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Executive Summary

Background
Pennsylvania, like the nation and many states, has traditionally had limited data on LGBT health and wellness. In an effort to learn more about the health and wellness of Pennsylvania’s LGBT communities, the Pennsylvania Department of Health partnered with LGBT centers across the state to gather health and wellness information in 2015/2016 and again in 2018. The 2018 Pennsylvania LGBT Health Needs Assessment collects data on LGBT health and supports identification of health disparities in tobacco use, cancer, HIV, obesity, mental health, access to care, and more.

In 2018, Pennsylvania partnered with Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center to reach a statewide purposeful sample. The Pennsylvania 2018 LGBT Health Needs Assessment was conducted in collaboration with LGBT HealthLink, a program of CenterLink. This collaboration allowed Pennsylvania to use a CDC-vetted tool, and opens future possibilities for improved trend analyses and state-to-state comparison data.

Key Findings
A total of 4,679 Pennsylvania LGBT respondents participated in the 2018 LGBT Health Needs Assessment. Respondents are from over 800 different ZIP codes across 64 of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties.

One in four respondents sometimes, often, or always experience a health care provider react poorly when they come out as LGBT. In addition, more than half of all respondents sometimes, often or always fear a negative reaction by a health care provider if they come out as LGBT. Over a third of respondents report their health is fair, poor, or very poor. However, resiliency factors are strong and almost all respondents report at least some interest in incorporating healthy living strategies into their lives. While overall LGBT respondents report higher current smoking than the general population, smoking reports are even higher among transgender and gender non-conforming respondents. Health disparities also exist within LGBT communities in health screenings and other health areas. Respondents identify mental health needs as a priority when considering LGBT community health.

Recommendations
1. Support Connection to LGBT-competent Providers
2. Encourage Health Screening Discussions
3. Prioritize Chronic Disease Prevention
4. Promote Tobacco Cessation Opportunities
5. Identify Community-wide Mental Health Supports
6. Continue and Enhance Data Collection
7. Partner with LGBT Community-Based Organizations
Pennsylvania 2018 LGBT Health Needs Assessment Overview

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) individuals and others in the LGBT community are disproportionately impacted by tobacco use. Estimates across studies show LGBT adults smoke at rates between 35 and 200 percent higher than the general population. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates over 30,000 LGBT people die each year of tobacco-related diseases. Of course, tobacco use is not a standalone issue. Higher prevalence rates in other high-risk behaviors, psychosocial and structural barriers, and reduced access to trusted care impact overall risk for negative health outcomes in the LGBT community.

Pennsylvania, like the nation and many states, has traditionally had limited data on LGBT health and wellness. In an effort to learn more about the health and wellness of Pennsylvania’s LGBT communities, the Pennsylvania Department of Health partnered with LGBT centers across the state to gather health and wellness information. In 2015 and 2016, Pennsylvania Department of Health and Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center piloted regional health needs assessments to better measure LGBT health disparities in Pennsylvania. Regional findings identified pervasive health disparities in tobacco use, cancer, HIV, obesity, mental health, access to care, and more. In 2018, Pennsylvania expanded the scope of the assessment to include a statewide purposeful sample, again partnering with Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center to facilitate connection with a broad network of Pennsylvania LGBT-focused service agencies.

The Pennsylvania 2018 LGBT Health Needs Assessment was conducted in collaboration with LGBT HealthLink, a program of CenterLink. CenterLink’s LGBT HealthLink program, one of eight CDC-funded cancer and tobacco disparity networks, is a community of experts and professionals working to advance LGBT health by eliminating tobacco use, reducing cancer incidence, and improving wellness within LGBT communities. This collaboration has allowed Pennsylvania to use a CDC-vetted tool, and opens future possibilities for improved trend analyses and state-to-state comparison data.

The 2018 findings presented here cover a variety of health topics, chronic disease risks, and healthcare experiences. These data are intended to identify needs and inform plans to close gaps. Opportunities remain for additional data analyses and future data collection.

