

LGBT Health 101



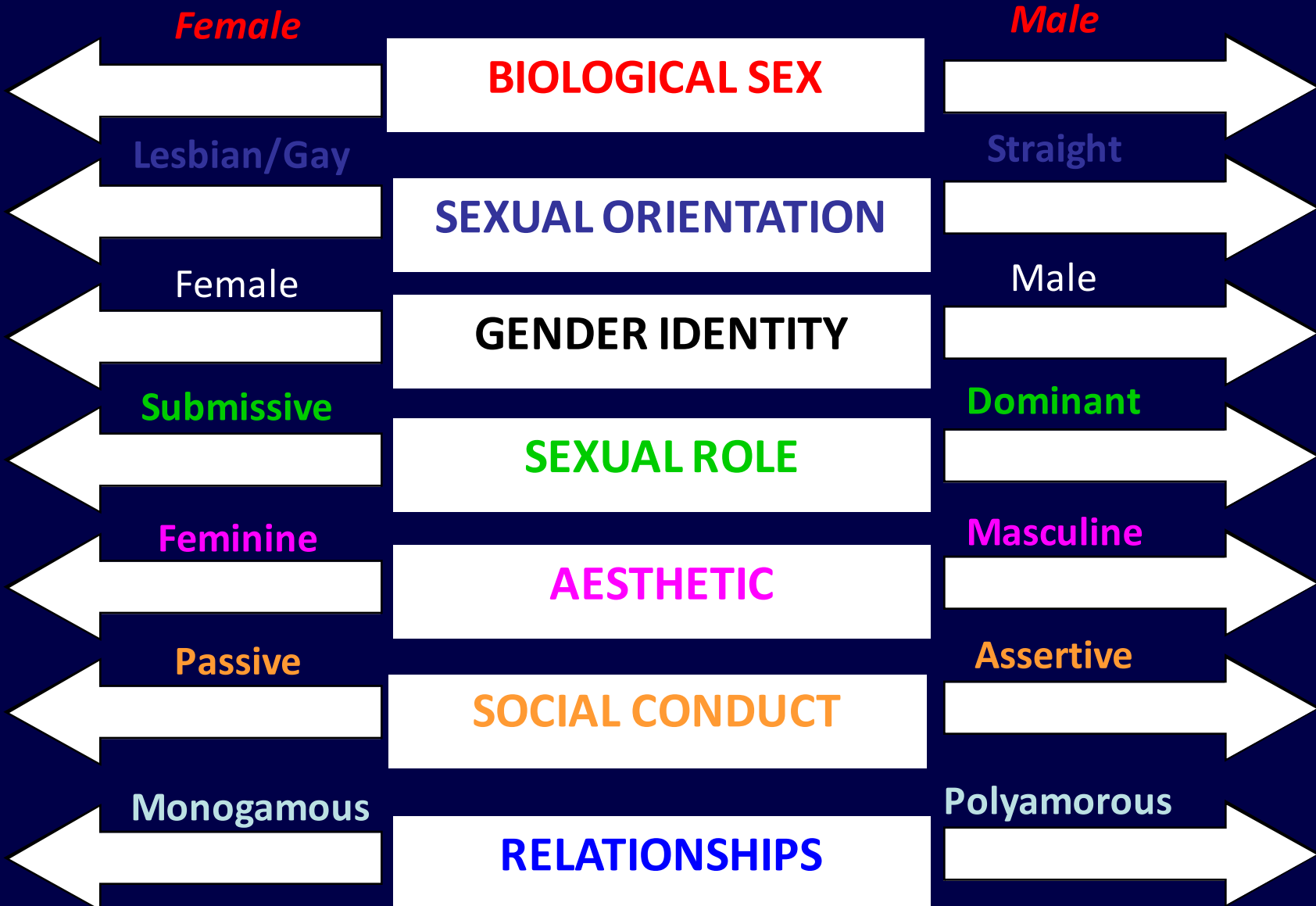
American Medical Student Association
Committee on Gender and Sexuality



Thanks to the UC Davis LGBT People in Medicine for the original material and inspiration.

Presentation Outline

- LGBT Terminology
- Barriers to care for LGBT patients
- LGBT-specific health concerns
- How to make your practice friendly



Sex vs. Gender

- **Sex:** the genetic distinction between male and female.
- **Gender:** the societal construct that is associated with men (masculinity) and women (femininity).

