

Abstract

Background: Transgender youth have a significantly increased probability of receiving a mental health diagnosis when compared with same aged peers. Clinical and cultural competency affects patient health care encounters, and negative experiences can decrease health-seeking behaviors, potentially leaving mental health concerns unaddressed. However, health professionals frequently lack cultural training required to care for transgender patients. The purpose of this quality improvement project was to evaluate the effectiveness of an educational intervention for psychiatric nurses intended to increase transgender cultural competency and nurses' self-rated clinical preparedness to care for transgender patients.

Methods: This project utilized a pre/post-test design to compare transgender cultural competency and clinical preparedness to provide care to transgender patients prior to the intervention, following the intervention, and 12 weeks post-intervention. The intervention was an online transgender cultural competency education module specifically created for psychiatric nurses at the project site. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Development of Clinical Skills Scale (LGBT-DOCSS), a reliable and valid tool, was used as the post-intervention survey.

Results: A total of 17 participants who met inclusion criteria were recruited from the adolescent inpatient psychiatric units. Not all participants completed both the pre- and post-intervention surveys. Statistically significant improvement was demonstrated in median total transgender cultural competency (n = 9) from pre- to post-intervention scores (5.29 vs 6.06, $p < .008$) and in median clinical preparedness (n = 10) from pre- to post-intervention scores (4.17 vs 5.33, $p < .007$).

Conclusion: Implementation of a transgender cultural competency education module for adolescent inpatient psychiatric nurses leads to an increase in transgender cultural competency and clinical preparedness to care for transgender patients. Utilizing transgender cultural competency education is an effective way to impact transgender cultural competency.

Keywords: transgender persons, cultural competency, mental health