

COMPETENCIES ON TRANS-AFFIRMATIVE HEALTH PROVISION



Acknowledgements

This booklet builds on the work in the TransCare stream within the Initiative for Health Equity, Advocacy, and Research, specifically the MedEd project which happened as several strands came together. Firstly, it draws from the lived experiences of some of our team members. Secondly, it builds from earlier and ongoing research and advocacy efforts of the team. Thirdly, it builds from earlier work by some members of the team in developing competencies for disability competencies which were successfully included in the national medical curriculum (Disability Inclusive Compassionate Care).

This project itself would not have been possible if not for Sangath serving as the anchor host institution for the initiative, funding and leadership from the University of Chicago and the collaboration with the Kasturba Medical College Manipal.

In the development of the competencies, we would like to specifically thank all the workshop and conference participants who gave their time and effort in sharing their experiences and perspectives, especially those from the trans and gender non-binary community. We know that sharing your traumatic experiences is difficult. We would also like to thank the workshop host institutions HIMSR, Delhi and KMC, Manipal, and Sangath.

In the development of this booklet, there were efforts from almost all of the team members. But we would like to specifically recognise the efforts of Ameya Kumar and Rajan Negi in designing the booklet and Mythili Menon for leading the competency development along with Gaadha Asha, Harikeerthan Raghuram and Shreya Agoramurthy. The work was guided by project co-leaders Anant Bhan, Anu Hazra, Aqsa Shaikh, Deepak Tugnawat, Harikeerthan Raghuram, Khan Amir Maroof, Kirtana R Nayak and Satendra Singh. (all names in alphabetical order)

We hope this booklet and the work under the project will contribute to the growing body of evidence and advocacy material toward inclusive, accessible healthcare for transgender community members

Cover art by - Rahul Jha

Rahul is a freelance writer and artist working towards equal opportunities and representation of people with disabilities. He writes, creates art, and uses his facilities as a tool to express, provoke, and resist.

He's a maker of hand-pulled noodles, a professional letter writer, and an admirer of bootleg canvas paper.

On a regular afternoon, he finds himself finishing commissioned artworks, assembling customized playlists, or creating merchandise.

Find and Follow Rahul on Instagram to support his work : @_dumbfound_dead_

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TransCare MedEd Collaborators



iHEAR
Initiative For Health Equity, Advocacy
and Research



THE UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO



AT THE FOREFRONT
**UChicago
Medicine**

Bucksbaum
Institute for
Clinical Excellence



**KASTURBA MEDICAL COLLEGE
MANIPAL**
(A constituent unit of MAHE, Manipal)

Project Team: iHEAR



Rajan Negi



Garima
Kumari



Harikeerthan
Raghuram



Sana Parakh



Varshini
Odayar



Anant Bhan



Aiswarya S



Shreya
Agoramurthy



Bhakti Ghatole



Aqsa Shaikh



Sunita S.
Bandewar



Deepak Tugnawat



Venu Pillai



Satendra Singh



Khan Amir Maroof



Supraja



Ameya Kumar



Kirtana Pai



Sharin D'Souza



Salik Ansari



Sanjana Singh



Mythili Menon



Gaadha Asha

Project Team



Dr. Anu Hazra (PI)

Assistant Professor, Section of Infectious Diseases and Global Health; Director of STI (Sexually Transmitted Infections) Services at the Chicago Center for HIV Elimination



Dr. Marshall H Chin

Richard Parrillo Family Professor of Healthcare Ethics in the Department of Medicine, Bucksbaum Senior Faculty Scholar, Associate Director, MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics



Dr. Monica E Peek

Associate Professor of Medicine, Bucksbaum Senior Faculty Scholar, Associate Director, MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics



Dr. Amanda Aeleye

Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Section of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology



Dr. Vinay Kumar

Lowell T. Coggeshall Distinguished Service Professor of Pathology, Biologic Sciences Division and The Pritzker School of Medicine, University of Chicago

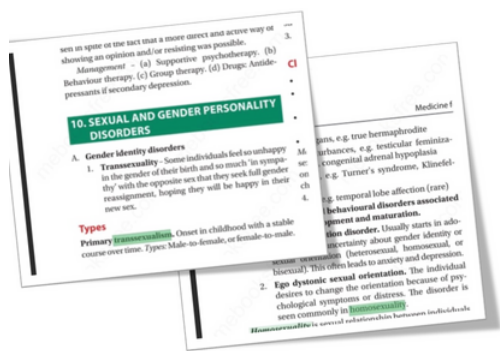


Dr. John A. Schneider

Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology; Director of the University of Chicago Center for HIV Elimination

Background

Despite efforts for universal health access, trans and gender non-binary (TGNB) persons in India face unequal barriers in accessing healthcare. A major reason for this inequity is that the health professional education in India largely operates within the gender binary and has not worked to include Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Expression, and Sex Characteristics (SOGIESC) competencies. Moreover, the medical education pathologises these identities within the curriculum.