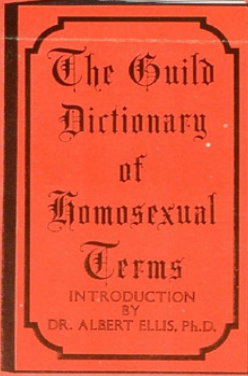


Terminology

- Large variety of words people in the LGBT community use to describe themselves
- Important to respect language choices
- LGBTQIAA: for every letter, there are people for whom the word is an important identity

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Transgender

- People whose gender identity differs from that assigned at birth are transgender.
- **Transsexual:** Identifies with a gender other than the birth gender, often transitions hormonally or surgically
- **Crossdresser:** Comfortable with physical birth gender, but occasionally dresses and takes on the mannerisms of the opposite gender
- **Gender Bender/Genderqueer:** Do not easily fit into binary gender categories, may have a mix of masculine and feminine characteristics
- **Performer:** Dresses as the opposite sex for entertainment or for work, may or may not identify as transgender

Transvestite



- Transvestite: Regardless of the motivation, a person who wears clothes, make-up, etc. which are considered by culture appropriate for the opposite gender, but not one's own.
- Cross dresser vs. Drag King/Queen

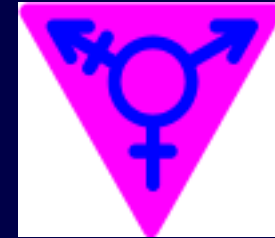
Cross Dressers

Drag Queens/Kings

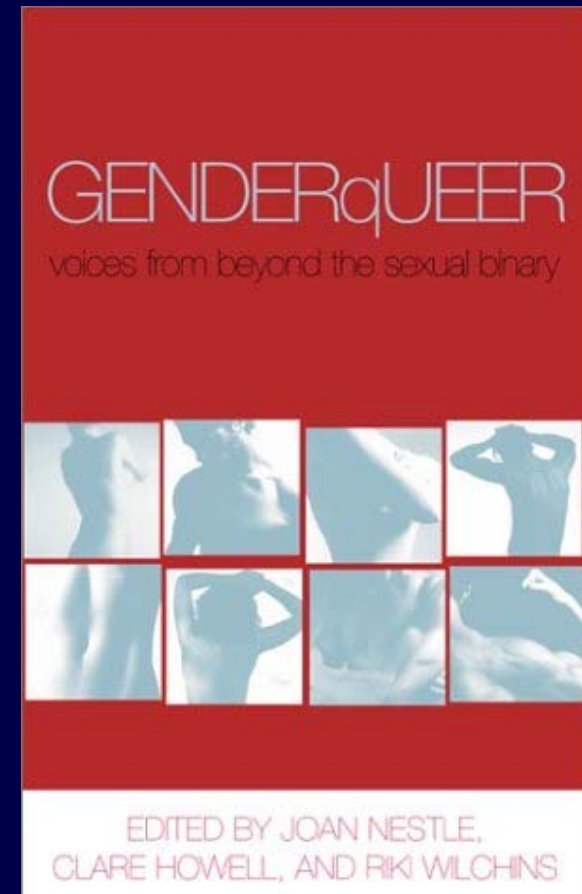


- Cross Dresser: Generally satisfied with his/her gender identity, but finds satisfaction in dressing in the clothing of the opposite gender.
- Many cross dressers/transvestites are straight men who enjoy wearing articles of women's clothing.
- Drag Queen/King: A person who employs dramatic mannerisms, clothes, and makeup of the opposite sex, often for its entertainment or shock value.
- Majority of Drag Queens are gay men. (Example: RuPaul)
- Majority of Drag Kings are lesbian women. (Example: The Drag King Book by Judith Halberstam)

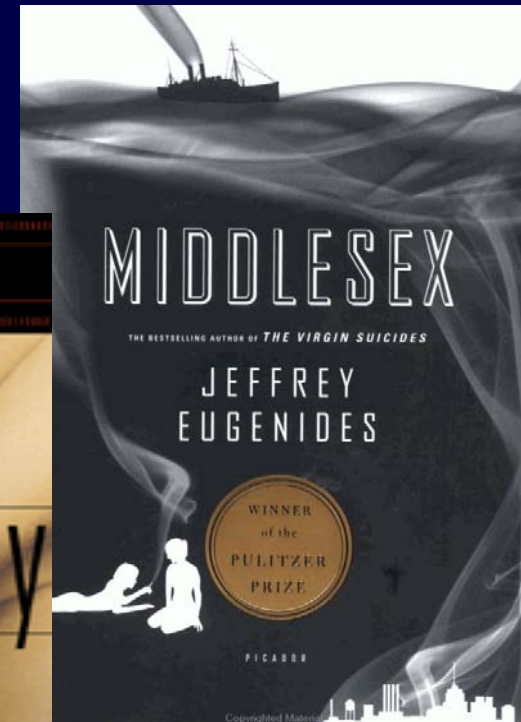
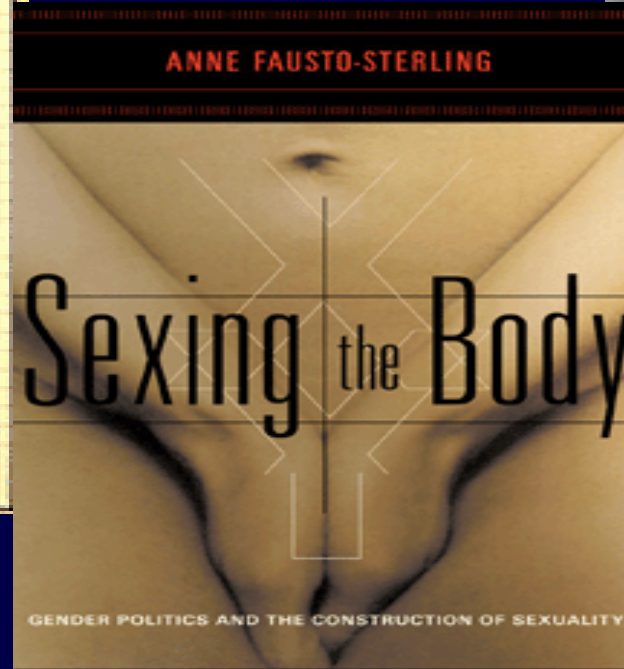
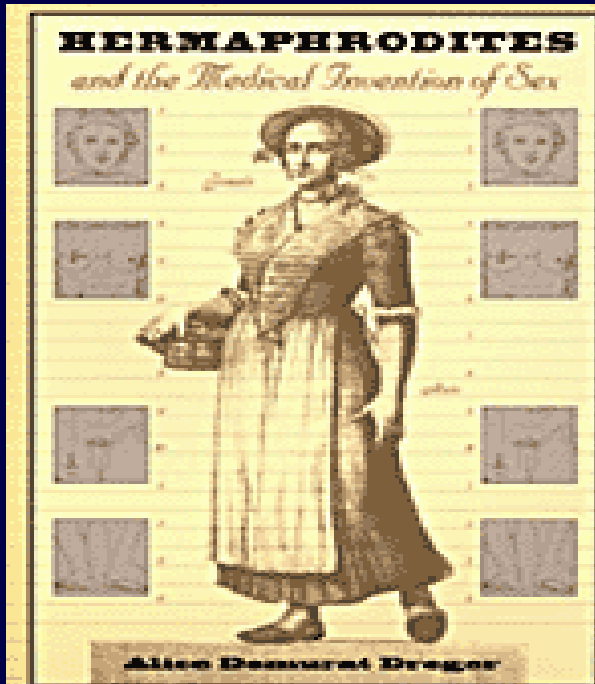
Genderqueer