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1 CDC, Smoking and Tobacco use: [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/disparities/lgbt/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/disparities/lgbt/index.htm)
2 The DC Center for the LGBT Community: [http://thedccenter.org/outtoquit/](http://thedccenter.org/outtoquit/)
6 CDC, Smoking and Tobacco use: [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/disparities/lgbt/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/disparities/lgbt/index.htm)
Needs Assessment Methodology

In spring 2018, Pennsylvania Department of Health and Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center partnered to administer the 2018 LGBT HealthLink Wellness Needs Assessment. Over a seven-week period, the anonymous, internet-based survey was available for completion by any Pennsylvania resident who across their lifetime consider themselves to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. LGBT HealthLink estimated the survey took approximately 15 minutes to complete.

The purposive, convenience, snowball style sample was supported by LGBT-focused community partners who distributed/posted the tool link and otherwise made the link available to their LGBT stakeholders. Additional indirect recruitment occurred via social media. No participant recruitment occurred in LGBT bars. Data collection partners are listed in Acknowledgment section of this report.

Method limitations include: online-only tool; English-only tool; cross sectional (single point in time) data collection.

Participants were informed the data they provided were being collected anonymously and they could stop the survey at any time or refuse to answer any questions. At the conclusion of the survey, participants were given the option to participate in an unlinked opportunity to be entered to win one of ten $50 gift cards for Amazon.\(^{10}\)

\(^{10}\) Raffle entries were at no point connected to needs assessment responses. All needs assessment responses remained anonymous regardless of entry into the incentive raffle.
Findings

A total of 4,679 Pennsylvania\textsuperscript{11} LGBT\textsuperscript{12} respondents participated in the 2018 Needs Assessment. Respondents are from over 800 different ZIP codes across 64 of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties.

Considering Pennsylvania’s health districts and two most populated counties, respondents are part of all regions.

\begin{table}[h]
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Northwest & Southwest\textsuperscript{13} & Allegheny County & North Central & South Central & Northeast & Southeast\textsuperscript{14} & Philadelphia County \\
\hline
4.1% & 5.5% & 17.2% & 4.8% & 12.9% & 24.0% & 20.7% & 10.7% \\
191 & 259 & 802 & 224 & 604 & 1,123 & 967 & 501 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{11} Respondent provided a Pennsylvania ZIP code (150xx-196xx) and/or selected PA as state. County name alone was used as a PA qualifier in one case.

\textsuperscript{12} Respondent selected Yes to question: Across your lifetime, do you consider yourself to be Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender?

\textsuperscript{13} Excluding Allegheny County.

\textsuperscript{14} Excluding Philadelphia County.
Respondents identify across LGBT communities. At the time of the survey, over a third of respondents identify as gay (38.3%), almost a quarter as lesbian (24.0%), bisexual (21.2%), another 15 (14.3%) and straight (2.2%).

538 respondents wrote-in their description, most commonly Pansexual, Queer, and Asexual.

Respondents identify as female, male, transgender and gender non-conforming. Two hundred and forty respondents provided a write-in response to the question: How do you describe yourself? The most common write-in responses included, non-binary, genderqueer, and genderfluid. When considering reported sex at birth, the respondent sample includes 21.7 percent transgender and/or gender non-conforming respondents.

15 “Other” category in the original survey tool has been modified to “Another” on this report in order to use more inclusive language.
Respondents vary in age from 10 to 87, with an average age of 37.6. A quarter of respondents are over 50 years of age (n=1,203, 25.7%) and a quarter are under 25 years of age (25.4%).

**Just under half** of all respondents are between ages **25 and 49**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 18 years</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 24 years</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 49 years</td>
<td><strong>48.9%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 64 years</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+ years</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the majority of respondents are insured, more than one in twenty are uninsured or are not sure of their insurance status. This is a slightly lower estimate than the Pennsylvania age 18-64 population, where 9 percent (CI:7-10%) have no health insurance (BRFSS, 2016).

