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Jeanie Lin

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Transgender Healthcare Resources for Clinicians in Vermont

Jeanie Lin

Community Health Centers of Burlington

Dr. Rachel Inker

March 2021

Problem

Transgender people are estimated to represent 0.5% of the U.S. population. They face disproportionate levels of discrimination in healthcare settings and have worse health than their cisgender peers.

A major barrier to healthcare reported by transgender individuals is a lack of providers who are sufficiently knowledgeable on the topic.

The 2011 National Transgender Discrimination Survey found that 50% of respondents reported having to teach their providers about their own healthcare.

Public Health Cost

There is a scarcity of quantitative data concerning this issue, but transgender individuals face significant barriers that likely lead to unnecessary higher healthcare expenditure.

Community Perspective

*A goal for delivery of quality trans affirmative health care in the state of Vermont is to improve access for patients throughout the state. This means the ability to seek and find well-informed and trained providers in their medical home. With that goal in mind, **providers should have available training and educational tools to allow them to provide safe, quality care to trans and nonbinary Vermonters.***

- Rachel Inker, MD

*Providers can see the **life-saving, life-generating impact of their work by helping trans/gender non-binary patients get appropriate care**, and thrive! It is an extremely satisfying part of medicine. When we talk about provider-patient collaboration, we also mean gains that providers themselves get from working with trans and gender non-binary patients.*

- Samuel Lurie, LICSW

*There are many providers who are passionate about transgender healthcare but don't have the expertise and skill set. **How can we increase comfort around trans health so that "trans healthcare" is just primary care?***

- Shelly Paquette, DNP

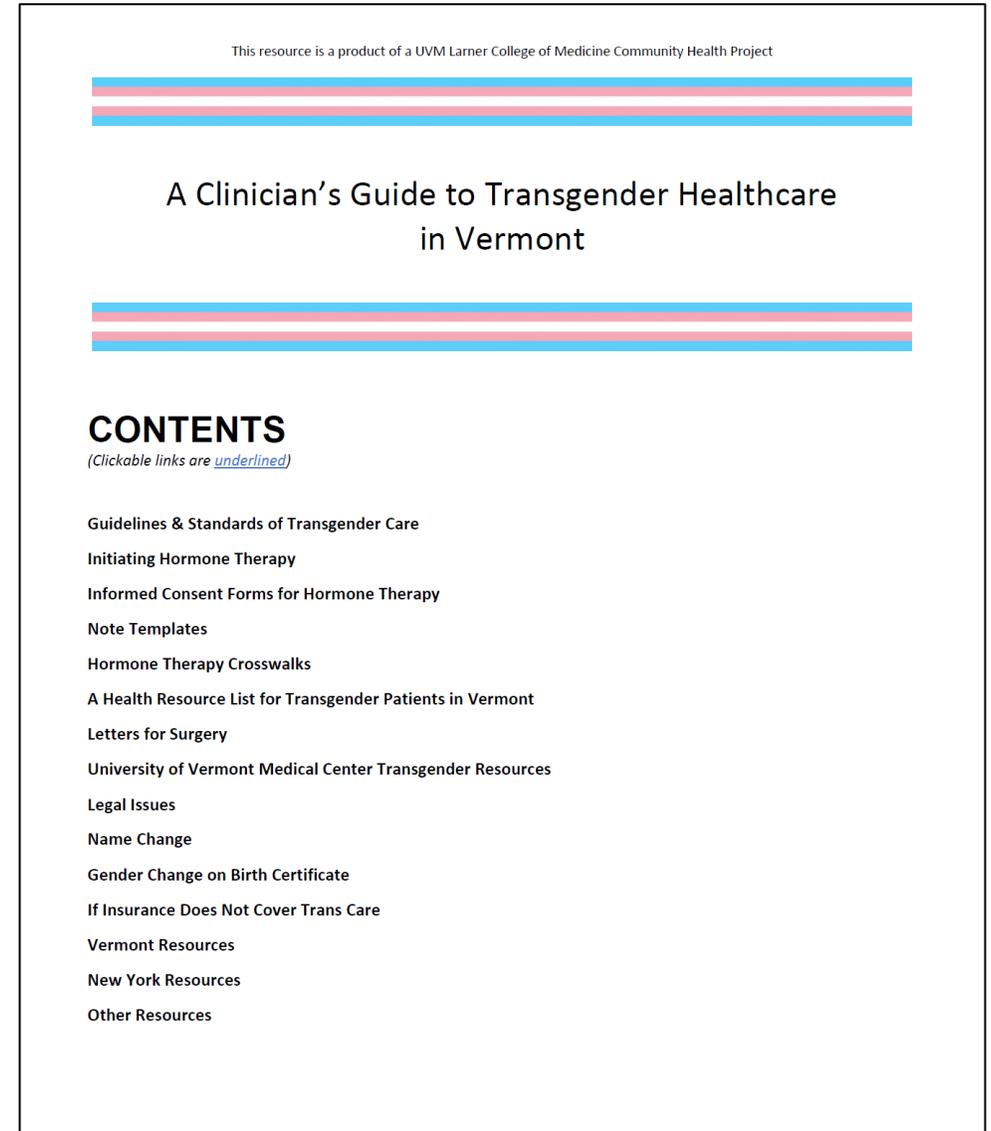
Methodology & Intervention

- Consulted with providers and social work at Community Health Centers of Burlington to identify provider needs and resource gaps in regards to transgender care
- Gathered and adapted commonly used resources for compilation
- Create a single clinician-centered document that includes guidelines for transgender healthcare, EHR note templates, informed consent forms for hormone therapy, crosswalks from various published guidelines for hormone therapy, surgery letter templates, information about name and gender changes on legal documents, insurance navigation, and links to local and national resources

Results

29-page electronic resource in two different formats

- Word version
 - Expandable and collapsible sections for easier navigation
 - Can be edited to maintain accuracy
- PDF version
 - Sections are expanded by default
 - Directly clickable links



Evaluation of Effectiveness & Limitations

- Providers could be surveyed about the resource's utility and for recommendations for improvement
- Transgender patients could be surveyed before and after PCPs receive the resource document to assess for any perception of improved quality of care
- Limitations include:
 - Initial distribution only to Community Health Centers of Burlington
 - Resource is currently not hosted online and must be distributed via email
 - Short duration of clerkship limited the scope of the project, distribution area, and ability to assess usefulness

Future Directions

- Distribute resource more widely to primary care practices in Vermont
- Maintain relevance of resource with continued updates as necessary
- Add “back to top” links in document for better usability
- Create Epic dot phrases for the UVMMC network based on the note templates from the University of Utah included in this project
- Edit resource to reflect provider recommendations

References

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