- An individual whose gender identity exists outside of the gender binary
- Identifies as a gender other than "man" or "woman"
- Identifies as neither, both, or some combination thereof



Intersex



An individual who is born with external/internal genitalia and/or secondary sex characteristics determined as neither exclusively male nor female

Two-Spirit



- A term used by individuals (for example, woman-living-man,) who are part of a American Indian and Canadian First Nations indigenous groups
- Usually implies both a masculine and feminine spirit living in the same body
- Also used by some contemporary LGBTQI Native Americans to describe themselves



LGBTQIAA Vocabulary and your Practice

Why is this relevant?

- Your patient is a gay male who would like to have children.
- A bisexual woman describes being physically and emotionally abused by her girlfriend.
- A male patient has a transgender girlfriend.
- Intersex patient currently involved with a genderqueer individual.

Limited Access to
Medical Care for
LGBT
People

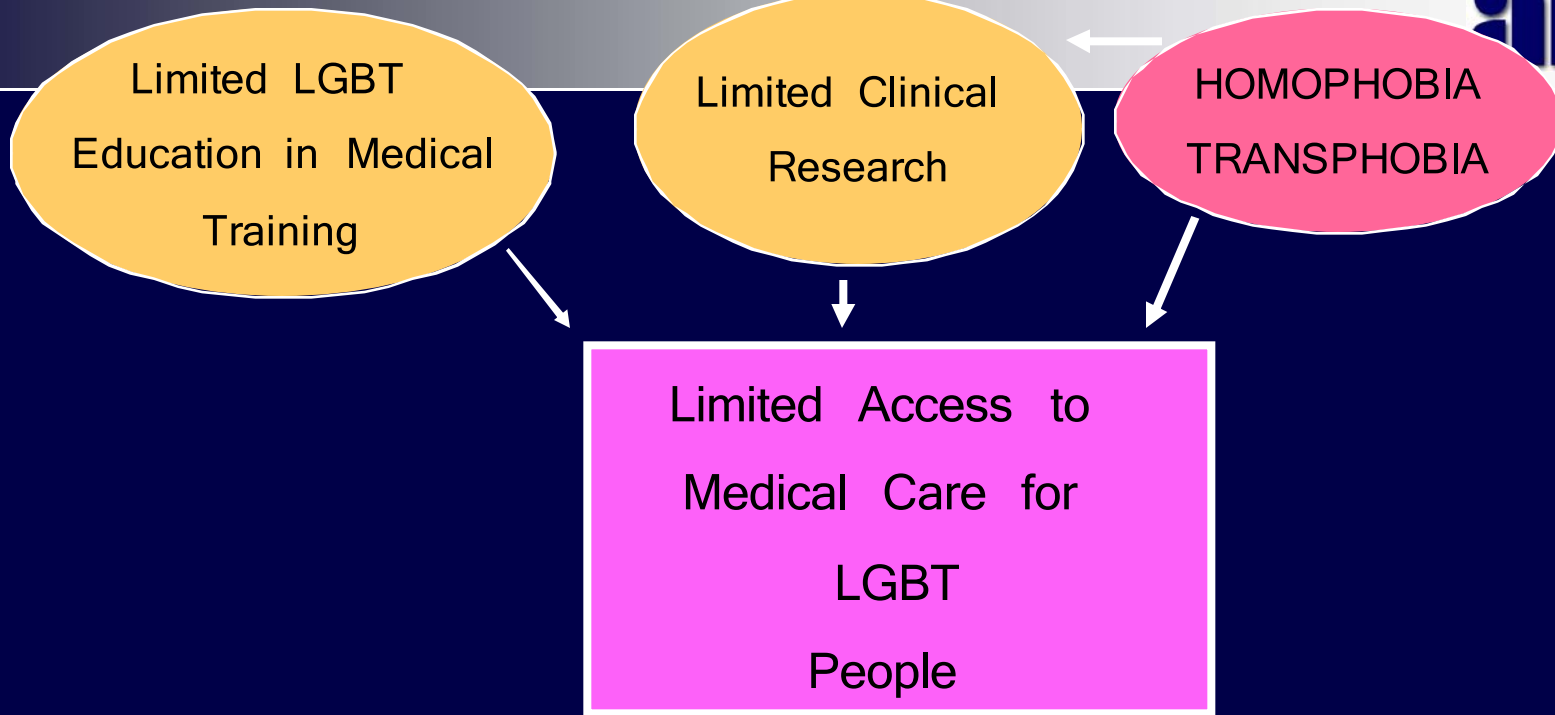


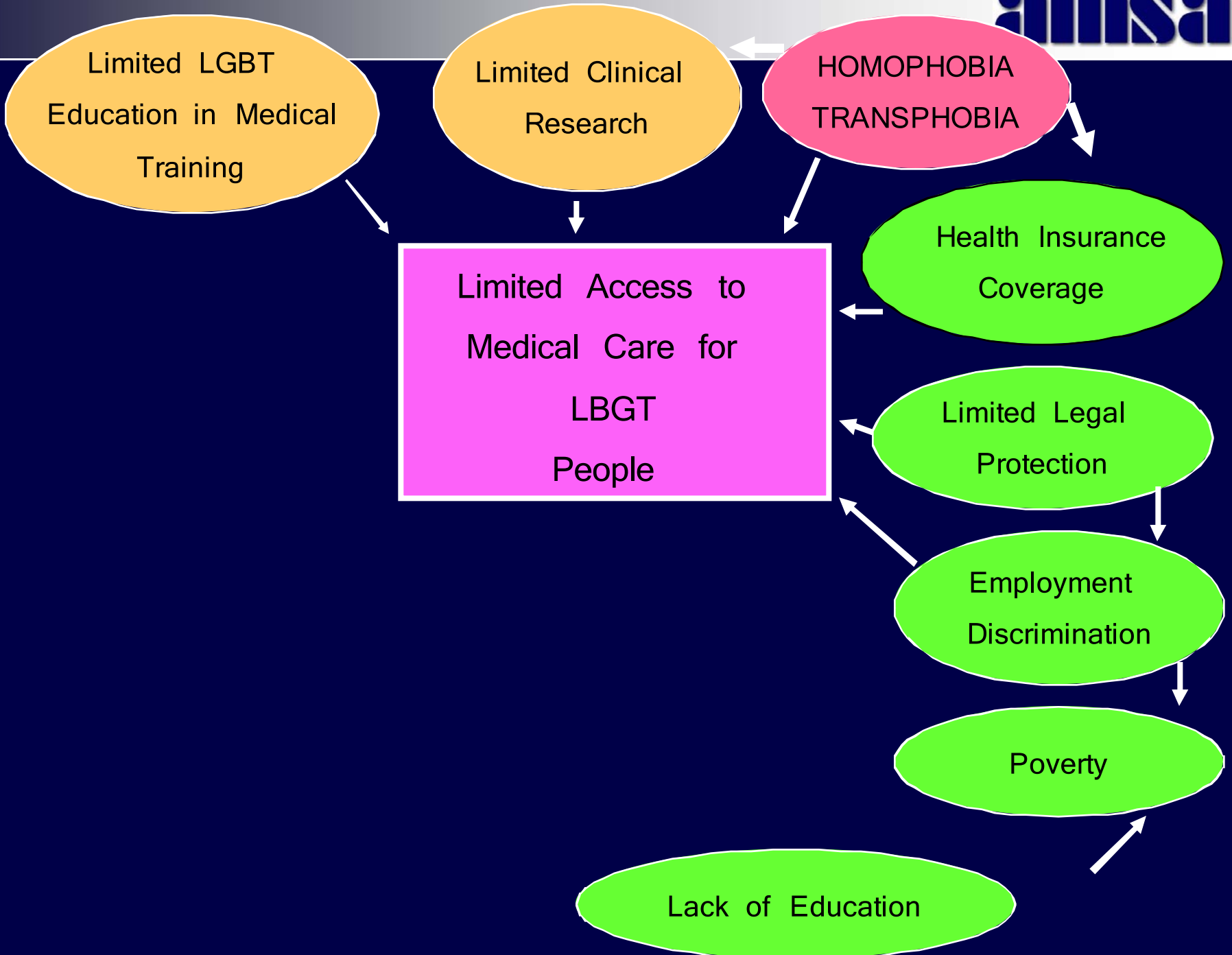
Limited LGBT
Education in Medical
Training

