

Further information

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Advisory Group

The Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Advisory Group is a group of stakeholder individuals and organisations assisting the Department of Health with the development and delivery of a programme of work to promote equality and eliminate discrimination for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people in health and social care (as both service users and employees). The group has four work streams: Reducing Health Inequalities, Better Employment, Inclusive Services and Transgender Health. The Group has commissioned a number of resources to support the strategy, including:

- Real Stories, Real Lives: LGBT People and The NHS: a DVD to be used as a practical tool
 in training staff and raising awareness;
- Core Standards for Training on Sexual Orientation (by Diverse Identities);
- Monitoring of Sexual Orientation in the Health Sector (by Stonewall); and
- Harassment and Sexual Orientation in the Health Sector (by Stonewall).

All of these, plus further resources currently under development, can be found on the Department of Health's sexual orientation and gender identity pages at:

www.dh.gov.uk/EqualityAndHumanRights

Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007, which came into force on 30 April 2007, prohibit sexual orientation discrimination in the provision of goods, facilities and services. The Regulations have important implications for health services. In particular, it is expected that they will lead to an improvement in the level of healthcare and uptake of services by Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people. This has built on the existing legislation, which protects Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people from discrimination in employment.

The Civil Partnership Act 2004

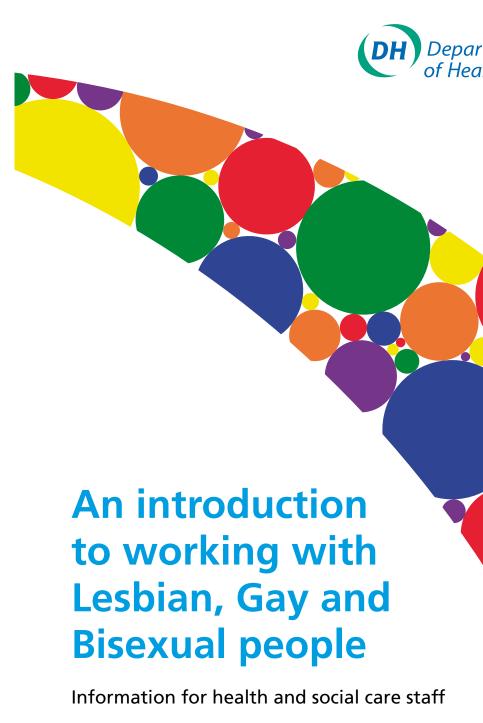
The Civil Partnership Act 2004 came into force on 5 December 2005. Civil partnership is the new legal partnership which can be formed by two people of the same sex. Civil partners have parity of treatment with spouses, as far as possible, in the rights and responsibilities that flow from forming a civil partnership. NHS and social care organisations need to ensure that their policies, procedures and practices for staff and patients/service users are inclusive in their language and content.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History Month

LGBT History Month is in February each year and provides an opportunity to celebrate and recognise the contribution made by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people to history. In previous LGBT History Month events, the NHS Chief Executive and Chief Medical Officer have spoken publicly about the Department of Health and NHS' commitment to tackling homophobia in the health service and improving health services for LGBT people. More information on LGBT History Month can be found at:

www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk

This leaflet was developed by the Department of Health's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Advisory Group's Reducing Health Inequalities work stream.



To deliver a patient-led NHS, services must be fair to everyone and recognise the needs of each individual. The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 make it unlawful for health and social care staff to discriminate unfairly against Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) people. This leaflet is intended to support you to ensure that LGB people do not experience discrimination and prejudice in service delivery. It is part of a more detailed package of resources to help you to improve the quality and uptake of health and social care services for LGB and Transgender people.

At
least 6
per cent of the
population is
Lesbian, Gay or
Bisexual.



assumptions
about someone's
sexuality is always
dangerous. Lesbian, Gay and
Bisexual people come from
all walks of life, all ages,
ethnicities, faiths
and abilities.

Everyone
has a right to
a private life. 'Outing'
someone (revealing their
sexual orientation to someone
else) could put him/her
in real danger. Always
ask who the person wants
you to contact, and how
he or she wants to
be contacted.



LGB
people have a
variety of health needs
– it is not just about sexual
health. Substance misuse,
eating disorders, obesity,
mental health, suicide and
self harm are also
issues within these
communities.



The Equality

Equality Act
(Sexual Orientation)
Regulations 2007 made
it unlawful, from 30 April
2007, for health and social
care staff to discriminate
unfairly against Lesbian,
Gay and Bisexual
people.



Prejudice
against Lesbian,
Gay and Bisexual people
is common in society. Therefore
LGB people might assume you are
anti-gay unless you show that you are
not. Many LGB people do not 'come
out' (reveal their sexual orientation) to
health and social care professionals:
try to ensure that you create
an environment where this
is possible.



young people
identify as Lesbian,
Gay or Bisexual or may
be questioning their sexual
orientation. It is important
that they are supported in a
non-judgemental way and
signposted to appropriate
youth services.



Homophobic
bullying and
harassment has
serious health impacts. It
is everyone's responsibility
to challenge offensive
language and
behaviour.



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Lesbian,
Gay and Bisexual
people vary in how they
like to describe themselves,
so avoid language like 'dyke',
'queer' or 'poof' and ask
them how they are most
comfortable being
described.



Civil
partnership
gives the same legal
rights as marriage to
same-sex couples who have
registered as civil partners;
this extends to next of
kin and parental
rights.