**Almost 6%** of respondents have **no insurance** and not all are sure of their insurance status.

91.5% Insured

Uninsured 5.9%

Don’t know 2.5%

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16 Age was missing in only four cases.
17 All Pennsylvania Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data in this report were provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. The Department specifically disclaims responsibility for any analyses, interpretations, or conclusions. Data available via <https://www.phaim1.health.pa.gov/EDD/>
The majority of respondents describe themselves as White (74.1%), but may also identify as another race. Six percent of respondents are Hispanic or Latino/a.

**Almost 3 out of 4 respondents are White, but more than one race could be selected.**

- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Middle Eastern or North African
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Other
- Black or African American
- White

The vast majority of respondents have a high school degree or beyond for their education level. Three out of four respondents with less than a high school education are under 18 years of age.

**Education**

- Graduate degree: 28.1%
- Bachelor degree: 28.5%
- Associates degree: 7.8%
- Some college/technical school: 20.7%
- High school degree or equivalent: 10.7%
- Less than high school education: 4.2%

Additional data findings by select sociodemographic and geographic groups can be found in appendices.
Most respondents had at least one personal doctor or health care provider, however, 17 percent do not or are unsure if they think of any provider as personal. This is a slightly higher estimate than the general Pennsylvania adult population, where 14 percent (CI:13-15%) do not have a personal health care provider (BRFSS, 2016). There is variation across respondents on whether they have advised their provider(s) that they are LGBT.

When asked: Have you advised your personal provider(s) that you are LGBT?

More than 1 in 4 report they have not advised any provider.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>None of them</th>
<th>26.2%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some of them</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of them</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One in four respondents sometimes, often, or always experience a health care provider react poorly when they come out as LGBT (25.1%). In addition, more than half of all respondents sometimes, often or always fear a negative reaction by a health care provider if they come out as LGBT (56.8%). While this proportion is high on its own, fear of a negative reaction is significantly higher for transgender and gender non-conforming respondents (p=.000). Three in four transgender and gender non-conforming respondents sometimes, often or always fear a negative reaction by a health care provider if they come out as LGBT (75.1%).

More than half of all respondents sometimes, often or always fear a negative reaction by a health care provider. 3 in 4 transgender and gender non-conforming respondents report this fear.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sometimes, Often or Always fear a negative reaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transgender and gender non-conforming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cisgender</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents find their health care providers, on average, vary in their knowledge about LGBT issues. While just under a quarter consider their health care providers to be extremely (5.6%) or very (18.2%) knowledgeable, over a third report much room for improvement with health care provider knowledge on LGBT issues reported as slight...
(26.9%) or none (7.3%). Similarly, respondents report varied average competency about LGBT issues among health care providers. Respondents identify opportunities for improvement among providers in competency about LGBT issues with three in four respondents reporting average competency as moderate, slight or none (74.6%).

Respondents find their health care providers, on average, vary in their competency about LGBT issues. **Almost 1 in 3 report their provider is not at all or slightly competent.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately</td>
<td>42.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respondents most commonly report their health as good (47.9%), but this leaves over a third of respondents who report their health is fair, poor, or very poor (35.6%). This is much higher than estimates for the general Pennsylvania adult population, with 17 percent (CI:15-18%) reporting being in fair or poor general health (BRFSS, 2016).

Over a third of respondents report their health as fair, poor or very poor.

As an indicator of health, respondents self-report height and weight and body mass index (BMI) was calculated. While BMI is limited as a health indicator,\(^\text{18}\) BMI reports show the majority of adult respondents (18+) are overweight or obese based on standard BMI category breaks (68.3%). This is slightly higher than estimates for the general Pennsylvania adult population, with 64 percent (CI:63-66%) identified as overweight or obese (BRFSS, 2016). Underweight respondents fall in largely similar proportions across cisgender males (32.3%), cisgender females (29.0%) and transgender and gender non-conforming individuals (38.7).

While BMI is limited, BMI varies with more than 2 in 3 adult respondents classified as overweight or obese.