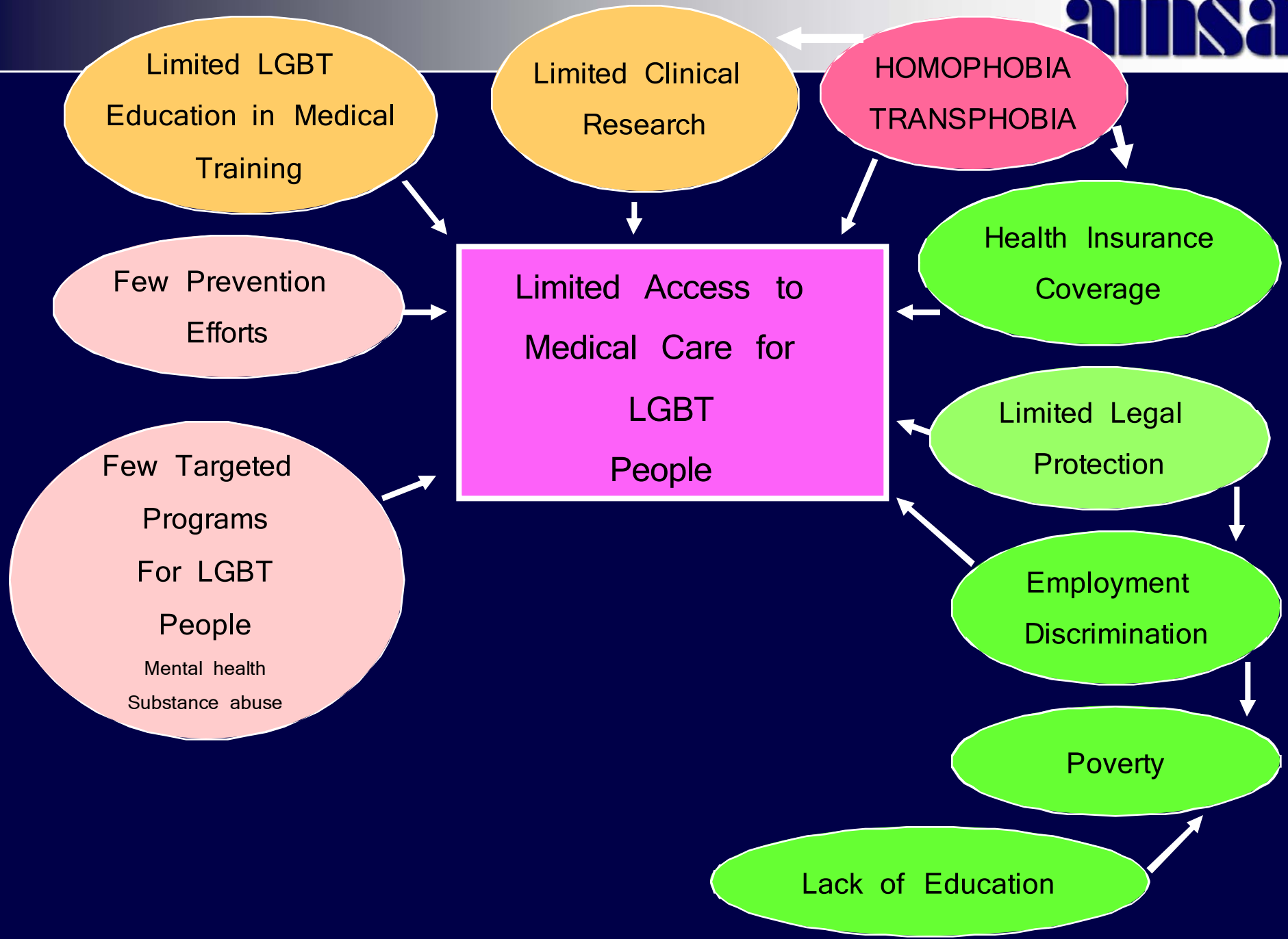
Limited Clinical
Research

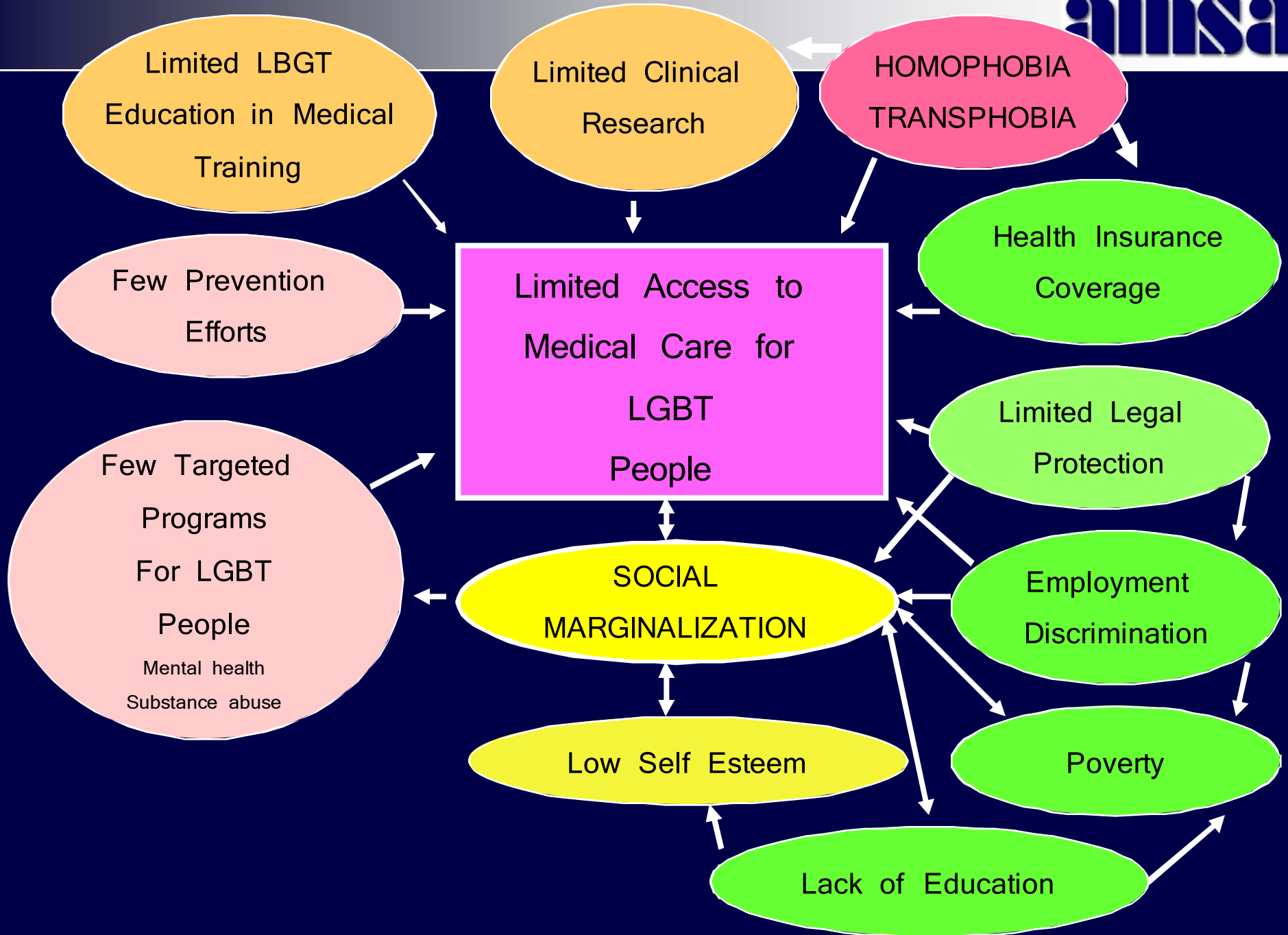
