Sexual and gender minority people’s health vulnerabilities during the COVID-19 health crisis

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INTRODUCTION

Among those experiencing a compounding of vulnerabilities due to COVID-19 are sexual and gender minority (SGM) people, which collectively includes Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Two-Spirit, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBT2SQIA+) people.

Sexual and gender minority people comprise a diverse group of equity-seeking communities whose needs are often left out of research, policy, and infrastructure.

Who is creating narratives of the pandemic? Are LGBTQ2SIA+ voices, experiences, vulnerabilities, resiliencies being represented?

COVID-19 and public health measures aimed at controlling its transmission may disproportionately impact the health of SGM people in part due to inequitable social, economic, and political conditions.

Economic inequity and poverty present increased risks for SGM people as well.

As is the case with other marginalized communities, exclusion and health precarity among SGM people translate to “underlying conditions” that can increase the risk for COVID-19 infection, complications, sequelae, and death.

STIGMA & GLOBAL IMPACTS

The Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights warned member states to refrain from using the COVID-19 crisis as an avenue to undermine the human rights of SGM people (OHCHR, 2020).

Panama’s Gender-Based Quarantine Ensnares Trans Woman
Trans-Sensitive Police Protocol Needed to Prevent Harassment

When Panama announced it would implement a gender-based

Covid-19 Backlash Targets LGBT People in South Korea
Government Should Act to Prevent Discrimination

MORE READING
POLITICS OF PUBLIC HEALTH VISIBILITY & INTERVENTION

Research and health surveillance systems that fail to include questions about sexual orientation or gender identity:

1. threaten to erase SGM people,
2. obscure health issues within the population
3. inhibit vital allocation of resources

Next Steps & Final Thoughts

SGM people faced significant structural (e.g., access to employment, housing, health care) and interpersonal (e.g., violent transphobic attacks) discrimination prior to COVID-19.

Pandemic conditions magnify these inequities, exposing and worsening health disparities and producing new ones.

As this global health crisis grinds on, we must leverage our expertise and positions of privilege to ensure that the global and local impacts of and responses to COVID-19 among SGM people are made visible.

Next Steps & Final Thoughts

Noting potential mediating roles of intersection between LGBTQ2SIA+ identities with other identities (e.g., along axes of racialization, ethnicity, age, class, etc.)

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# Original 2020 Summer Research Plans

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>JK Gibb, MSc</th>
<th>Unaffected by COVID-19?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing analyses and write-up of secondary data, primarily on health of LGBTQ2SIA+ peoples</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completion of MSc</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiation of new project investigating food security among LGBTQ2SIA+ peoples living in Toronto, CAN</td>
<td>✗</td>
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