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Another indicator of personal health and resiliency is interest in healthy living. Almost all respondents report at least some interest in incorporating healthy living strategies into their lives (98.3%).

Respondents are interested in incorporating healthy living strategies (such as healthy eating, exercise, tobacco cessation, etc.) into their lives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at All</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
<td>40.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents had the opportunity to report specific healthy living practices as well. During the past month, three in four respondents report physical activity or exercise outside of their job (75.4%). Respondents also report sugar sweetened beverage intake. While the sugar sweetened beverage consumption recommendations largely focus on reduction rather than a limit to a certain number of soda/pop or other sugar sweetened drinks per week, more than one in 20 respondents report 15 or more sugar sweetened beverages per week in the past month (5.6%). This estimate is conservative as almost an additional one in 20 report estimates that may exceed 14 beverages across the two sugar sweetened beverage categories (4.7%). Related to healthy living, outside of pregnancy, more than three in 20 respondents report having been told by a health care professional they have pre-diabetes or borderline diabetes (16.7%).
Health screenings may also serve as an indicator of personal health and/or access to care. Health screening recommendations vary and often have tailored conditions related to timing and frequency. Rates in chart below relate to ever being screened among the primary categories of eligible individuals. It is important to note individuals outside of the primary categories of eligible individuals may be recommended for screening based on personal health risk, family risk, gender-affirming hormone therapy or other hormone intake, and other discussions with care providers.

### Ever Screened vs. Never Screened

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Screening</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Among overweight/obese adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diabetes test</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among those under 64 years</td>
<td>69.9%</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HIV test</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among those under 64 years</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among gay respondents</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among transgender respondents</td>
<td>58.7%</td>
<td>41.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mammogram</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among those under 64 years</td>
<td>87.0%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among gay respondents</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among transgender respondents</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cervical Pap test</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among those under 64 years</td>
<td>92.6%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among gay respondents</td>
<td>70.5%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among transgender respondents</td>
<td>66.2%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prostate exam</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among those under 64 years</td>
<td>79.5%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anal Pap test</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among all assigned male at birth</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>84.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among gay respondents</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>83.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among transgender respondents</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among HIV+ respondents</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blood stool test</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among 45+</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sigmoidoscopy or Colonoscopy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among 45+</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mental Health

Several aspects of survey findings relate to mental health, both personally and among LGBT communities in general (see LGBT Community Health Section). While the majority of respondents report general satisfaction with their life (72.6%), more than one in four report not being satisfied with their life (27.4%).

In general, how satisfied are you with your life?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>54.7%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents find it to be more common to get the social and emotional support they need than not, with just over half of respondents reporting they usually or always get the support they need (52.8%). Unfortunately, this leaves almost a third of respondents who get the support they need only some of the time (31.1%) and about one in six respondents who report not getting the support they need (16.2%).

1 in 6 report they rarely or never get the support they need.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When thinking about the past year, more than three in four respondents report experiences with a mental health condition or problem (77.6%). Counseling or treatment, as well as prescription medication for mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, stress, suicidal ideation, etc. were also part of many respondents’ recent experiences.

**In the past 12 months, respondents:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental Health Experiences</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experienced any type of mental health condition/problem</td>
<td>77.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received any counseling or treatment for a mental health condition</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took a prescribed medication for any mental health condition</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Experience with any type of mental health condition was more common among cisgender females, transgender, and gender non-conforming respondents. This same experience also shows a pattern by age group. The youngest age groups most often report experiencing a mental health condition/problem in the past year and reports decline with age group progression. Counseling or treatment was more than 1.5 times more likely among transgender and gender non-conforming respondents compared to cisgender counterparts and more common among younger age groups. Age group rates for taking prescribed medications hang together more closely and did not show the same ramp pattern.