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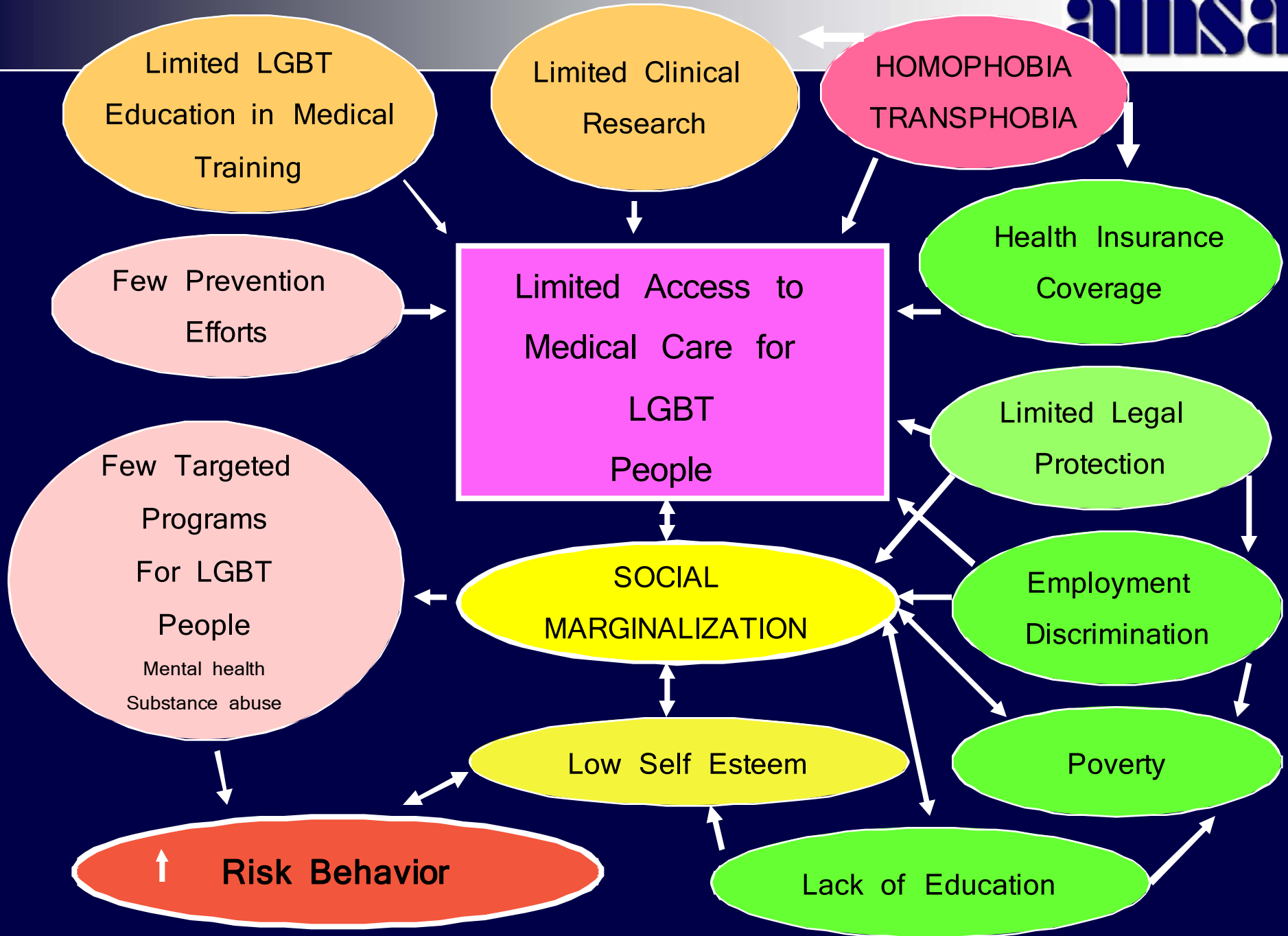












