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It's not just about sex

A Health & Social Care Needs Assessment of
Young Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual People
in Bradford District

Executive Summary of Findings

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On behalf of Bradford Equity Partnership

Equity Partnership is the trade name of Bradford LGB & T Strategic Partnership.
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> Setting the Scene

This Needs Assessment was conducted by Equity Partnership: a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Trans (LGB&T) community and voluntary sector charity in Bradford.

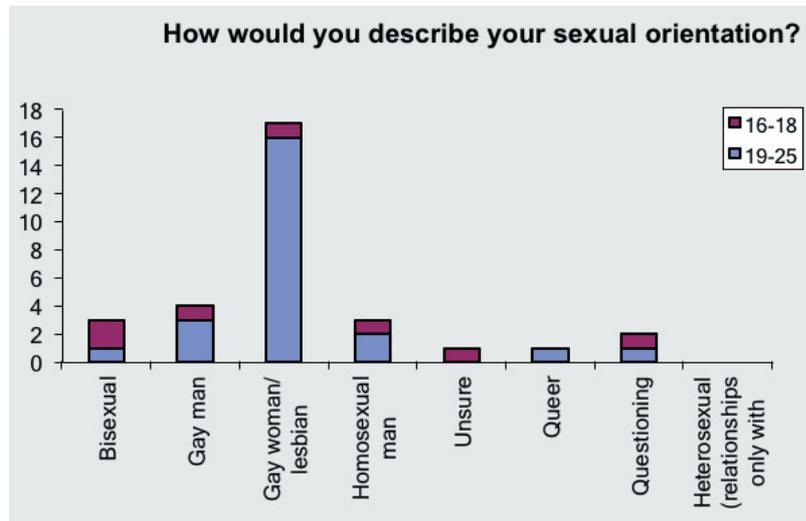
The main aim of this Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) Young People Needs Assessment is to establish a baseline picture of both health and social care experiences and requirements in Bradford and District in the 16 - 25 years age group.

The full report discusses the reasons why young LGB people can feel dissatisfied with services and what can be done to address this inequality. It also highlights areas of good and poor practice nationally and locally in the delivery of care.

> Key Findings - Who Took Part?

31 LGB individuals aged 16 - 25 completed the questionnaire. This is a lower number than hoped but in context, is reasonable given that no previous assessment has focussed on this age group, and the lack of provision for LGB young people outside the centre of Bradford. 9 young people took part in individual interviews and a focus group.

- From the 31 respondents the majority 81% (25) live in the Bradford district.
- 52% (16) work in the district.
- 48% (15) socialise in the district.
- Just over half of respondents 55% (17) are currently in a same sex relationship.
- The graph on the next page shows there are more than twice the number identifying as lesbian/gay woman than gay man.
- The majority of respondents are in the 19 - 25 age range.



> Graph 1 :
Sexual orientation

> Being 'Out'

“Life is better when you can be yourself. Coming out means you can be yourself.”

- 42% of respondents reported that they are not “out” to all or some of their relatives.
- 54% are not “out” to all or some of their friends.
- 54% are not “out” to some or all services.
- It is worthy of note that half of the respondents are not out to any neighbours. It is within the neighbourhood and/or with neighbours that a high percentage of hate crimes occur.

“Assumptions are made that I am straight and in a relationship with my best male friend.”

- 69% of respondents would tell a service, without any caveats, about their sexual orientation if they were asked in a ‘safe’ environment.
- However, it was also apparent that services either fail to ask at all, or do so in a way which feels ‘unsafe’.

> Satisfaction with Services

- More than half, 64% felt that the providers are aware of the needs of LGB people.
- Sexual health, drug, alcohol and mental health issues are most likely to be faced by young LGB people but all of these services are unacceptably under performing in terms of satisfaction rates amongst young LGB people.
- Universities and colleges all enjoyed good satisfaction rates closely followed by GPs and the report suggests more sharing of best practice should be done between these services.
- Bradford Royal Infirmary is seen to be the best performing hospital.

> Body Mass Index (BMI)

BMI is used to measure body shape (thickness/thinness).

- 11 out of 25 (44%) are a healthy weight - less than UK average of 62%.
- 9 out of 25 (36%) are borderline overweight, overweight or obese - slightly more than UK average of 32%.
- 5 out of 25 (20%) are borderline underweight or underweight.

> Mental Health

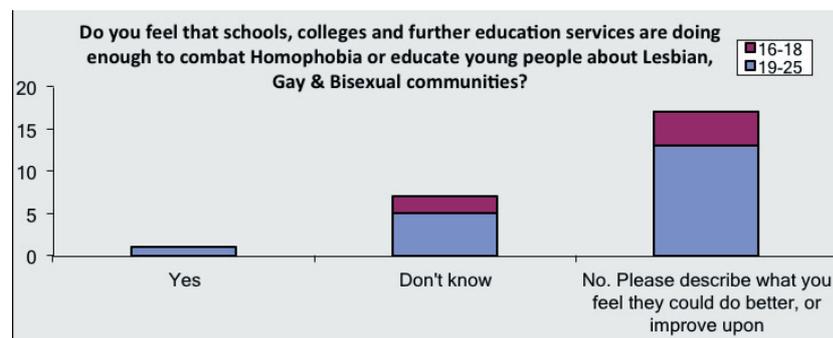
“There is no current place I feel I could access information about my emotional health.”

- Of the participants who responded; 70% reported having experienced depression and 41% had self-harmed.
- Slightly more young lesbians and bisexual women have experienced self-harm than gay and bisexual men.

> Homophobia

“The Bullying will not last for ever and it gets better with time.”

- From those attending school/college 27% have experienced homophobia from fellow pupils.
- When asked what issues/concerns are facing them as young LGB people homophobia and stereotyping were highlighted the most.
- As the graph below shows (68%) of the young LGB people felt that the educational services were not doing enough to combat homophobia in schools/colleges.



> Graph 2 :
Education

> Specialist Workers

The majority of respondents feel that a specialist LGB worker should be available in all the health, social care, educational, police and home visits services.

> LGBTQ Youth Groups

Around one third of the respondents reported attending an LGBTQI youth group and the majority reported very positive experiences including good personal support from members and advice from staff.

Bradford has the third highest proportion of residents aged 0-14 of any district in England and Wales. This means that the numbers of young LGB people will continue to grow in the coming years and services should act now in anticipation of this demographic shift.

> This Report Identifies The Need For:

Improving Services

Fly the flag - Show young LGB people that they matter to you.

Create an LGB friendly environment. Use neutral language.

The will is there and you can implement effective monitoring

Train and support your staff to do this and explain to all service users why you are doing this. Act on the information you gather.

Are we there yet? Less jaw jaw...

Start taking real and meaningful steps to address and affect change for young LGB people.

Preventative Measures

Help to prevent hate crime, enough is enough

Tackle homophobic bullying particularly in schools.

Promote and Protect

What are you afraid of? You can make a difference

Provide training for all your staff so that they understand young LGB issues, see that LGB young people are diverse and learn how to create an LGB friendly environment. Provide training for school staff around legislation in education (stamping out the legacy of Section 28) and young LGB people equalities training for religious organisations.

Smarter Strategies

Be ahead of the game

Provide friendly services: Understand and address the impact of Homophobia and heterosexist assumptions on younger LGB mental health.

Pump up the volume

Ensure that the current work with LGB young people and LGB health is continued.

Work in partnership

Using co-ordinated approaches for the delivery of good health and social care for younger LGB people. Remember the local voluntary and community sector too, in particular Equity Partnership who can provide support.