



**Recognising the impact of
hate crime and domestic
violence on lesbian, gay
and bisexual (LGB) people
and how this impacts on
health**



Homophobia

- Hostility or prejudice based on a person's lesbian, gay or bisexual identity (whether actual or perceived)
- Hostility or prejudice towards someone who is attracted to someone of the same sex, even if they do not call themselves LGB
- Homophobia can and does lead to hate incidents and hate crimes
- Homophobia may take the form of discrimination, bullying, harassment and violent hate crime against LGB people or those who are thought to be LGB



Homophobia

Can include:

- Verbal abuse
- Harassment
- Graffiti or damage to property
- Threatening behaviour
- Offensive telephone calls or texts
- Hate mail or e-mail
- Physical assault
- Bullying

Can take place anywhere:

- At home
- At work
- In the street
- At school or college
- In the health and social care sectors



Homophobia

- The police and criminal justice system have made significant steps to tackle hate crime, including homophobic hate crime
- Extensive legislative provisions have been introduced in the workplace to protect people from homophobic discrimination



Homophobia in the UK

- In 2008, a YouGov survey commissioned by Stonewall found that **20%** of lesbian and gay people in Britain have been a victim of one or more homophobic hate crimes or incidents in the previous 3 years
- **75%** did not report them to the police. Only **6%** per cent reported them to third parties. **70%** did not report hate crimes or incidents to anyone
- Incidents ranged from regular insults on the street to serious physical and sexual assaults

Dick, S., *Homophobic Hate Crime: The Gay British Crime Survey 2008*, Stonewall, 2008



Homophobia in the UK

- **Over 16%** of LGB people experiencing homophobic hate incidents in the previous 3 years experienced a physical assault
- **8%** of all black and minority ethnic LGB people have experienced physical assault as part of a homophobic hate incident, compared to **4%** of all lesbian and gay people
- **Over 12%** of LGB people experiencing homophobic hate incidents have experienced unwanted sexual contact as part of the incident
- Overall, **60%** of LGB people have been the victim of any crime or incident in the previous 3 years



Homophobia in the health & social care sector

- 50%** of gay and bisexual men do not disclose their sexuality to their GP and 39% have no intention of doing so. Anxiety that:
- GPs will not hold the information confidentially
 - the quality of service provision would decline because the GP would be homophobic

Dodds, C., Keogh, P., Hickson, F., *It makes me sick, Heterosexism, homophobia and the health of Gay men and Bisexual men*, Sigma Research, 2005



Homophobia in the health & social care sector

- **50%** of lesbian and bisexual women had negative experiences in the health sector in the previous year
- **50%** of lesbian and bisexual women are not out to their GP
- **10%** of lesbian and bisexual women said that a healthcare worker ignored them when they did come out
- **Only 30%** of lesbian and bisexual women said that healthcare workers did not make inappropriate comments when they came out

Hunt, R., Fish, J., *Prescription for Change, Lesbian and bisexual women's health check 2008*, Stonewall, 2008



Homophobia in the health & social care sector

A survey of gay and lesbian doctors and dentists found:

- **76%** thought it was important to be able to be open about their sexual orientation in the work place
- **only 39%** were open about their sexual orientation to close work colleagues
- **only 1%** had told their superiors about their sexual orientation
- **29%** of respondents had experienced homophobia at work
- **13%** felt that their sexual orientation had impaired their career

GLADD Membership survey 2004, Gay and Lesbian Association of Doctors and Dentists, 2004



Domestic violence & abuse



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“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional”

Cross-governmental definition of domestic violence, Home Office, 2012, to be implemented March 2013



Domestic violence & abuse



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Can and does occur in any relationship, including same sex relationships

Often similar to abuse experienced in heterosexual relationships, though perceived to be more hidden, less recognised and less frequently talked about

Limited evidence is available about the unique forms of domestic abuse experienced by LGB people but may include:

- an abuser using the fact that their victim is gay or bisexual e.g. threatening to 'out' them
- abuse from family members because of perceived or actual LGB sexual orientation
- a fear of reporting abuse resulting from a belief that agencies are homophobic



Domestic violence & abuse experienced by LGB people



- Some evidence that sexual violence within same sex relationships is under-reported, especially by men
- Sexuality as a tool of control used especially by women – abusive partner limits access to friendship/support networks
- ‘Most survivors of same sex domestic abuse do not report to public agencies’
 - see their experience as their own problem
 - do not believe they will receive a sympathetic response