Your patients

- No matter your specialty you *will* have LGBT patients.
- Ophthalmology, General Surgery, Pediatrics, Ob/Gyn, Family Medicine, Pathology, Radiology, and others all see LGBT patients
- What you need to know...

LGBT Patient Health

- Being gay or lesbian is not genetically or biologically hazardous
- Stigmatization and marginalization, regardless of whether an individual identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, are the primary reasons for the health disparities in the LGBTQI community.
- It is sexual behavior, not sexual orientation, determines STD/STI risk
- Other kinds of risk MAY be specific to identity, rather than behavior (think about mental health Issues)

LGBT Health Concerns

- Hate Crimes: Victims of more violent physical assaults
- Substance Abuse
 - LGBT population: 20-30%
 - General population: 10%
- Raising Families: LGBT individuals have unique fertility concerns
- Domestic Violence: Similar rates of DV among same-sex couples but less screening by health care workers





LGBT Youth



- Denied many adolescent “Rites of Passage”
- Fewer role models
- Lack of healthy outlets for sexual exploration
- Missing these experiences can stifle normal development
- Verbal and Physical Violence
 - 1 in 3 LGBT Youth in Chicago had an object thrown at them and 1 in 5 had been kicked, punched, or beaten because of their sexual orientation (2000)
- Suicide and Depression
 - Nearly one third of all adolescent male suicide attempts are linked to a crisis over sexual orientation





Lesbian Health - Cancer



- Increased risk of Breast Cancer
 - Fewer pregnancies
 - Higher prevalence of obesity (a BC risk factor in post-menopausal women)
 - Increased alcohol use
- Increased risk of Cervical Cancer
 - Many lesbians have had or will have male sexual partners
 - HPV can be transmitted by sharing sex toys that have not been properly cleaned
- Increased risk of Ovarian and Endometrial Cancer
 - Decreased number of pregnancies
 - Decreased use of oral contraceptives
- All of these risks are made more substantial because of delayed diagnosis

Lesbian Health – Sexual and Reproductive Health

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

- Lesbian sex can transmit most STIs – it is important to offer screening to lesbian and bisexual women on the same basis as heterosexual women.
- Common vaginal infections can also be spread during woman-to-woman sexual contact



Reproductive Health

- Fertility assistance - it is possible for both women to be biological parents if one woman donates eggs and resulting embryos are implanted in her partner's uterus.
- Seeking a court's validation of both women as legal parents is advisable.



Gay Male Health



Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

- Hepatitis A and B are vaccine-preventable diseases, but physicians and patients often do not discuss due to embarrassment or lack of knowledge.
- Men who have sex with men (MSM) are at higher risk of both HAV (oral-fecal) and HBV (sexual contact)
- MSM youth are particularly vulnerable to STIs due to lack of supportive environments and limited prevention information (ie. “abstinence only”)

Anal cancer – caused by HPV, but HIV+ men at higher risk because:

- Immunocompromised patients have higher incidence of anal cancer
- Decreased CD4+ count associated with increased progression to anal cancer.
- AIDS also increases risk of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and Kaposi's sarcoma
- Gay men who regularly have receptive anal sex are recommended to get anal pap smears

HIV and AIDS



- Although no longer the primary population affected by HIV, HIV/AIDS continues to have a profound effect both physically and psychologically on this community.
- **FDA bans gay men from participating in blood drives and sperm banks**
- Drug use is being blamed for more risky sexual behavior in the gay community and an increase in HIV infection rates.
- Many of those infected with HIV are unaware
- CDC reports over 50% of all new MSM HIV infections are in youth ages 14-24.



