|  |
| --- |
| **Reducing health inequalities for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans & intersex (LGBTI) people in six countries: An innovative European training programme to improve the knowledge, skills, & attitudes of health professionals in caring for LGBTI people\*** |
| **Background/Objectives**  Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, & Intersex (LGBTI) people commonly experience a range of health inequalities & barriers to healthcare. This paper draws on the European Commission’s Health4LGBTI project to highlight these inequalities & their causes in relation to healthcare. We present an innovative European training programme to address these inequalities which aims to improve the knowledge, skills & attitudes of health professionals in caring for LGBTI people.  **Methods**  A narrative review of primary research, & a comprehensive scoping review of grey literature from 27 European countries was conducted on the inequalities experienced by LGBTI people, & the barriers faced by health professionals when providing care.  Two focus group studies were also conducted with LGBTI people & health professionals in six EU countries (n=103). A training package for health professionals on LGBTI issues related to health(care) was then developed & piloted amongst participants with different professional backgrounds across diverse European settings.  **Results**  Data confirmed the existence of health inequalities & barriers in health settings with LGBTI people reporting unfavourable experiences of health care. Cultural & social norms that prefer & prioritise heterosexuality, minority stress, discrimination & stigma emerged as root causes. Inequalities pertaining to LGBTI health & healthcare varied depending on gender, age, income & disability as well as between LGBTI groupings. Based on the data, four training modules were developed on: awareness raising, terminology & LGBTI concepts; physical/mental health inequalities & needs; inclusive communication & practice; & trans & intersex health. Evaluation data from the pilot testing of these modules with health professionals showed significant increases in participants’ knowledge, evidence of positive attitudinal change, & acceptance.  **Discussion**  Significant & largely preventable health inequalities persist for LGBTI people. The Health4LGBTI training programme offers an important opportunity to engage with health professionals across all EU member states & internationally to reduce inequalities including barriers to healthcare through the development of health services that accommodate the needs of LGBTI people.  **Keywords:** LGBTI, health inequalities, health professionals, EU.  **\*Disclaimer**: This content is responsibility of the authors & does not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Commission. |