Providing Affirmative Care for our LGBTQ+ Population

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Providing Affirming Care to our LGBTQ+ Population

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Purpose
- Ensure that our Family Medicine Clinic is trained and prepared to provide high quality, affirming healthcare to our LGBTQ+ population.

Methods
- Collected SOGI data at the start of the project as well as throughout.
- Survey to Caregivers about comfort levels asking about sexual orientation, gender identity, and pronouns before and after education and implementation.
- Presentation about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity which included definitions, causes of disparity, and what we can do to change outcomes.
- Engaged “Peer Leaders” to help support the work from within the teams and give tips/tricks
- Regularly rounded and gave feedback and advice

Results
- We had over 300% increases in data regarding SOGI in less than a year
- Education and practice made a huge difference for our caregivers
- After 2 months, 0% of caregivers felt “Really” or “Kind of” uncomfortable with any of the questions. Before, those rates were as high as 40% (re: pronouns)
- This data collection showed that our rate of LGBTQ+ patients is actually in line with the national average, not less
- Caregivers received great feedback from patients and families who were very grateful

Discussion/Implications
- Having SOGI data is a critical step to providing better care for this high risk group
- A team is more likely to take an active role in supporting this vulnerable population when the history of discrimination is discussed
- Supporting the team with coaching, practice, and tips from peer leaders was very important
- Open and affirmative caregivers save lives

Background
- Members of the LGBTQ+ community are at increased risk for a number of health threats when compared to their heterosexual peers
- Many avoid healthcare providers because of lack of insurance, discrimination, and lack of provider education/understanding
- LGBTQ+ Youth are more likely to be homeless and 2-3 times more likely to attempt suicide
- Transgender individuals have a high prevalence of HIV/STDs, victimization, mental health issues, and suicide and are less likely to have health insurance than heterosexual or LGB individuals.
- A goal of Healthy People 2020 is collecting data on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI)

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References:
CDC: LGBT Health
Healthy People 2020: LGBT Health
National LGBT Health Education Center