Inclusion, Excellence and Dental Education

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Health Care Disparities Among Diverse Groups
The Transgender Patient
“I believe that the trans community is vast and varied, with all manner of perspectives represented. The main thing they all share is the struggle to be authentic, to be known, to be heard and received. It is truly a civil rights struggle, and in the larger frame, a paradigm change for the way we think about gender.”

Dr. Maureen Osborne
Transgender Population

- Historically Stigmatized
- 0.3 - 0.5% of Population
- 41% Suicide Rate
Barriers to Health Care

- Personal Humiliation
- Misunderstood / Dismissed
- Lack of Trained Medical Personnel
- Lack of Adequate Health Insurance
Spectrum of “Trans” Patients

- **Enormous Variations**
  - Non Binary
  - Gender Non Conforming

- **New Definitions**
  - Gender Fluid
  - Ze / Hir
  - Gender Queer
  - They / Them
Welcoming Environment

- Create office forms that reflect diverse gender identities. Review protocol with staff.

- Offer unisex or gender neutral rest room facilities.

- Ask patients how they want to be addressed. This is both for in person and on medical forms. Do not assume anything!!!
Welcoming Environment

- Respectfully review the medical history and find out if the patient is taking hormones.

- Be dignified with the patient’s partner, spouse, or family member. Don’t pepper these people with “Trans” questions.
Understand the Patient
Testosterone Therapy Changes (Permanent)

- Voice becomes deeper
- Increased growth & thickening of body hair
- Growth of facial hair; male pattern baldness
- Increase in size of clitoris / phallus
Testosterone Therapy Changes (Non Permanent)

- Menstrual periods stop
- Increased muscle mass & strength
- Skin changes / acne / red facial flushing
- Increased sex drive
Estrogen Therapy Changes

- Breast growth & development (permanent)
- Loss of muscle; decreased strength
- Skin becomes softer; less body hair
- Emotional changes
Surgical Options
Surgical Procedures F-M

- Double Mastectomy “Top Surgery” (KeyHole)
- Genital Options “Metoidioplasty” Phalloplasty
- Cosmetic Changes
Surgical Procedures M-F

- Breast Augmentation
- Genital Reconstruction
- FFS Surgery
- Cosmetic Options
Dental Considerations
The actual dental treatment of Transgender patients is fairly straightforward. However, what separates you as a professional is an understanding (and an acceptance) of the situation.
Status of Transgender Healthcare
Challenges

- Lack of Educated Providers
- Surgical Dilemma
- Cost
The Issues

- Problems at Both Extremes; over 55y/o, less than 18 y/o
- Patient Selection / Diagnosis is Poor
- Lack of Legitimacy by Medical Schools
The Good News

- More Educated Providers
- Increased Resident Interest
- Greater Awareness in Medical and Dental Community
The Solution

- Education, Education, Education
- Better Role Models in Media
- Establishing Transgender Health Care as a Legitimate Part of the Medical School Curriculum
Question 1

- What is causing this explosion in transgender patients?
- What effect does the internet and social media have on this?
- When is young too young to begin treatment?
Question 2

- What would you do if your spouse decided to transition?
- Could you offer support?
Question 3

- With the changing political climate, how will this effect “transitions?”
- Will more mature individuals decide to not transition?