

Smoking Cessation/ Behaviours & LGBT Communities

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We believe in a fair and equal society where all lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people can achieve their full potential.



**Achieving
Equality**



**Encouraging
Wellbeing**



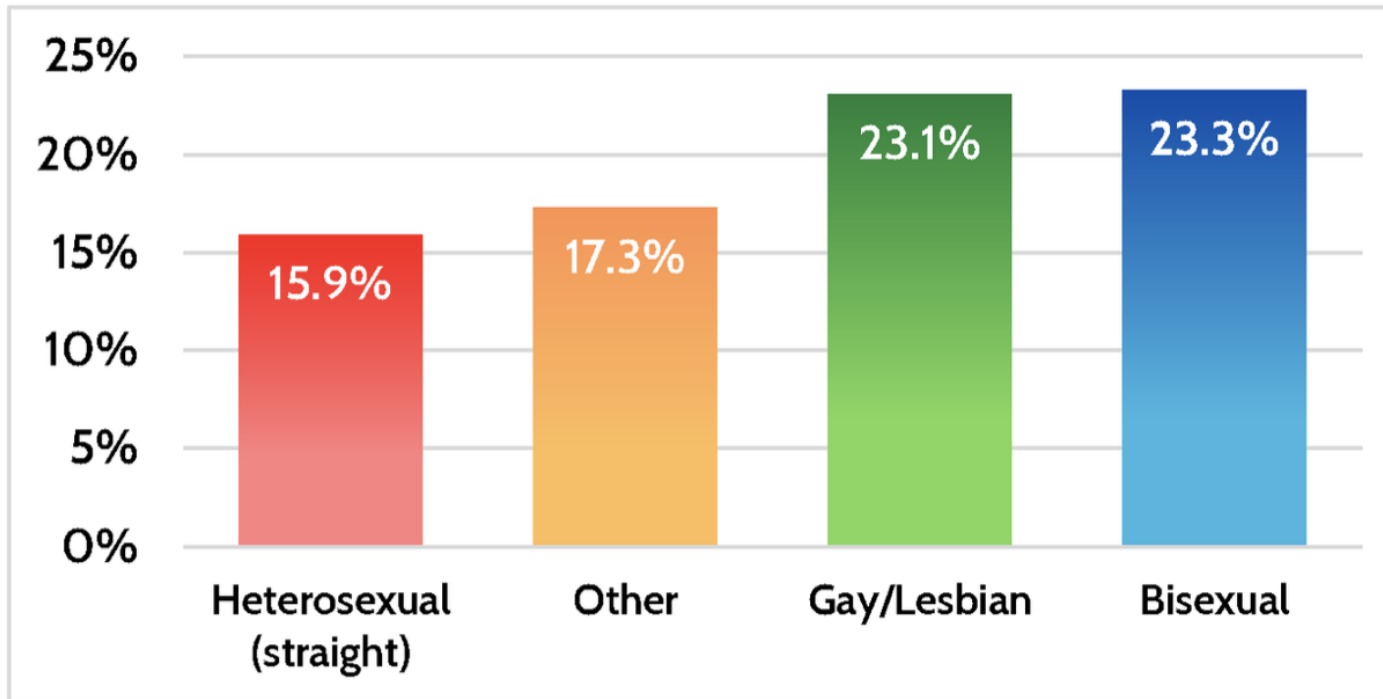
**Promoting
Safety**

LGBT
foundation

Smoking inequalities in LGBT communities

- Often LGBT individuals are separated from their family unit. Or are unable to be open about their sexual orientation or trans status. This can lead to minority stress. This is also seen as a result from homophobia, discrimination and micro aggressions.
- This stigmatisation can lead individuals to smoke, these statistics are disproportionately higher within LGBT communities.
- In stigmatised and discriminated groups, people may be more reluctant to stop smoking as they feel that quitting will exclude them from a group they finally belong to.
- It's important to state that smoking is not a lifestyle choice but an addiction, many may have become addicted through their need to find a coping mechanism from stress and discrimination.
- LGBT communities have historically been targeted by tobacco companies.

Fig 1: Adult smoking habits in the UK: 2018, ONS



Health Inequalities

LGBT people are disproportionately more likely to experience poor mental health due to societal pressures and prejudices.

