

Although anybody can experience difficulties with their mental health, LGBTQ people are significantly more likely to than straight and non-trans people.

Research shows that more than 40% of LGBTQ people will experience a significant mental health problem, compared to around 25% of the whole population, a huge amount more. We are also more than twice as likely to have attempted suicide than the population as a whole.

## Why do LGBTQ people have higher rates of mental health issues?

- The most likely reason for this is that as LGBTQ people we experience stigma and discrimination. Some of us experience rejection and other negative reactions especially when we first come out.
- We live in a world that for the most part does not reflect or take into account the experience of our day-to-day lives; a world that is full of subtle (and not so subtle) messages about lack of equal worth; about the unacceptability of difference.
- We can be the subject of hate crimes ranging from verbal abuse in the street to violent attacks.
- Some of us do not feel able to be out about our sexual or gender identity at work and/or at home; consequently we feel we have to be very careful about everything we say in relation to our personal lives. This can cause a great deal of ongoing stress.
- Just the fact that we are in some ways different from the majority of people in our society can cause us to question our value and worth, especially in adolescence. This can lead to feelings of low self-worth/self-esteem which can last into adulthood.
- Low self-worth, rejection, negative self-questioning, fear of judgement and abuse can make some situations in our lives more difficult to cope with.



LGBTQ mental health service

## get in touch

If you would like to find out more about what we offer, or if you think someone you know might benefit, or if you would just like to tell us about your own experiences, then please do contact us to make an appointment.

**telephone** 0300 7729855

(confidential answerphone)

**email** [info@mindout.org.uk](mailto:info@mindout.org.uk)

**website** [www.mindout.org.uk](http://www.mindout.org.uk)



Designed and produced by MINT (01273) 261166 [www.mintcreative.com](http://www.mintcreative.com)

# MENTAL HEALTH IN LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANS AND QUEER COMMUNITIES

# MindOut

for each other

**NHS**  
Brighton and Hove



Sussex  
Community  
Foundation

Supported by  
**The National Lottery**<sup>®</sup>  
through the Big Lottery Fund



  
Brighton & Hove

**time to change**  
let's end mental health discrimination

Registered Charity Number 1140098



LGBTQ mental health service

# Making a more **mentally healthy** community

## **Stigma and discrimination within society as a whole badly effects the mental health of LGBTQ people.**

L, G, B, T and Q communities themselves can also have a negative influence on our mental health. Many of us feel isolated because we feel we don't fit in or don't have the self-confidence to go out. Some of the negative things that happen in society at large can happen on a smaller scale within our own communities.

## **We can all contribute to making our communities more mentally healthy.**

### **We can start by looking out for each other.**

In a healthy community we recognise that what we say and do can have positive and negative effects on others. We can all do things that even in some small way improve the quality of other people's lives.

### **We can respect each others' differences and support each other.**

## **Here are some things that we can all do to improve the mental health of our communities:**

### **Keep in touch**

We can keep in touch with the people we know, especially if we know that they are having a difficult time.

### **Listen**

We can try to listen well when people tell us about any difficulties they are having. We can look out for people who seem anxious or ill at ease. We can make sure we are open and supportive if people confide in us.

### **Trust is important in a healthy community:**

we can choose not to gossip.

### **Stop stigmatising**

We can stop stigmatising other people. It's too easy to put people down who are different from us in some way; we behave and dress differently; have different values; are from different ethnic groups; some of us are trans, some of us have plenty of money, some on benefits; have different HIV statuses etc. None of these are reasons to put people down. Stigma hurts. We need to think carefully about how what we say and do affects others.

### **Treat others with kindness and openness**

Many of us fear rejection, or wrongly believe that any greeting or conversation with someone new will be interpreted as making a pass. Take a risk, acknowledge a stranger.

### **Challenge our prejudices about mental health**

We can challenge our own assumptions, fears and prejudices about people with mental health problems. People's mental health difficulties are very often made worse by isolation, and the rejection and stigma they experience from members of their communities.

### **Talk about mental health**

We could find out more about mental health and how to look after our own wellbeing and talk to others about it. We can take up opportunities to discuss mental health in our daily lives to help raise awareness among others.

### **Be political**

We can get politically involved on behalf of our community, we can make our voice count by attending community consultation meetings and filling in surveys and questionnaires. We can lobby the PCT (Primary Care Trust) and the council to put resources into community safety, LGBTQ accessible services, LGBTQ spaces, mental health promotion and LGB&T community groups.

### **Support local mental health initiatives**

We can support community groups and individuals working towards better mental health. We can spread the word, make donations, attend events and offer to volunteer.