**HIV**

As reported in Health Screenings, three in ten respondents report never being tested for HIV (30.1%). HIV ever testing reports are highest among gay respondents (85.7%), followed by bisexual men (72.1%). HIV ever testing reports are lower among transgender respondents (58.7%). When considering most recent test, gay men (23.9%) and bisexual men (20.3%) were the most likely to report a test within the last three months. Almost half of gay men (48.6%) and more than two in five bisexual men (43.2%) report an HIV test within the past year. Just over one in 20 across all respondents report being HIV positive as of their last test. Respondents report feeling most comfortable getting an HIV test in an LGBT community-based setting and with a primary care provider.

Respondents report some risks for HIV at much higher rates than others. Most common risk reports include four or more partners in the past year (20.0%) and anal sex without a condom in the past year (26.8%). Less frequent risks among respondents include: intravenous drug use in past year (1.9%); past year exchange of sex for money or drugs (2.5%); and past year treatment for sexually transmitted disease (8.3%). Over one in three respondents have at least one of the BRFSS identified primary risk factors for HIV (36.0%). Please note survey limitation: Risk factors questions did not account for PrEP usage.

19 BRFSS primary risk factors are treated for STDs/VDs, traded money or drugs for sex, had anal sex without a condom or had 4+ sex partners in the past year.
Tobacco Use & Opinions

Cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product with almost a third of respondents reporting cigarette use every day or some days (30.2%). Based on this survey, current smoking among LGBT communities is well over the smoking rate estimate for all Pennsylvania adults at 18 percent (CI: 17-18%) (BRFSS, 2016).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Tobacco</th>
<th>Cigarettes</th>
<th>E-cigarettes</th>
<th>Cigars/Cigarillos</th>
<th>Hookah</th>
<th>Chew/Snuff/Snus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While overall LGBT respondents report higher current smoking than the general population, smoking reports are even higher among transgender and gender non-conforming respondents (36.9%) than among cisgender males (28.8%) and cisgender females (28.1%).

Cigarette use reports also vary by age and region in Pennsylvania. Overall, the highest smoking rate estimates are among 18 to 24 year olds, averaging 42.6 percent. Regionally, the Northwest, Southwest, North Central, and Northeast have smoking estimates above the overall respondent estimate of 30.2 percent. All regions have rates higher than BRFSS 2016 estimates for all Pennsylvania adults.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Under 18 years</th>
<th>18 to 24 years</th>
<th>25 to 49 years</th>
<th>50 to 64 years</th>
<th>65+ years</th>
<th>All LGBT</th>
<th>Transgender &amp; Gender non-conforming</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northwest</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allegheny County</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>46.0%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Central</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
<td>44.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia County</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Region</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percent removed for categories with <5 respondents.

20 Excluding Allegheny County.
21 Excluding Philadelphia County.
Respondents have some interest in quitting, with about a one in four looking to quit within six months (24.3%). However, few are most likely to go to a Quitline for assistance (2.6%). When reporting where respondent would be most likely go for assistance to quit smoking, one in 20 respondents selected a cessation class or program at an LGBT organization (5.3%).

Respondents also share their opinions on several tobacco-related statements, demonstrating majority support for all smoke-free opportunities discussed. With greater than six in 10 respondents saying they would likely go to a smoke-free bar/club, pride event, or LGBT community center.

### Tobacco Opinions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGBT people smoke more than the general population.</td>
<td>44.9%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride celebrations should be smoke-free events.</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would be likely to go to a smoke-free bar/club.</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would be likely to go to a smoke-free Pride event.</td>
<td>65.2%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would be likely to go to a smoke-free LGBT Community Center.</td>
<td>67.6%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Substance Use & Alcohol

More than four in ten respondents report 5 or more alcoholic drinks per day (commonly referred to as binge drinking) at some point in the past year (43.1%), with close to one in 10 reporting this daily or weekly (9.1%). Respondents report use of 12 other substances outside of alcohol with wide variation. Over a third of respondents report past year use of marijuana (36.6%), with one in ten reporting daily or almost daily use (10.4%). Past year usage of other drugs include: opioids (6.7%); inhalants (5.5%); cocaine (4.8%); ecstasy (3.3%); and crystal meth (2.1%). All other drugs listed were reported by less than two percent of respondents.
As reported in Health Screenings, reports of cancer screenings vary by test and population. Among respondents 40 and over assigned female at birth, three in four had a mammogram within the last three years (75.3%). Similarly, among respondents 21 and over assigned female at birth, over three in four had a cervical Pap test within the last three years (77.5%). Over one in four respondents report HPV vaccination 22 (26.6%). Among those who have not had the HPV vaccine, a portion report their provider refused to give the vaccine when they asked (2.4%).

