LGBT Healthcare Needs and Concerns

Purpose: To elicit Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender (LGBT) perspectives on experiences with healthcare encounters, toward the development of evidence-based, best professional practices.

Goal: Development of educational guidelines for better teaching and more skillfully managing LGBT healthcare needs and concerns.

Design: Exploratory descriptive study with Focus Group design

Methodology:
- **Participants**: LGBT individuals of mixed gender and sexual orientations, including straight women.
- **Goals**: To identify positive and negative experiences of LGBT individuals in the healthcare system, participants’ perceived major needs and concerns related to their healthcare, their ideas about best healthcare experiences and conditions for achieving that level of care, and essential skills needed in providing effective LGBT care.
- **Focus Group Sessions**: Four semi-structured focus groups were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim.
- **Qualitative Analysis**: Conducted identifying major themes in the data. Comparisons were made across the focus groups for similarities and differences.

**Participants**:
- 24 Participants were interviewed.
- Participants included both male and female individuals.
- Participants discussed their experiences with healthcare providers, their needs, and concerns.

**Healthcare Needs and Concerns**

- **Common Concerns**:
  - Language barriers
  - Cultural differences
  - Lack of knowledge
- **Solutions**:
  - Providing more culturally competent care
  - Enhancing communication skills

**Similarities and Differences Among the Focus Groups**

- **Similarities**:
  - Importance of cultural competency
  - Need for more education on LGBT issues
- **Differences**:
  - Gay Men's Group:
    - More focus on relationships and family issues
  - HIV+ MSM Group:
    - More focus on HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention
  - Transgender Group:
    - More focus on gender identity and expression
  - Lesbian Women's Group:
    - More focus on sexual orientation and identity

**Specific Concerns**

- **Gay Men's Group**:
  - Health and wellness
  - Mental health
  - Social support
- **HIV+ MSM Group**:
  - Awareness of healthcare options
  - Access to healthcare services
  - Quality of healthcare
- **Transgender Group**:
  - Gender identity
  - Access to care
  - Acceptance and understanding
- **Lesbian Women's Group**:
  - Sexual orientation
  - Discrimination
  - Access to care

**Recommendations**

- **Increasing Cultural Competency**
- **Enhancing Communication Skills**
- **Providing More Education**

**Conclusion**

The study provides valuable insights into the healthcare needs and concerns of LGBT individuals. It highlights the importance of cultural competency and communication skills in providing effective care. Further research is needed to address the specific needs and concerns of different LGBT subgroups.