

Core LGBT-Related Competencies for Medical Students

These areas of knowledge constitute core LGBT-related competencies:

Knowledge of basic information about LGBT individuals

Knowledge of resources providing basic information about LGBT individuals (e.g., websites of major LGBT civil rights organizations)

Knowledge of resources available to support LGBT patients' health (e.g., targeted smoking cessation programs, substance abuse treatment, psychological support)

Knowledge of health disparities faced by LGBT individuals

Knowledge of health risks faced by LGBT individuals

Knowledge of health-related behaviors that disproportionately affect LGBT individuals

Knowledge of barriers to health care access faced by LGBT individuals

Knowledge of concerns with which LGBT patients may enter health care system (e.g., disclosure of LGBT identity or display of same-sex affection will lead to biased treatment)

Knowledge of appropriate screenings and vaccinations for LGBT patients (e.g., pap smears for WSW, hepatitis vaccination for MSM, screenings generally recommended for those of transgender patient's birth sex)

Knowledge of the needs of LGBT "special populations," including youth, elders, same-sex parents, and abuse survivors

Knowledge of law and policy affecting LGBT patients (e.g., prohibition of discrimination related to sexual orientation or gender identity, recognition of same-sex partnership/marriage)

Knowledge of insurance issues affecting LGBT patients (e.g., exclusion of procedures related to transsexualism, taxation of domestic partner health insurance)

Knowledge of possible health care needs of transgender patients (e.g., hormone therapy, surgeries)

Knowledge of WSW and MSM sex practices and related terminology

Knowledge of challenges faced by LGBT health professionals

These abilities constitute core LGBT-related competencies:

Ability to respond sensitively and non-judgmentally to a patient's disclosure of LGBT status

Ability to respond to LGBT patients' concerns about possibility of biased treatment

Ability to take a full sexual history with an LGBT patient, responding sensitively and non-judgmentally to information received

Ability to explain the degree (if any) to which information about a patient's LGBT status will be shared verbally, in writing, or electronically

Ability to make available (or advocate for the availability of) information collection systems that allow LGBT patients to identify as such

Ability to conduct an appropriate, sensitive physical examination of a transgender patient

Ability to assess one's own LGBT-related bias, and address it effectively

Ability to respond effectively to witnessed bias toward an LGBT patient

Ability to create a welcoming environment for LGBT patients via staff training, waiting area materials, etc.