When asked about specific skin cancer risks, almost four in 10 report prior indoor tanning (38.9%). Prior indoor tanning is more common among cisgender males (43.6%) than among cisgender females (39.1%) or transgender and gender nonconforming respondents (23.0%). More than four in 10 report infrequent or never use of sun protection during peak hours (44.2%). One in 10 respondents reports a cancer diagnosis during their lifetime (11.2%). Skin cancer is by far the most common, however, each of the other six cancers 23 listed is reported by no fewer than three respondents.

Regardless of experience with cancer prevention, screening, or treatment, respondents overwhelmingly agree services are needed to help LGBT cancer survivors.

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22 Survey question included additional terms for the HPV vaccine, including: cervical cancer or genital warts vaccine, HPV shot, Gardisil or Cervarix.

23 Cancers list included: lung, skin, prostate, breast, cervical, colorectal, anal, and other.
Respondents’ perceptions of priority health issues for LGBT communities was also collected. Across 15 answer options the top three selections for issues perceived to be the most impactful for LGBT communities in Pennsylvania all relate to mental health. Depression is the most common issue selected, with recognition as a top three issue by over half of respondents (58.1%). Suicide (36.3%) and Loneliness/Isolation (34.1%) round out the top three most commonly selected issues. Over a quarter of respondents rank HIV/AIDS (28.6%) and Access to Welcoming Care (27.6%) as top issues. Over 280 respondents also wrote in other issues and comments in the ranking question. A wide variety of issues were covered that were not on the original list of 15 options, including, but not limited to: domestic violence; eating disorders; employment discrimination; gender-affirming care; homelessness; and trauma-informed care.

Some topic areas are selected more often by certain age groups. Alcohol use, for example, grew steadily as a top three issue from younger to older groups, peaking among 65+ respondents at almost 30 percent (29.1%). Elder care followed this same pattern, peaking at about a third of 65+ respondents (34.4%). Bullying, on the other hand, as a top three classification ramped in the other direction with <18 respondents classifying as a top three issue at over 40 percent (43.9%). Depression as an overall top three selection, was more frequently selected by the younger age groups with ramped decline in older age groups as well, but never dipping below 44.5 percent for any age group.

Also of note, several respondents critiqued the break out of specific drugs in the original 15 options. The identification of the top three issues may have been impacted if all drugs or addiction (general) were available for selection. One respondent summarized this issue by responding, “Addiction in general, I don’t think it can be narrowed down to just one addiction.”
Discussion & Recommendations

LGBT+ respondents from across Pennsylvania shared critical information on personal and community health opportunities. Service gaps can be closed and support systems can be reinforced/expanded. A variety of players must be part of addressing LGBT community needs, including government agencies, community-based agencies, advocates/allies, and LGBT individuals.

Recommendations


Encourage Health Screening Discussions – Identify strategies to facilitate discussions on improving access to and frequency of health screenings for the LGBT community. Consider development of an online health screening recommendation summary tool to support a range of screenings discussions acknowledging the diversity within the LGBT community. Develop tailored messages specific to the LGBT community.

Prioritize Chronic Disease Prevention – Continue work to raise awareness about tobacco, HIV, obesity and cancer as LGBT issues among LGBT communities and Pennsylvanians at-large. Support service expansion to address tobacco use, HIV, obesity and cancer risks for LGBT communities. Maximize interest among LGBT communities for incorporating healthy living strategies by sharing resources and facilitating connections to LGBT-welcoming statewide and community-based services.

