DEFINING LGBTQIA+ INCLUSIVITY IN THE COLORADO HEALTHCARE SETTING.
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Despite national improvements in LGBTQIA+ inclusivity, local governmental policy and
public attitudes continue to influence the health of this community. This study
emphasizes perspectives among rural and non-urban LGBTQIA+ patients to further
define attributes of inclusive healthcare provision through a thematic, qualitative
approach. Participants (n=28) joined semi-structured focus groups in Denver, Ft.
Collins, Colorado Springs, and Grand Junction. They were more likely to identify as
white (78.6%) and transgender or gender diverse (71.4%), and a majority of patients
(85.7%) lived in rural or non-urban regions outside of the Denver metropolitan area.
Focus group themes were identified, such as inclusive language use, comfort with
sexual history taking and exams, advanced communication skills, cohesion among all
team members, LGBT training credentials, provider connection to community, ability to
provide specialized and preventive care, importance of LGBTQIA+ symbolism, and
value for the individual. Specific examples of each were provided in detail, including
notable direct quotations. This study describes a more inclusive healthcare environment
for those traditionally under-represented in LGBTQIA+ medical literature; results were
used to create a variety of publicly available resources for patients and healthcare
providers in Colorado. Patients discussed tangible solutions to meet these identified
needs, which should be a call to action for providers to continue to strive for more
patient-centered care.