

The Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing Lecture Series:

LEADING CHANGE, ADVANCING HEALTH

Ideas for a Progressive Society:
Reducing Health Disparities in the LGBT Community

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How Do We Generate Ideas for Progressive Scholarship?

- Exposure
- Perspective
- Knowledge
- Action
- Commitment



Exposure: Nursing Education

- Literature reveals limited attention on a strategy for including lifelong learning about LGBT health issues in nursing education. Reinforced by findings from Eliason, et al. (ANS, 2010), Keepnews (ANS, 2011), & Brennan, et al. (Journal of Professional Nursing, 2010)



Perspective: Equality

➤ Social Justice

- “Without a perspective grounded in values of social justice, approaches to inequities in health will likely aim at symptoms, continuing to rely on cures, treatments, or individual interventions rather than transforming institutions that cause health inequities.” (Richard Hofrichter, 2003)

➤ Upstream

- A focus on the Determinants of Health provides a landscape of opportunities

➤ Population Health

- Geopolitical definition casts a wide net



Knowledge: The Health of LGBT People: Building a Foundation for Better Understanding

- Study conducted by the Institute of Medicine in 2010; published in 2011
- Sponsored by the National Institutes of Health
- Recognized the importance of understanding the populations represented by the term LGBT
- Major challenges exist in building the knowledge and science relative to the LGBT communities



NIH Charge to the Committee

- Outline a research agenda to assist NIH in enhancing efforts in this area
- Identify research challenges and opportunities
- Assess the state of the science on health status of the LGBT populations
- Consider research training needs to advance knowledge about LGBT health



Background & Context for the Study

- Unique disparities within the LGBT populations and subpopulations
- Limited research available on the health status of LGBT populations
- Identification of research barriers and priorities
- Provide a platform for dialogue and action to enhance research



Primary Research Perspectives

- Life-course framework: events at each stage of life influence subsequent stages and experience is shaped by age cohort and historical context
- Minority stress model: sexual and gender minorities experience chronic stress as a result of stigmatization
- Intersectionality: individual's have multiple identities that interact with each other including race, ethnicity, income, gender, sexual orientation, and gender non-conformity
- Social ecology perspective: individuals are surrounded by spheres of influence such as family, community, and society that impact the health of LGBT people.



Primary Findings

- Research has been focused more on gay men and lesbians, less on bisexual and transgender individuals
- Most research has been conducted on adults, less on adolescents and few studies on LGBT elders
- Research has not adequately examined subpopulations such as racial and ethnic groups
- Barriers to research include operational definitions, barriers to study participants, small proportion of the general population



Recommendations

- Research to build the evidence base:
 - Utilize cross-cutting perspective for research
 - Increase demographic research across the life course and on LGBT subpopulations
 - Social influences on the lives of LGBT populations (crime, victimization, housing, families, social & economic issues)
 - Inequities in health care
 - Intervention research
 - Transgender-specific health needs



Recommendations

- Research that builds the data base and methodology:
 - Collect data on sexual orientation and gender identity in federally funded surveys
 - Collect data on sexual orientation and gender identity in electronic health records
 - Support the development and standardization of sexual orientation and gender identity measures



Recommendations

- Develop a comprehensive research training approach to strengthen LGBT health research at NIH
- NIH should encourage grant applicants to address explicitly the inclusion or exclusion of sexual and gender minorities in their samples



Action: Engaging a Research Agenda

- Update on NIH funding for LGBT health research (Coulter, et al, 2014)
- Discrimination (Haas, et al, 2014)
- Informatics (Deutsch, et al, 2013)
- Nursing Research
 - Primarily theoretical
 - American Academy of Nursing LGBTQ Expert Panel is addressing LGBT nursing research and strategies to reduce barriers to LGBT health research in nursing



Commitment:

Resources Matter

- Creation of an LGBT Health Initiative at Columbia University Medical Center; a collaboration among the College of Physicians and Surgeons Dept. of Psychiatry and the Columbia University School of Nursing.
- Development of Resources and Programs specific to LGBT issues
- LGBT Research Workgroup across the Schools of Nursing and Medicine