Donovan, C., Hester, M., Holmes, J., & McCarry, M., *Comparing Domestic Abuse in Same Sex and Heterosexual Relationships*, Economic and Social Research Council, 2006



Domestic violence & abuse experienced by LGB people



- **30%** of LGBT people experience abuse from a family member or someone close to them in their lifetimes
- **39%** of those who have experienced domestic violence and abuse do not know where to go for help around sex or relationships

Browne, K., *Domestic Violence & Abuse, Additional Findings Report, Count Me in Too, LGBT Lives in Brighton & Hove*, University of Brighton & Spectrum



Domestic abuse experienced by LGB people

- **25%** of all lesbian and bisexual women have experienced domestic violence in a relationship. Two thirds of those say the perpetrator was a woman, a third a man
- Over **50%** of those who have experienced domestic abuse from a female partner had experienced some form of physical violence.
- **80%** of lesbian and bisexual women who have experienced domestic violence have never reported incidents to the police. Of those that did report, only half were happy with how the police had dealt with the situation'

Hunt, R., & Fish, J., *Prescription for Change, Lesbian and bisexual women's health check, 2008*, Stonewall, 2008



Domestic abuse experienced by LGB people

- **50%** of gay and bisexual men have experienced at least one incident of domestic abuse from a family member or partner since the age of 16 compared to 17% of men in general
- **80%** of gay and bisexual men who have experienced domestic abuse have never reported incidents to the police. Of those who did report, **more than 50%** were not happy with how the police dealt with the situation

Guasp, A., *Gay and Bisexual Men's Health Survey*, Stonewall, Sigma Research, 2011.



So what is the likely impact of hate crime & domestic violence on the health of lesbian, gay and bisexual people?



‘Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity’

Definition of ‘health’ outlined in the constitution of the World Health Organisation. The definition has not been amended since 1948.



Impact of hate crime on the health of LGB people

- Victims of hate crimes are at greater risk of psychological distress than those who experience violent crime not motivated by hate ^[1]
- Psychological distress can include depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder ^[2]
- Hate crimes threaten the group the victim belongs to as well as the particular individual ^[3]
- Members of a community targeted because of a central identity such as sexual orientation may feel less safe after a fellow group member is targeted ^[4]
- Witnessing discrimination against someone who is from the same group as oneself can lead to depressed emotion and lower self-esteem ^[5]



Impact of hate crime on the health of LGB people



1. Herek, G. M., Gillis, J. R., & Cogan, J. C. (1999). 'Psychological sequelae of hate crime victimization among lesbian, gay, and bisexual adults.' *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 67, 945-951; and Sullaway, M. (2004). 'Psychological perspectives on hate crime laws.' *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 10(3), 250-292
2. Bisson, J. I., & Shepherd, J. P. (1995). 'Psychological reactions of victims of violent crimes.' *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 167, 718-720; and Weaver, T. L., & Clum, G. A. (1995). 'Psychological distress associated with interpersonal violence: A meta-analysis.' *Clinical Psychological Review*, 15, 115-140.
3. Sullaway, M. (2004)
4. Boeckmann, R. J., & Turpin-Petrosino, C. (2002). 'Understanding the harm of hate crime.' *Journal of Social Issues*, 58(2), 207-226.
<http://www.spssi.org/summer2002.htm>.
5. McCoy, S. K., & Major, B. (2003). 'Group identification moderates emotional responses to perceived prejudice.' *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29(8), 1005-1017.



Impact of hate crime on the health of LGB people

Impact can be be **physical, mental and social:**

‘My partner was attacked...receiving a cut to the top of his head and a broken wrist. He told the nurse at the hospital he was drunk and fell over the night before. He was in truth struck twice with a cricket bat, once from behind on his head and the second hit his arm. He was not drunk! We had just left a gay club, he was on call so could not drink. The attacker called him a fag and queer. He was chased off by a taxi driver. My partner will not report it and most of us don’t!’

Dick, S., *Homophobic Hate Crime: The Gay British Crime Survey 2008*, Stonewall, 2008



Impact of hate crime on the health of LGB people



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‘A third of lesbian and gay people alter their behaviour so they are not perceived as being gay specifically to prevent being a victim of crime’

Includes:

- not showing affection for their partners in public
- dressing differently
- avoiding areas where they could be identified as lesbian or gay

Dick, S., *Homophobic Hate Crime: The Gay British Crime Survey 2008*, Stonewall, 2008



