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| **Development and evaluation of a training course for health and mental health professionals to improve attitudes, knowledge and skills in providing healthcare for LGBTI people (Health4LGBTI EU project)\*** |
| **Background/Objectives**There is evidence to suggest that direct and indirect discrimination against LGBTI people, along with a lack of specific knowledge and sensitivity within the health sector, contribute to and reinforce LGBTI health inequalities.The objective is to describe and assess a new training course developed to improve knowledge, skills and attitudes of health professionals in caring for LGBTI people.**Methods**The two-year EU funded project was implemented by a team of researchers, health professionals and LGBTI people. A comprehensive literature review and 12 focus groups in 6 EU Member States were carried out at the beginning of the project.The training was piloted in Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, Lithuania, Poland and the UK, involving medical doctors, nurses and midwives, psychologists and other healthcare staff. Pre/post evaluation using questionnaires (including knowledge questions, Likert scales for attitudes, awareness and intended behaviours and satisfaction questions) was carried out.**Results**Four face-to-face standalone training modules including both practical and theoretical sessions have been developed on: (1) awareness raising, terminology and LGBTI concepts; (2) physical and mental health inequalities; (3) inclusive communication and practice; (4) trans and intersex health. The training duration is between 8-10 hours. The evaluation provided the following results: no significant differences emerged across professions, gender or age groups in the pre-training evaluation. Post-test knowledge improved on average by 30.2%. After the training participants were more aware of inequalities in healthcare access (p<0.001), intended to discuss sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics as part of routine care (p=0.011) and were willing to improve practice to make it more inclusive (p=0.002). They also felt more competent to provide care to LGBTI people (p<0.001) and acknowledged the need to include LGBTI perspective in medical education (p=0.004). **Discussion**The training course represents a promising intervention to improve knowledge and skills of health professionals. The dissemination of this training course could help health care professionals to reduce the inequalities and barriers experienced by LGBTI people. **\*Disclaimer**: this content is responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Commission.**Keywords**health inequalities, health professionals, barriers, Sexual minority, LGBTI, European Union |