Background

The health of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other gender minorities is an important public health issue. LGBT+ health education has been shown to increase knowledge and change attitudes and behaviors of medical students towards LGBT+ patients. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Health Education (LGTE) curriculum for the University of Vermont College of Medicine (COM) has been developed in an effort to provide students with a better understanding of LGBT+ health, the inequalities that lead to disparities, and the need for ongoing education and training in LGBT+ health.

In Phase 1 of the study, 67 respondents strongly agreed (55.6%), 49 somewhat agreed (41.4%), 6 somewhat disagreed (5.2%), and 0 somewhat and strongly disagreed (0%). The results of this question are shown in Figure 1.

Methods

This study was completed in three phases.

Phase 1: The initial phase consisted of an electronic survey administered to the Class of 2011 at the University of Vermont College of Medicine. Phase 2: In Phase 2, the survey was electronically administered to the 2012 Class of COM. Phase 3: In Phase 3, subjects identified several factors within the COM curriculum they believed influenced these changes, including LGBT+ lectures, interactive group exercises, and simulation scenarios. Subjects also identified several other factors that they believed influenced these changes, such as diversity training and cultural competence training.

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Results

A complete set of survey questions, and a complete compendium of results are shown in the links elsewhere on this page. Quantitative significant results are reported below.

Phase 1 of the study was offered to the entire Class of 2011 at the time of administration during a 2-hour session of their orientation week activities. Subjects included the entire Class of 2011.

Phase 2 of the study was offered to the entire Class of 2012 at the regularly scheduled time during their clerkship orientation week activities. Subjects included the entire Class of 2012.

Phase 3 of the study was offered to the entire Class of 2013 at their clerkship orientation week. They were invited to opt in to a focus group, but no focus groups participated.

Conclusions

Results of all phases of the study strongly suggest that significant and meaningful changes in attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs about LGBT+ people and LGBT+ healthcare occurred during the course of the pre-clinical years. These changes include

- an increase in the number of subjects who believe that same sex sexual attraction is morally acceptable.
- an increase in the number of subjects who believe that same sex sexual attraction and behavior are morally acceptable.
- an increase in the percentage of subjects who believe that sexual orientation and behavior can be natural expressions of sexuality in humans.
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Because many of the educational interventions and developments that finally came to bear on the course of events LGBT+ education could not have gotten started at the study outset, identifying which of the interventions would have the greatest impact on student performance, attitudes, and beliefs about LGBT+ people.

Download a copy of the survey used in this study

Download a complete set of results of this study

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