

# Fact File

## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Health & Wellbeing

### Mental Health



**35%** of LGB people have had suicidal thoughts in their lifetime, compared to **13%** of heterosexuals.

**17%** of LGB people have made suicide plans, compared to **4%** of heterosexuals.

**13%** of LGB people have attempted suicide, compared to **3%** of heterosexuals.

**18%** of LGB people have a high to very high level of psychological distress, compared to **9%** of heterosexuals.

**36%** of LGB people had an anxiety disorder in the past 12 months, compared to **14%** of heterosexuals.

**19%** of LGB people had an affective disorder in the past 12 months, compared to **6%** of heterosexuals.

**41%** of LGB people had any mental disorder in the past 12 months, compared to **20%** of heterosexuals.

Source: Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing 2007, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

### Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs



**33%** of LGB people are smokers, compared to **18%** of heterosexuals.

**29%** of LGB people drink at risky levels over their lifetime, compared to **20%** of heterosexuals.

**25%** of LGB people drink at risky levels in a single session of drinking, compared to **16%** of heterosexuals.

**34%** of LGB people used illicit drugs recently, compared to **14%** of heterosexuals.

Source: National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2010, Australian Institute of Health & Welfare

### Seniors

**12%** of LGB people (all ages) have no family members they can rely on, compared to **6%** of heterosexuals.

Source: Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing 2007, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The most common concerns about ageing as an LGBT person are 'not having LGBT specific accommodation options' (**61%**), 'being alone in old age' (**58%**) and 'ability to maintain contact with the LGBT community' (**42%**).

**86%** of LGBT people think there is inadequate coverage of older LGBT people in mainstream ageing campaigns/media and **78%** in the LGBT media.



**58%** of LGBT people expect to receive emotional support in older age from the LGBT community, and **54%** from their partner.

**52%** of LGBT people expect to get practical support in older age from their partner and **35%** from community services or LGBT friends.

**66%** of LGBT people have no or limited knowledge of aged care services and **65%** were concerned their sexuality or gender identity would negatively affect the quality of aged care services.

### Healthy Lifestyles



**51%** of LGB people had a chronic condition in the past 12 months, compared to **47%** of heterosexuals.

**70%** of LGB people have a low or sedentary level of exercise.

**40%** of LGB people are overweight or obese.

**12%** of LGB people have ever been homeless, compared to **3%** of heterosexuals.

Source: Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing 2007, Australian Bureau of Statistics.



**64%** of LGBT people want LGBT community organisations to provide them with 'information & referrals', **59%** wanted 'social groups & events' and **55%** wanted 'care coordination'.

Source: Healthy Communities (2008) 'The Young, The Ageing and the Restless: Understanding the experiences and expectations of ageing and caring in the Qld LGBT community'. Brisbane, Queensland Association for Healthy Communities.

### Community Safety

**82%** of LGBTIQ people have experienced homophobic/transphobic violence or harassment in their lifetime.

**53%** of LGBTIQ people have experienced homophobic/transphobic violence or harassment in the past 2 years, including:

**43%** verbal abuse  
**18%** threats of physical violence  
**9%** physical attack  
**3%** sexual assault

**75%** of LGBTIQ people did not report or seek professional help the last time they were harassed, abused or were the victim of violence, because:

**16%** did not believe their report would be treated fairly  
**12%** had previous negative experiences of reporting  
**10%** did not know where to go

for help  
**9%** feared further violence or discrimination  
**8%** feared being outed

**74%** of LGBTIQ people occasionally or usually concealed their sexual orientation or gender identity in public for fear of violence or harassment.

Source: Berman, A and Robinson, S (2010) 'Speaking Out: Stopping Homophobic and Transphobic Abuse in Queensland'. Brisbane, Australian Academic Press.



### Transgender People

Most mainstream research does not ask the gender identity of respondents, so direct comparisons can't be made. However most targeted research shows the need among transgender people is higher than that for LGB people and heterosexuals.

**64%** of transgender people rated their health as good or very good, compared to **73%** of the general community.

**36%** of transgender people have a current major depressive episode, compared to **7%** of the general population.

**60%** of transgender people have not had surgery that was gender related. This decreases to **42%** of those over 60 years.

**51%** of transgender people have attempted to amend public documentation to reflect their current gender identity. This increases to **89%** among those who have had any surgery.

**87%** of transgender people had experienced stigma or discrimination on the basis of their gender identity.

Source: Couch, M., Pitts, M. Et al (2007) "tranZnation: A report on the health and wellbeing of transgender people in Australia and New Zealand.



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