

# Increasing Transgender Cultural Competency Among Adolescent Inpatient Psychiatric Nurses

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## Introduction

### Background:

- Cultural competence: “efforts to reduce the cultural and linguistic barriers between patients and medical personnel that interfere with effective health care delivery”<sup>3</sup>
- Approximately 150,000 adolescents in the US identify as transgender <sup>7</sup>
- Transgender youth have an increased probability of receiving mental health diagnoses<sup>11</sup>
- Health professionals often lack cultural training to care for transgender patients, leading to negative attitudes, inappropriate care, hesitancy to deliver care <sup>5, 8, 10</sup>
- Negative experiences with health care providers can decrease health-seeking behaviors, leaving mental health concerns unaddressed <sup>6</sup>

### Synthesis of Evidence

- Scant research on culturally competent care of transgender patients in mental health settings<sup>12</sup>
- Themes in literature: lack of provider training, effect of provider attitudes towards transgender individuals, and importance of therapeutic relationship between provider and patient <sup>1, 4, 5, 9</sup>
- Trainings increase competence and confidence but infrequently impact provider attitudes towards transgender individuals<sup>9</sup>

## Purpose & Aims

### Purpose:

To evaluate the effectiveness of an educational intervention for psychiatric nurses intended to increase transgender cultural competency and self-rated clinical preparedness to provide culturally competent care for transgender patients

### Aim 1:

To determine whether transgender cultural competency among adolescent inpatient psychiatric nurses increased from pre- to post-intervention

### Aim 2:

To determine whether self-reported clinical preparedness to provide culturally competent care for transgender patients increased from pre- to post-intervention

## Methods

**Design:** Pre/post-test educational intervention

**Setting:** Inpatient adolescent psychiatric units in a pediatric hospital in Midwestern U.S.

**Inclusion Criteria:** Nurses on adolescent inpatient psychiatry units

**Exclusion Criteria:** Nurses on child psych units, “float” nurses, travel nurses

**Intervention:** 20-minute online education module with content covering terminology, statistics, hospital policies and procedures

**Data Collection:** Pre/post-intervention, 12 week post-intervention; LGBT-DOCSS<sup>2</sup> used as pre/post “survey”

## Results

### Findings for Aim 1

Outcome variable: difference between pre- and post-intervention summary scores (mean total score) for total transgender cultural competency

- 9 participants (52.9%) completed both pre- and post-intervention survey
- 5 participants completed 12 week post-intervention survey
- Pre-intervention: *Mdn* summary score= 5.29 (IQR .88)
- Post-intervention: *Mdn* summary score= 6.06 (IQR .71)
- 0.76-point improvement ( $p < .008$ )

Table 1

Baseline Characteristics of Nurse Participants

Demographic characteristics	(N = 16)
<b>Age, n (%)</b>	
18-24 years	6 (35.3)
25-34 years	5 (29.4)
35-44 years	3 (17.6)
45-54 years	2 (11.8)
<b>Gender identity, n (%)</b>	
Female	16 (94.1)
Unanswered	1 (5.9)
<b>Years in nursing, n (%)</b>	
0-4 years	12 (70.6)
5-9 years	2 (11.8)
10-14 years	2 (11.8)
<b>Highest education level, n (%)</b>	
BSN	12 (70.6)
MSN or non-nursing masters	3 (17.6)
Unanswered	2 (11.8)
<b>Transgender specific training</b>	
No	14 (82.4)
Yes	2 (11.8)
Unanswered	1 (5.9)

### Findings for Aim 2

Outcome variable: difference between pre- and post-intervention summary scores (mean total score) for self-reported clinical preparedness

- 10 participants (58.8%) completed pre- and post-intervention survey
- 6 participants completed 12 week post-intervention
- Pre-intervention: *Mdn* summary score= 4.17 (IQR 1.67)
- Post-intervention: *Mdn* summary score= 5.33 (IQR 1.33)
- 0.83-point improvement ( $p < .007$ )

## Results

### Additional Findings

- Statistically significant improvement in Attitudinal Awareness and Basic Knowledge subscale scores
- Greatest improvement in Basic Knowledge subscale

Table 2

LGBT-DOCSS Summary Scores (Difference Between Pre / Post-Intervention)

	N	Median	Mean	Std. Deviation	P value
Attitudinal Awareness	9	.1429	.1587	.18133	.024
Basic Knowledge	10	1.5000	1.4000	.92946	.005
Clinical Preparedness	10	.8333	.6833	.49348	.007
Total Transgender Competency	9	.7647	.6939	.34197	.008

## Discussion

### Findings:

- Educational intervention increased transgender cultural competency and clinical preparedness
- Cultural competence training can positively impact attitudes

### Strengths:

- Prior research has not explored transgender cultural competency in inpatient mental health settings
- Intervention: module content specific and relevant to participants, minimal resources required to create and implement

### Limitations:

- Small sample size
- Unexpected release of hospital-wide education on topic prior to implementation
- Transcription error when converting the LGBT-DOCSS to an electronic format
- Utilization a self-assessment tool

### Recommendations:

- Explore most effective format and delivery methods for intervention
- Investigate link between cultural competency education and provider attitudes
- Examine impact of intervention on patient care, satisfaction, and outcomes

## Conclusion

In health care providers, transgender cultural competency and clinical preparedness can be increased through brief educational modules.