Promote Tobacco Cessation Opportunities – Expand promotion of free cessation opportunities available to all Pennsylvanians, like the PA Free Quitline. Build skills among tobacco cessation professionals and promote use of evidence-based cessation and tobacco recovery supports among LGBT communities. Develop LGBT focused tobacco-free campaigns. Engage in direct outreach to the LGBT community. Partner with LGBT community centers, LGBT bars, and pride celebrations to effectively reach the LGBT community with tailored tobacco-free messages.

Identify Community-wide Mental Health Supports – Identify ongoing opportunities to support mental health services within LGBT communities. Prioritize training for mental health clinicians on LGBT issues. Plan to incorporate discussions about depression management, suicide prevention and social isolation mitigation into provider education. Post vetted mental health resources on LGBT community organization websites and social media platforms. Increase availability of mental health programs at LGBT community-based organizations.

Continue and Enhance Data Collection – Maintain a 2-year schedule of the Pennsylvania LGBT Health Needs Assessment with broad administration. Maintain a commitment to collection of LGBT health and wellness data among a large geographically and demographically diverse LGBT population. Support further research and data collection to focus specifically on LGBT people of color, transgender people, LGBT youth, LGBT older adults, and LGBT adults without a college degree. Consider opportunities to expand responses from Hispanic/Latinx LGBT populations, including a Spanish-language survey instrument. Improve all tools over time with feedback from LGBT stakeholders and informed the survey field.

Partner with LGBT Community-Based Organizations – Healthcare professionals, public health agencies, and health researchers should consider partnerships with LGBT community-based organizations to develop and implement strategies to promote a high-quality of health for the LGBT community.
Acknowledgements

Thank you to all respondents for your time, feedback, and ideas.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health and Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center would also like to thank all of the 2018 data collection partners:

- Equality Pennsylvania
- Erie Gay News
- Fighting AIDS Continuously Together
- Greater Erie Alliance for Equality
- Grindr for Equality
- Human Rights Campaign
- LGBT Center of Central PA
- LGBT Equality Alliance of Chester County
- LGBTQmunity Center of Montgomery County
- Metropolitan Community Church of Lehigh Valley
- Montgomery County LGBT Business Council
- Pennsylvania Youth Congress
- Persad Center
- Philadelphia Gay News
- Rainbow NEPA
- Triversity
- Washington County GSA
- William Way LGBT Community Center

Special thanks to CenterLink's LGBT HealthLink program, for survey oversight and administration, and to Adrian Shanker from Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center, for recruitment coordination and ongoing commitment to data dissemination and use.

Funding to complete the needs assessment and conduct analyses was provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. Analyses were completed by the Research & Evaluation Group at Public Health Management Corporation.

Suggested Citation

2018 Findings Summary

LGBT Health Needs Assessment

Pennsylvania has health and wellness feedback from 4,679 LGBT+ Pennsylvanians! These data can be used to inform program planning, outreach efforts, and service proposal. While these data have some limitations, we can use these data to better understand areas of resilience, health disparities and overall need. To collect these important data, Pennsylvania partnered with Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center to reach a statewide purposeful sample. The Pennsylvania 2018 LGBT Health Needs Assessment was conducted in collaboration with LGBT HealthLink, a program of CenterLink.

- **64.3%** report good or very good health
- **98.3%** have interest in healthy living strategies
- **44.6%** report mental health treatment this year
- **30.2%** are current smokers
- **68.3%** are overweight or obese
- **36.0%** report a primary risk factor for HIV

LGBT+ respondents from across Pennsylvania shared critical information on personal and community health opportunities. Service gaps can be closed and support systems can be reinforced/expanded. A variety of players must be part of addressing LGBT community needs, including government agencies, community-based agencies, advocates/allies, and LGBT individuals. Data from the Pennsylvania 2018 LGBT Health Needs Assessment inform several recommendations for incorporation into future work:

