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Understanding LGBTQ+ Athletic Healthcare: Athletes, Athletic Trainers, and Their Perceptions

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Understanding LGBTQ+ Athletic Healthcare: Athletes, Athletic Trainers, and Their Perceptions

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OBJECTIVE

To investigate the perceptions of NCAA Division II student-athletes from the University of Findlay have of athletic trainers that identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community.

DESIGN AND SETTING

The web-based survey was sent out to all student-athletes at the University of Findlay via email.

PARTICIPANTS

A total of 71 student-athletes participated (18 males and 53 females) completed the survey.

INTERVENTION

A 14 question survey instrument was used to investigate student-athletes' perceptions in regards to appropriateness of, quality of care from, and comfort level with athletic trainers who identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community.

MAIN OUTCOME MEASUREMENT

Participants completed a 14 question survey to determine their perceptions about the care that LGBTQ+ athletic trainers provide. The questions included demographic questions, without specific identifiers, questions that asked their past experience with LGBTQ+ individuals, matrix questions that assessed the level of appropriateness, quality of care,

and the level of comfort perceived by student-athletes of athletic trainers who identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community. There were also two open ended questions that allowed the student-athletes to provide an explanation of their answers in the questions.

RESULTS

Participants indicated that they would seek health care and would be comfortable with an athletic trainer that is a member of the LGBTQ+ community. Participants also agreed that it is appropriate for an athletic trainer that is a member of the LGBTQ+ community to work with both male and female sports. They also agreed that the quality of care does not differ between an athletic trainer that identifies as LGBTQ+ compared to an athletic trainer who identifies as heterosexual. The responses to the open ended questions revealed common themes: not knowing enough about specific populations, education, situational concerns, and professionalism that affected their perceptions.

CONCLUSION

In general, the student-athletes at the University of Findlay had positive perceptions of working with athletic trainers that are members of the LGBTQ+ community.

KEY WORDS: *Athletic Trainer, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity*