

A method to improve midwives’ knowledge and attitudes on LGBTQ+health-rights; ATHENA study

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Objective: LGBTQ+ individuals face worse health outcomes and significant disparities in healthcare, particularly in sexual and reproductive care¹. As awareness of reproductive equality grows, so does the demand for inclusive midwifery care. The ‘*ATHENA study*’ seeks to promote inclusive societies by addressing knowledge gaps among healthcare professionals in Greece. This project is the first to assess the impact of a structured educational intervention on Greek midwives' understanding and attitudes toward LGBTQ+ health rights.

Design: Our study involves an initial assessment of midwives' knowledge, skills and attitudes, followed by the educational intervention that comprised of a 3-hour small-group training session with a lecture, case-based discussions, and group conversation on gender equality, reproductive rights, and perinatal care for LGBTQ+ individuals. A final assessment was carried out at the workshop's completion to evaluate changes in knowledge and skills.

Method: From July to November 2024, participation invitations were extended to midwives via the nine professional bodies of Greek midwives and the study’s official webpage <https://www.athenastudy.gr/>. n=87 volunteer midwives attended training sessions held across three venues in November & December 2024. Post-intervention, 70 participants completed the follow-up surveys (response rate= 80.5%).

We utilized a validated version of Rowe’s (2017) questionnaire², adapted for the Greek context, alongside an ad hoc knowledge assessment tool specifically developed to evaluate participants' understanding of the health needs of LGBTQ+ individuals in Greece.

	Pre		Post		Change		P+
	Mean (SD)	Median (IQR)	Mean (SD)	Median (IQR)	Mean (SD)	Median (IQR)	
Sexual and Gender Minority Affirmative Practice Scale	67.01 (7.5)	69 (60 – 74)	69.07 (6.83)	73 (60 – 75)	2.06 (6.37)	0.5 (0 – 3)	0.009
Knowledge score	10.61 (1.64)	11 (10 – 12)	11.13 (1.27)	11.5 (11 – 12)	0.51 (1.35)	0 (0 – 1)	0.003
Knowledge score of Greek reality for LGBTQI+ people	46.55 (19.99)	50 (33.33 – 58.33)	65.36 (12.26)	66.67 (58.33 – 75)	18.81 (21.03)	16.67 (8.33 – 33.33)	<0.001

Table 2. Midwives’ pre- and post-intervention GSMAPS and knowledge scores

Table 1. Participants’ characteristics

n=70		n	%
Gender	Males	2	2.9
	Females	68	97.1
Sexual orientation	Heterosexual	61	87.1
	Homosexual	3	4.3
	Bisexual	6	8.6
Marital status	Married	44	62.9
	Partnered	14	20.0
	Single	10	14.3
	Divorced	2	2.9
Had acquaintance, peers, colleagues, friends, or family who are LGBT	No	17	24.3
	Yes	53	75.7
Primary care providers providing care to LGBT patient subgroups If yes, which groups:		48	68,6
	Lesbians	41	58.6
	Gay men	7	10.0
	Bisexual	16	22.9
	Transgender	6	8.6
		40	57,1
Additional degree of education (MSc, PhD, another Bachelor)		9	12.9
	Never	25	35.7
	1 time/ 6 months	14	20.0
	1 time/ month	2	2.9
	1 time/ week	20	28.6
	Do not know		
Frequency of coming into contact with LGBTI+ people/patients in workplace during last year			