Impact of hate crime on the health of LGB people

- ‘I keep a low profile so am less likely to experience these hate crimes, but this is at great personal expense’ – Joanna, 57, London
- ‘I think most attacks can be avoided by a change in behaviour, however this is not the solution as people in same sex relationships should be able to act and behave in public as heterosexuals do’ – Rosalyn, 39, South East
- I am the one who feels ashamed because the inference is that they abused me in this way because of my body language or even the way in which I looked at them prior to the verbal abuse’ – Patrick, 46, South West

Dick, S., *Homophobic Hate Crime: The Gay British Crime Survey 2008*, Stonewall, 2008



Impact of domestic violence on the health of LGB people

LGB survivors of domestic violence and abuse are much more likely to:

- have poor relationships with their families of origin
- be at risk of suicide
- experience difficulties with their mental health

LGB people who have experienced domestic violence and abuse are:

- more likely to be disengaged from services
- more reluctant to use services
- more likely to think that their sexual orientation is relevant to their experience of using services

Browne, K., *Domestic Violence & Abuse, Additional Findings Report, Count Me in Too, LGBT Lives in Brighton & Hove*, University of Brighton & Spectrum



Impact of social inequality on the health of LGB people



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‘Health inequalities result from social inequalities. Action on health inequalities requires action across all the social determinants of health’

In *Fair Society, Healthy Lives*, the Marmot Review found that ‘social inequalities exist across a wide range of domains: age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, language, physical and mental health and sexual orientation...These inequalities interact in complex ways with socio-economic position in shaping people’s health status’

Healthy Lives, Healthy People, Impact Assessments, Department of Health, November 2010



In summary

- Homophobia and domestic violence are health issues, relevant to both service provision and employment: patients, service users and colleagues may be affected
- Health inequality and social inequality are linked
- The impact of hate crime and domestic violence on the health of LGB people is often unseen and unreported
- LGB people also experience homophobia in the health & social care sectors, as patients, service users and colleagues



What is the role of health and social care professionals?

- To understand the needs of LGB patients, service users & staff
- To assess and implement policies, practices & procedures for LGB patients, service users & staff
- To deliver inclusive services to LGB people



A legal obligation that makes good business sense



Inclusive services and best practice in the workplace result in:

- Improved health outcomes for LGB people
- Increased productivity
- Financial risk mitigation. £120,000 is the highest employment tribunal settlement for a case on the grounds of sexual orientation discrimination.



A legal obligation that makes good business sense



‘Action taken to reduce health inequalities will benefit society in many ways. It will have economic benefits in reducing losses from illness associated with health inequalities. These currently account for productivity losses, reduced tax revenue, higher welfare payments and increased treatment costs’

Fair Society, Healthy Lives, The Marmot Review, 2010



Resources & references



Understanding the health needs of lesbian, gay and bisexual people, Stonewall Healthy Lives Training Module

Legislative & procedural context for delivering & monitoring work that responds to LGB health needs, Stonewall Healthy Lives Training Module



Resources & references



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Blow the Whistle on Gay Hate, Stonewall, 2010

Dick, S., *Homophobic Hate Crime: The Gay British Crime Survey 2008*, Stonewall, 2008

Domestic Violence, A resource for gay & bisexual men, Barking & Dagenham PCT, 2008

Domestic Violence, A resource for lesbian & bisexual women, Barking & Dagenham PCT, 2008

Donovan, C., Hester, M., Holmes, J., & McCarry, M., *Comparing Domestic Abuse in Same Sex and Heterosexual Relationships*, Economic and Social Research Council, 2006

Hunt, R., Cowan, K., *Harassment and sexual orientation in the health sector*, Stonewall, 2006



Resources & references



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Browne, K., *Domestic Violence & Abuse, Additional Findings Report, Count Me in Too, LGBT Lives in Brighton & Hove*, University of Brighton & Spectrum

Hunt, R., & Fish, J., *Prescription for Change, Lesbian and bisexual women's health check, 2008*, Stonewall, 2008

Sexual Orientation: A practical guide for the NHS, Department of Health, 2009

Trans: A practical guide for the NHS, Department of Health, 2008

An introduction to working with Transgender people, Department of Health, 2007



Resources & references



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Victim Support – 0845 30 30 900 – Mon-Fri 9am-9pm, Sat & Sun 9am-7pm

Broken Rainbow, support for LGBT people experiencing domestic violence 0300 999 5428 – Mon 2-8pm, Weds 10-5pm, Thurs 2-8pm

Stonewall's Information Service – Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30

Phone: 08000 50 20 20

Minicom: 020 7633 0759

Email: info@stonewall.org.uk

Post: Stonewall, Tower Building, York Road, London, SE1 7NX

www.healthy lives.stonewall.org.uk