



# Improving Cultural Competence Among Nurses when Caring for Transgender Youth

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## Background

- Transgender youth experience higher rates of discrimination, self-injury, suicidal ideation, depressive symptoms, and suicide attempts than their cisgender counterparts.
- Some healthcare organizations offer training on LGBT-related health topics, however, these initiatives tend to treat the LGBT community as a whole, overlooking the unique needs of sub-communities like transgender youth, who require tailored medical, psychosocial, and legal support.
- Cultural competency training is necessary to better prepare nurses for working with transgender youth.

## Objectives

- To identify the psychosocial stressors contributing to health disparities and barriers to seeking healthcare among transgender youth.
- To collect and evaluate data related to educational nursing interventions to support transgender youth in healthcare settings.
- To identify the CNL role in implementation of this evidence-based recommendation

## Development

The following PICO question was developed for the purpose of researching this topic:

Among transgender adolescents in primary health care settings (P), how does transgender-specific nurse education and training (I) compared to nursing care without specific transgender-related training (C), improve mental health outcomes and allyship in the healthcare environment?

## Methods

- A PRISMA search strategy of the University of Maryland Health Sciences and Human Services (HSHSL) Library was conducted using the Boolean phrase ((transgender) AND (youth) AND (nurs\*) AND (health\*)), with filters for the last 5 years, peer reviewed, and academic journals were selected and yielded 197 results. Studies were excluded from this review due to lack of relevance to the PICO question, non-English, or full access to the article was unavailable.

Study designs included:

- One prospective cohort study (JHNEBP Level III)
- Two pre-/post-test research designs (JHNEBP Level III)
- One case-control study (JHNEBP Level III)
- One randomized controlled trial (JHNEBP Level I)

## Important Remarks from Transgender Youth

“It was hard enough to find providers who were accepting of new patients, worked with adolescents, and took my insurance. On top of it, finding someone who was trans-friendly made it all but impossible”

“Sometimes you have to share [needles] – I need these [hormones] to pass and be a little accepted”

“There is nothing for transgender youth. Please help us”  
- Chong et al. (2021)

## Results

- The odds of depression and suicide risk among transgender and nonbinary youth are reduced with gender-affirming care and with respect to their chosen names in the healthcare environment (P<0.001).
- Transgender-specific educational interventions for nurses improve knowledge and allyship in the healthcare environment (P<0.05).
- Transgender-specific cultural competency training specifically improved nursing skills in providing care for transgender adolescents (P<0.05).

## Conclusions

- There is strong support for gender affirmation as a suicide risk-reduction strategy among transgender youth.
- Based upon the literature reviewed, culturally competent care specific to transgender youth should be implemented into routine continuing education for all nursing and particularly those caring for adolescents because this intervention is an inexpensive and non-disruptive way to support transgender adolescent patients.

## Role of the CNL

- CNL nurses can advocate for better mental health outcomes for transgender adolescents by using education as a primary preventive strategy among nurses in their unit to create a welcoming and supportive environment for this population.
- CNLs should assess their own cultural awareness, knowledge, skills, and working to continually improve their interactions and sensitivity with transgender adolescents (King & Gerard, 2016, p. 92).

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