In 2019, the Government of India passed the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, which mandates governments to take measures to “review of medical curriculum and research for doctors to address their [transgender] specific health issues”. Due to inaction, recent legal interventions from the Honorable courts of the country like the Kerala HC and the Madras HC have pushed for these conversations to create active change. This has led the National Medical Commission to release a mandate for the omission of harmful content from the curriculum.

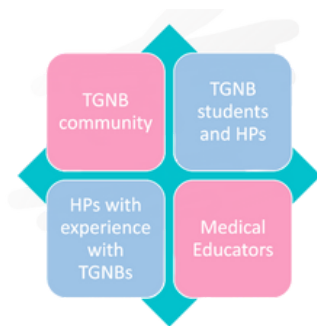


This is where the work done in TransCare MedEd takes center stage. TransCare MedEd addresses the lack of trans affirmative content that needs to be a part of the MBBS curriculum.

Approach

Through a systematic, participatory, and inclusive effort, TransCare MedEd has developed a set of draft trans affirmative competencies on trans-affirmative healthcare in India. For this a series of consultative stakeholder workshops were conducted in Delhi, Manipal and Bhopal.

The stakeholders for the workshops included:



The project went through three phases :



After the development of the competencies in these workshops, the project will review these competencies for which the conference plays an important role. The TransCare Med Ed National conference on May 5th and 6th is therefore aimed at disseminating and discussing these competencies, highlight best practices and building consensus on the way forward.

In the next few pages you will find few pictures and excerpts from the workshops. This will be followed by the draft competencies which are arranged as per the panels in the conference for discussion and feedback.

Consultative Workshops



Medical educators, KMC Manipal workshop

A Queer Affirmative Health Professional: I remember that when the first [trans] person walked into my outpatient department, I immediately felt that I became this other person that I wasn't very proud of.

A Queer Affirmative Health Professional: It is not trans cured. It is trans care.



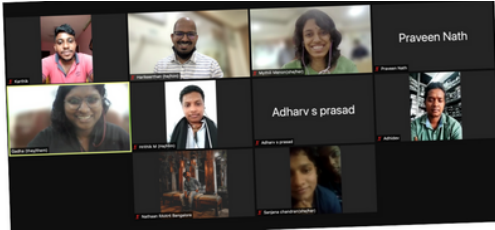
Trans medicos, a virtual workshop

Another Queer Affirmative Health Professional: We require care to be given, which is considered cosmetic for other people but is life saving for trans people.



Health professionals who work with trans people, Delhi Workshop

Consultative Workshops



Trans Community, Manipal workshop

A trans medico - I have had very transphobic experiences in the hospital despite the hospital having had a lot of trans patients. Asking my old name, and asking questions like "back when you were a girl, how you were" – thats how they worded it.

A Queer Affirmative Health Professional: there are surgical procedures which are done on cis women but when demanded by people who are gender incongruent are denied – because somebody feels that it is not ethically right



Health professionals who work with trans people, Manipal Workshop



Trans Community, Delhi workshop

A trans person: Then a nurse came and said I will not put injection to this person. You find someone else

Core Competencies

on Trans-Affirmative Care for Health Professional Education in India

This section lists out the core competencies as per the five roles of the Indian medical graduate given by the National Medical Commission (erstwhile, Medical Council of India).

1. Clinician

(equivalent for nursing: patient centered care, evidence based practice, safety and quality improvement)

An Indian health professional should be able to:

1.1. Describe and differentiate between the evolving concepts of the SOGIESC (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics) framework.

1.2. Identify the social and structural determinants of health of TGNB patients including their intersectionality.

1.3. Enlist the Gender Affirmative Services available for TGNB persons.

1.4. Discuss the need for mental health services throughout the life-course of a TGNB person, particularly, before, during and after gender affirmative services

2. Leader and Member of the Healthcare Team

(equivalent for nursing: systems based practice, teaching and leadership, teamwork and collaboration)

An Indian health professional should be able to:

2.1. Demonstrate awareness of the need to facilitate the development of a bias and discrimination free environment and inclusive infrastructure for learning, work and care provision for TGNB students, colleagues and patients.

