

Medical Student Perceptions of LGBTQIA Inclusivity in Anesthesiology

Abstract

Background: LGBTQIA+ identifying medical students' perception of inclusivity within a specialty is highly predictive of their specialty choice. An LGBTQIA+ inclusive culture has a positive impact on student learning, patient care, and employee health and well-being. While the importance of inclusivity and diversity in health care is known, there is little data on medical student's perception of inclusivity in anesthesiology for LGBTQIA+ students.

Methods: To create a survey for medical students to assess their perception of how inclusive the field of anesthesiology is for LGBTQIA+ identifying students. This single-center, multi-class anonymous survey was generated from expert opinion based on prior published reports¹ and distributed to medical students at the University of Colorado School of Medicine (CUSOM). Participants that did not complete an anesthesiology rotation were excluded from the survey. Data were analyzed on R-Studio, utilizing Chi-Squared Testing and Fisher's Exact Testing.

Results: Collected data indicate the feasibility of a questionnaire survey for assessing the perception of how inclusive the field of anesthesiology is for LGBTQIA+ identifying students. Analyzed results demonstrated several statistically significant differences between how LGBTQIA+ and non-LGBTQIA+ students answered survey questions, with the perceptions of decreased inclusivity among the LGBTQIA+ identifying students.

Conclusion: This study provides evidence that an online questionnaire can be used to evaluate the perception of inclusivity in the field of anesthesiology for LGBTQIA+ and non-LGBTIA+ medical students. The study provides a framework for investigating this work and warrants conduction on the national level. These data support that LGBTQIA+ students perceive the field of anesthesiology to be less inclusive in comparison to other medical specialties. Establishing baseline perceptions of inclusivity in our specialty is important so that interventions to improve

inclusivity can be evaluated for effectiveness. Further studies are necessary to establish if these data are reproducible on a national level.