Gay Male Health



Crystal methamphetamine

- a.k.a. Tina, Crissy, crystal, bump, speed, tweak
- Crystal Meth use significantly increases risk of HIV transmission

Eating Disorders

- Eating disorders are not uncommon in the gay male culture
- Social pressure to conform to physical ideals is pervasive

“On the down-low”

- Due to social pressure, some men lead a double life by having a girlfriend/wife and a male lover.

Transgender Health - Basics



MTF (Male to Female) Therapy

- Breast Implantation
- Hormone Therapy
- Genital Surgery
- Reconstructive Surgery
- do not have their prostate removed and still are at risk of prostate cancer



FTM (Female to Male) Therapy

- Breast Reduction
- Hormone Therapy
- Genital Surgery
- Reconstructive Surgery
- still at risk of breast cancer in spite of breast reduction surgery
- risk of cervical and ovarian cancer

<http://tsresource.info/ouster.htm>

Transgender Health - Disparities

Physical and sexual violence

- High rates of violence, large numbers of murders
- Large percentage (14% in one survey) report being victims of sexual assault

HIV/AIDS: MTF sex workers at particularly high risk for HIV

Substance abuse: Lack of culturally appropriate treatment programs

Suicidal ideation and attempt

- Ideation rates of up to 64%, mainly due to gender identity issues
- High rates of suicide attempt

Lack of health insurance/health insurance coverage

Transgender Health - Controversy

- Identifying as transgender is not a mental illness
- Cannot be objectively proven or confirmed
- Requires a close patient/physician relationship because transitioning transgender individuals depend on the medical system for diagnosis and therapy (hormones, surgery, psychotherapy)
- World Professional Association for Transgender Health (formerly HBGDA) publishes Standards of Care
- “Gender Identity Disorder” remains in the DSM-IV-TR
 - Homosexuality was removed in 1987
 - Used to justify medical treatment of transgender individuals and gain insurance coverage
 - Elimination of diagnosis may result in loss of insurance coverage for medical treatment

Intersex health

- Although still mislabeled by society as “hermaphrodites” and by the medical community as having “ambiguous genitalia,” many of these individuals prefer to be called “intersexed” – they lie on a spectrum between 2 sexes.
- Current debate about terminology – “disorders of sex development”
- National advocacy organizations state that no sex assignment surgery be performed on the infant, but rather, wait until the individual is old enough to participate in the decision making.

How health care providers can change their practices

- Educate yourself – visit the AMSA website and download free white coat cards about LGBT health and check out the Resources slide at the end of the presentation
- Safe Space: present visual cues - posters, stickers, magazines, pamphlets
- Revise intake client forms with more options for gender using neutral terms like “partner/spouse” and “parent one/parent two” on forms
- Make sure you and your staff know what pronouns to use when referring to a transgender patient or same sex partner, even when the patient is not present
- Don’t assume that identity defines behavior or vice versa

Increasing LGBT sensitivity

- Include chosen name and legal name as well as a blank space for gender on intake paperwork
- Establish an effective administrative policy for addressing discriminatory comments or behavior within your office or organization
- Remember to keep the focus on care rather than indulging your personal curiosities
- Keep in mind that a LGBTQI patient is not always a training opportunity for other health care providers. Ask permission before bringing in a student, resident or colleague.

Increasing LGBT sensitivity

- It is inappropriate to ask the genital status of a transgender patient if it is unrelated to their care.
- Never disclose a person's transgender or sexual orientation status to anyone who does not explicitly need the information for care.
- Humanism in medicine: be compassionate, don't judge. Work for the best interest of your patients.

Things NOT to say

- “I have to ask – do you have sex with men, women, or both?”
- “You are so different from other gay people.”
- “You’re not at risk for HIV. . .” (women patients)
- “It must be easier to find someone to date” (bisexual patient)
- “Are you the man or the woman in the relationship?”

Things NOT to say

- “You’ve never had sex with men (or women), right?”
- “What is the difference between the schizophrenic who thinks he is Jesus and a man who thinks he is a woman?”
- “That’s so gay!”

Things NOT to assume

- All gay men have anal sex and are promiscuous
- Lesbians will not have children.
- Lesbians don't need pap smears.
- All transgender individuals want to have surgery.
- Bisexual individuals are promiscuous and "can't decide"

Resources

- American Medical Student Association's LGBT Health Action Committee (www.amsa.org/gender)
- GLMA – Gay & Lesbian Medical Association (www.glma.org)
- Gay Health (www.gayhealth.com)
- Lambda Legal (www.lambdalegal.org)
- GLBT health Access Project (www.glbthealth.org)
- Bisexual Health (www.biresource.org/health/)
- Transgender Care (www.transgencare.com/default.asp)
- Intersex Society of North America (www.isna.org)
- PFLAG – Parents, Family & Friends of Lesbians and Gays (www.pflag.org)
- HRC - Human Rights Campaign (www.hrc.org)
- GLAAD - Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (www.glaad.org)
- NGLTF - National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (www.nglftf.org)



Thank you!
Any questions?