2.2. Describe the importance of an interprofessional team to provide inclusive and affirmative care for trans-affirmative care.

2.3. Encourage for social inclusion of TGNB persons within the healthcare community.

3. Communicator

(equivalent for nursing: communication)

An Indian health professional should be able to:

3.1. Demonstrate the use of appropriate and affirming verbal and non verbal communication techniques while communicating with TGNB persons.

3.2. Provide health education to the TGNB patients, caregivers, their families and at the community level in a culturally appropriate manner.

3.3. Explain the need for referral and the referral procedure to a TGNB patient.

4. Life Long Learner

(equivalent for nursing: Health informatics & technology)

An Indian health professional should be able to:

4.1. Demonstrate familiarity with the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 and keep abreast of the updates such as other policies, provisions and government schemes related to TGNB persons, both at the national and state level and keep abreast of updates.

4.2. Describe the Standards of Care for transgender persons.

4.3. Encourage research among sexual and gender minority groups using a participatory approach.

5. Professional

(equivalent for nursing: Professionalism)

An Indian health professional should be able to:

5.1. Demonstrate empathy, dignity and respect with consideration for agency, privacy and confidentiality for the TGNB persons especially in clinical settings.

5.2. Demonstrate integrity in treating TGNB patients who are vulnerable to physical, mental, sexual, social and financial exploitation.

5.3. Demonstrate awareness of a health professional's own power and privileges and how it influences interactions and decision making with TGNB patients.

5.4 Demonstrate shared decision making in decisions related to gender affirmative services.

Equivalence between the Competencies of ACGME, National Medical Council and Indian Nursing Council

ACGME,USA	India	
	National Medical Commission	Indian Nursing Council
Medical Knowledge	Clinician	Patient centered care
Patient care & procedural skills		Evidence based practice
		Safety
		Quality improvement
Systems based practice	Leader	Systems based practice
Interpersonal & Communication skills		Teaching & leadership
		Teamwork & collaboration
Practice based learning & improvement	Communicator	Communication
Professionalism	Lifelong learner	Health informatics & technology
	Professional	Professionalism

Important abbreviations

IMG - Indian Medical Graduate

IHP- Indian Health Practitioner

TGNB- Transgender/Non-binary

SOGISEC- Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristic

WPATH- World Professional Association for Transgender Health

IPATH- Indian Professional Association for Transgender Health

About iHEAR



iHEAR is a collaborative initiative hosted at Sangath that brings together academics, researchers, activists, practitioners and community representatives to conduct participatory research, advocacy and education at the intersection of marginalised identities, health access and mental health.

OUR VALUES

- Work towards improving equity in healthcare
- Recognize intersectionality in experiences of marginalization
- Recognize lived experience as expertise
- Work in partnership with the communities in line with the phrase 'nothing about us, without us'
- Work towards high quality ethical academic scholarship
- Work towards creating real change through policy advocacy

TransCare MedEd is one of the projects under iHEAR. Other projects under iHEAR are mentioned in the next page.

To know more, visit: www.sangath.in/ihear



iHEAR VaccinEquity is participatory qualitative research that aims to deconstruct how COVID-19 vaccine access and uptake are shaped by historical and entrenched structural inequities that affect the transgender and disability communities in India. The study uses interviews and Photovoice Stories for data collection.



iHEAR Peers for Equity is a peer-led initiative where we aim to co-create learning spaces to develop a cohort of researcher-advocates from the LGBTQIA+ and disability communities. This will be done through a short digital course and a paid mentored fellowship. This project is in collaboration with SAATHII.



Queerclusive is a workplace initiative to support the psychosocial needs of Queer and Transgender (Q&T) employees at Sangath Bhopal. The project works to:

- Connect Q&T employees to affordable Queer Affirmative counsellors
- Involve the workplace to learn together about Q&T experiences and shift the workplace culture to be more inclusive
- Discuss, amend and propose policies to safeguard the rights of Q&T persons at the workplace



TransCare Queer Ambassadors aims to set up a network of students and faculty across college campuses in India that will facilitate the exchange of ideas towards making their campus spaces queer-friendly.

This will be done through virtual and in-person sensitisation, and co-learning sessions.



TransCare COVID19 is a participatory qualitative research that aimed to document the experiences of transgender persons in accessing and navigating healthcare in India, specifically, during the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on mental health. The study used interviews and focus group discussion for data collection and used an intersectionality approach,



Project Partners



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