- 2018- 31% of cis LGB people thought about taking their own life.
- 2018- 46% of trans people had thought about ending their lives at some point in the previous year. (Both stats from Hidden Figures Report, LGBT Foundation)
- These figures are referenced in research into the health and wellbeing effects of the first Covid UK lockdown. However, mental health inequalities have historically been prevalent in LGBT communities. We expect them to be significantly higher post Covid. Calls about mental health concerns to LGBT Foundation helpline increased 50% over the first lockdown.
- Smoking is linked to SMI (serious mental illness), a complex relationship of factors can also include substance misuse and risk taking sexual behaviour (chemsex). As a way to cope or disassociate.
- LGBT people make up a quarter of the youth homeless population and homelessness is strongly linked with smoking and mental health issues

Barriers to Accessing Services

- LGBT individuals are often reluctant to access services. This can come from a historic distrust of services and organisations of authority.
- LGBT people often state that their needs are not met or understood.
- Trans people are often misgendered, their pronouns or names are not respected or their health needs are met with confusion or lack of understanding.
- These issues contribute to the presence of micro aggressions and minority stress. LGBT people will miss appointments or not seek out support for health issues. As the trauma, discomfort or embarrassment can be too much.
- Stop smoking services are included within this, if services are not fully inclusive, then LGBT people will struggle to access them or their cessation journey will suffer.
- Stop smoking campaigns also contribute to this, if LGBT individuals, particularly those from intersectional communities, i.e. QTPOC or disabled LGBT people, are not represented. Then LGBT people may not see it being for them.

What is being done in Greater Manchester?

- Inclusivity training delivered to stop smoking services, population health teams and other relevant GM teams to ensure their services are fully LGBT inclusive.
- Working with Pride events, to deliver smoke free events or spaces.
- Working with LGBT communities to better understand what individuals want from services, understand their experiences and why they face barriers to accessing smoking cessation support.
- GM wants to deliver a smoke free generation and be one of the first major areas to be smoke free by 2030. Whilst smoking reduction is under the national average (13% in GM, 15% nationwide), rates are continuously dropping. There is significant support from residents to deliver smoke free spaces across all boroughs.
- LGBT Foundation's Pride in Practice programme delivers inclusivity training to GP's, health practitioners and dental services, to ensure they are fully LGBT inclusive.



Stevie's Story

- Stevie is part of a community led group for LGBT people living within social/supported housing.
- 'I started smoking at 16, it was the late 70's, my friends and peers were all smoking.'
- 'I worked high-pressure jobs until my 40's, but had to stop working due to my mental health. I was also diagnosed with COPD.'



Substance Misuse Programme

- Subcontracted by a mainstream drug and alcohol service CGL (Change Grow Live). The service has access to all their referral pathways into more structured treatments such as detox, rehab or medical support.
- Volunteers are a huge part of the service, indeed across all of LGBT Foundation. Recovery champions provide support for service users and programme leaders, allowing the programme to deliver on a large scale.
- Provides multiple approaches to recovery depending on the individual. The programme has knowledge and training around CBT, SMART Recovery, compassion focussed approach, mindfulness, acupuncture amongst others. There is no one way to recovery.
- The service runs 4 groups a week and last year had over 1000 visits to remote groups. Peer support from other LGBT people is very highly valued and successful.
- Chemsex has become more frequently cited as the cause for a referral and now makes up at least 50% of referrals.

Resources

- Stop smoking pages of LGBT Foundation website
- NHS stop smoking helpline- 0300 123 1044 NHS stop smoking pages
- ASH- Action on Smoking and Health. A public health body providing advice and resources on smoking addiction and quitting smoking.
- Hidden Figures- LGBT Foundation report into the disproportionate effect Covid-19 has had on LGBT communities
- ASH report- LGBT Evidence into Practice Briefing
- For GM specific services- GM Health Hub
- Check your local authority or NHS service pages for area specific support
- LGBT Foundation Training Academy

Resources

- Substance misuse programme pages of LGBT Foundation website
- FridayMonday webpage of Terrence Higgins Trust
- Hidden Figures- LGBT Foundation report into the disproportionate effect Covid-19 has had on LGBT communities