LGB and T health and social care curriculum inclusion in English HEIs: Emerging findings a national survey

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Aims of the project

• The survey was designed to collect information about the coverage and teaching of lesbian gay and bisexual (LGB) and of trans* (T) issues in health and social care curricula in higher educational institutions (HEIs) in England.

• The aim was to find out the barriers and facilitators to LGB and T inclusion in health and social care teaching and to identify good practice.
The issue

• UK studies show poorer quality of care and fear or experiences of discrimination in health and social care services, particularly evidenced for older people and for people with mental health problems

• Preparation as a student as well as training as a practitioner

• Fitness to practice, professional standards, cultural competency

• Health and social care policy contexts

• Equality Act 2010 and case law
Method

- The study adopted a mixed methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative data gathered from an online survey (using Qualtrics).
- LGB and T were separated out in the questionnaire.
- Purposive sample was initially used to gather the data, followed by the snowball sampling.
- A link to the online survey was sent to a list of potential participants from other universities and to relevant networks such as JSWEC and MHHE.
- The link to the survey was also disseminated on social media platforms such as Twitter.
- A total of 61 respondents completed the survey.
### Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Stand. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female</strong></td>
<td>51%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*<em>Trans</em></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heterosexual</strong></td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gay or Lesbian</strong></td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bisexual</strong></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N 31 participants
Sample - Age

- 18-20: 3%
- 21-29: 3%
- 30-39: 20%
- 40-49: 14%
- 50-59: 37%
- 60-69: 26%
- 70 or older
Sample – Ethnicity

- White UK: 74.29%
- White Irish: 8.57%
- White European: 8.57%
- Mixed other: 5.71%
- White Other: 2.86%
Sample by role

Sample demographics

- Teaching staff: 74%
- Research: 28%
- Administration: 13%
- Management: 7%
- Other: 8%
Sample by disciplines

DISCIPLINES

Social Work 34%
Mental Health 15%
Nursing 21%
Psychology 3%
Counselling / Psychotherapy 2%
Other 25%

*Other included art therapy, criminology, administration services, sociology, public health, education studies, youth and community work, law, pharmacology and human resources.
Findings: Priority and confidence

Priority in teaching and learning

LGB (N=40)
- 48% high priority
- 28% moderate priority
- 18% somewhat a priority

T (N=35)
- 31% high priority
- 29% somewhat a priority
- 20% moderate priority

Confidence in teaching

LGB (N=40)
- 33% extremely confident
- 30% moderately confident
- 18% slightly confident

T (N=35)
- 29% moderately confident
- 26% somewhat confident
- 20% not at all confident
Findings: Facilitators and barriers

Overall facilitators*
1. Time and space =
2. Support by colleagues
3. Support by students
   - “It needs to become part of the curriculum”
   - “A positive environment for the exchange of ideas of LGBT issues”
   - “Looking at LGB issues from various cultural viewpoints and heritages”

Overall barriers*
1. Time and space
2. Balancing cultural differences
3. Resistance by colleagues
4. Professional competencies
   - “When there are supportive students this can change a group’s attitude”
   - “I think the support of colleagues in vital in this area”
   - “Exploring the current legislation…and professional codes of conduct”

* based on categories defined by Davy et al (2015)
Findings: Emerging issues for practice

Fear and confidence

• “fear in the learning environment”, “fear of offending others” [or] “saying the wrong thing”

• Need for expert guidance and information, especially for T issues.

• Experiential expertise recognised as valuable.

Religion, culture and personal views

• Resistance from students from “strong faith backgrounds” and those who find the issues “sinful and offensive”

• Personal views and conduct standards need to be explored.

Leadership and learning culture

• Those in leadership positions can “set the tone” by “embracing LGBT issues to their Schools and Departments”

• “Institutional attitudes and behaviours” can create a supportive learning environment where “people can ask questions and make mistakes”
What about any rewards?

- Creating awareness in a “safe” environment
- Motivate colleagues to be confident in teaching LGB&T
- Supporting LGB&T students
- Supporting students in their “personal life”
What’s next?

• Stage II of this project
• Create a “good practice” guide for teaching
• Support teaching in HI in health and social care
Thank you for listening!

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