127**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Five respondents had no GAP scores. **One respondent had no GAP score.

61% of respondents perceived a professional benefit in a cultural competence course.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0–5</td>
<td>0–110 (3)</td>
<td>140 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–10</td>
<td>82–132 (8)</td>
<td>0–119 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–15</td>
<td>36–120 (7)</td>
<td>NA*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16–20</td>
<td>0–130 (9)</td>
<td>NA*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21–25</td>
<td>0–146 (10)</td>
<td>99 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26–30</td>
<td>66–134 (5)</td>
<td>101 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31–35</td>
<td>67**–150 (7)</td>
<td>70–89 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 35</td>
<td>0–142 (11)</td>
<td>111 (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Note.* *All the respondents in the ranges of 11–15 and 16–20 had a friend or family member who identifies as LGBT; therefore there are no GAP score ranges in the section where the respondent does not have a friend or family member who is LGBT. **Only answered the belief domain questions.
Recommendations and Discussion

• **Provide education for nurses in the system**  
  (Crisp 2006; Dinkel et al., 2007; Mayer, et al., 2008; Makadon, et al., 2015; Röndahl, 2011; & Sirota, 2013)
  
  – Conduct a pre-post test analysis of effectiveness of education

• **Repeat study on a national level- with nurses from non-Caucasian nurses**

• **Develop a nurse evaluation of belief and behavior, which is inclusive of bisexual and transgender** (Strong & Folse, 2015)

• **Work with the Chief Nursing Informatics Officer to get sexual orientation and gender identity questions into the electronic medical record** (IOM, 2011; TJC, 2011)


Questions

your beliefs
don't make you a
better person, your
behavior does.