

Introduction

There is a community around us that receives discrimination, lack of acceptance, and lack of equality. This is the LGBT community. The LGBT community is an openly defined group that is comprised of individuals, adolescents to older adults, who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. These individuals suffer from the indifferences of the way they express themselves resulting in a rise of mental health issues and overall health disparities. The LGBT community is at a higher risk than those who identify as heterosexual for suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts (Johns et al., 2018)). A health disparity that this community lacks is access to mental health programs (Williams & Fish, 2020). LGBT individuals also lack the availability of healthcare professionals who are culturally competent with their community (Smith et al., 2018).



Purpose

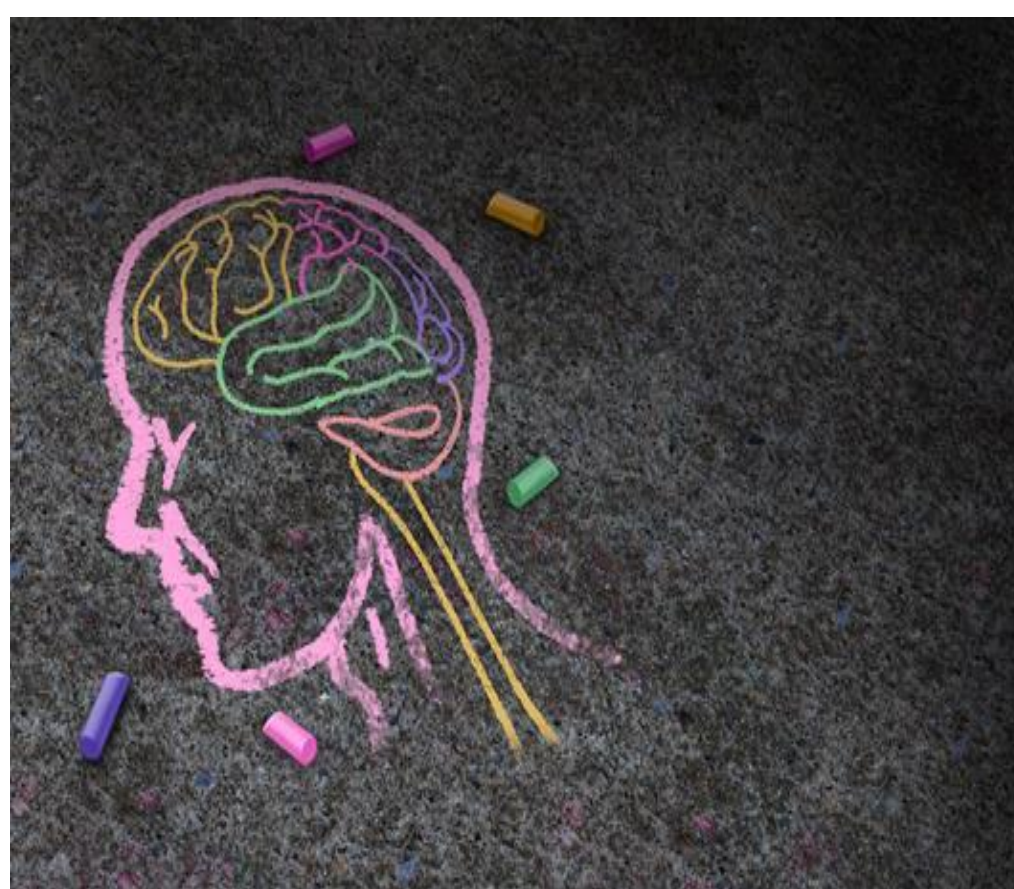
The purpose of this literature review is to explore the disparities in mental health for the LGBT community of young adolescence through older adulthood. The question that drives this review is how does being a member of the LGBT community effect mental health.

Background

Mental health plays an important role in our physical health. It is common that an individual's deteriorating mental health makes them more susceptible to diseases (CDC, 2021). An untreated mental illness can result in hospital stays as well as admittance to mental health facilities. The average cost per year in the United States for mental health care is \$1 trillion (WHO, 2019). There were 45, 979 Americans who died by suicide in 2020 (AFSP,2022). Suicide rates in the LGBT community are seemingly higher due to the lack of acceptance particularly in younger LGBT adolescents (Green et al., 2021).

Literature Review and Methods

This literature review utilized search engines from PubMed, ETSU One Search, and Google Scholar. Articles were chosen from within the past five years, 2017 through 2022, and corresponded with disparities in mental health for the LGBT community and the effects of acceptance from peers and family. A total of four articles and one systematic review were chosen. Key words used during the search of articles included "LGBT", "mental health", "suicide", and "nursing".



Findings

- LGBT identifying adolescents who do not have acceptance from others (peers and family) had a higher risk of suicide (Green et al., 2021).
- Many mental health and substance misuse facilities do not have LGBT-specific programs available (Williams & Fish., 2020).
- LGBT individuals report a lack of information regarding LGBT health and suffered discrimination from health professionals (Medina-Martinez et al., 2021).
- Healthcare professionals expressed the lack of training with LGBT clients; however, they are willing to learn as it is relevant to their practice (Smith., 2018).



Conclusion

The studies indicate that there is a lack of equality and acceptance, and lack of available resources for the LGBT community. To improve the lives and experience for LGBT individuals, there is a need for more training in cultural competency among the healthcare industry and implications of programs and resources specifically for the LGBT community. The increase of culture competency training and LGBT-specific programs will increase LGBT individuals experience with healthcare as well as decrease the number of LGBT deaths resulting from mental illness created by lack of acceptance and equality.

References

Scan the QR code with your phone camera and click the link to view the complete list of references.