1. Support Connection to LGBT-competent Providers
2. Encourage Health Screening Discussions
3. Prioritize Chronic Disease Prevention
4. Promote Tobacco Cessation Opportunities
5. Identify Community-wide Mental Health Supports
6. Continue and Enhance Data Collection
7. Partner with LGBT Community-Based Organizations

Full report available here: livehealthypa.org/lgbt
We have 2018 health and wellness feedback from 4,679 LGBT+ Pennsylvanians! These data can be used to inform program planning, outreach efforts, and service proposals. While these data have some limitations, we can also explore data from different parts of Pennsylvania. The Northwest Health District in Pennsylvania has information from 191 respondents. Check out some highlights below!


*Risk factors are: treated for STDs/VDs, traded money or drugs for sex, had anal sex without a condom or had 4+ sex partners in the past year, age 18-64
2018 Regional Summary
LGBT Health Needs Assessment

We have 2018 health and wellness feedback from 4,679 LGBT+ Pennsylvanians! These data can be used to inform program planning, outreach efforts, and service proposals. While these data have some limitations, we can also explore data from different parts of Pennsylvania. The Southwest Health District* in Pennsylvania has information from 259 respondents. Check out some highlights below!

**Southwestern** PA

* Excluding Allegheny County

- **35.4%** current smoking
  - BRFSS 2016 comparison for all PA adults: 18%

- **68.5%** overweight or obese
  - BRFSS 2016 comparison for all PA adults: 64%

- **30.6%** at least one primary risk factor for HIV*
  - BRFSS 2016 comparison for PA adults 18-64: 7%

**Interest in Healthy Living**

- Not at All: 3.5%
- Somewhat: 9.3%
- Moderately: 30.4%
- Very: 34.4%
- Extremely: 22.5%

Southwestern Pennsylvania respondents also demonstrate resiliency and are ready to incorporate healthy living strategies into their lives (such as healthy eating, exercise, tobacco cessation, etc.)...

56.9% report being very or extremely interested!


*Risk factors are: treated for STDs/VDs, traded money or drugs for sex, had anal sex without a condom or had 4+ sex partners in the past year, age 18-64
2018 Regional Summary
LGBT Health Needs Assessment

We have 2018 health and wellness feedback from 4,679 LGBT+ Pennsylvanians! These data can be used to inform program planning, outreach efforts, and service proposals. While these data have some limitations, we can also explore data from different parts of Pennsylvania. Allegheny County, Pennsylvania has information from 802 respondents. Check out some highlights below!


*Risk factors are: treated for STDs/VDs, traded money or drugs for sex, had anal sex without a condom or had 4+ sex partners in the past year, age 18-64

Allegheny County respondents also demonstrate resiliency and are ready to incorporate healthy living strategies into their lives (such as healthy eating, exercise, tobacco cessation, etc.)... 69.9% report being very or extremely interested!
We have 2018 health and wellness feedback from 4,679 LGBT+ Pennsylvanians! These data can be used to inform program planning, outreach efforts, and service proposals. While these data have some limitations, we can also explore data from different parts of Pennsylvania. The North Central Health District in Pennsylvania has information from 224 respondents. Check out some highlights below!

**North Central PA**

- **40.4%** current smoking (BRFSS 2016 comparison for all PA adults: 18%)
- **71.7%** overweight or obese (BRFSS 2016 comparison for all PA adults: 64%)
- **43.9%** at least one primary risk factor for HIV* (BRFSS 2016 comparison for PA adults 18-64: 7%)

**Interest in Healthy Living**

- Not at All: 0.5%
- Somewhat: 14.1%
- Moderately: 21.0%
- Very: 45.4%
- Extremely: 19.0%

North Central Pennsylvania respondents also demonstrate resiliency and are ready to incorporate healthy living strategies into their lives (such as healthy eating, exercise, tobacco cessation, etc.)... 64.4% report being very or extremely interested!


*Risk factors are: treated for STDs/VDs, traded money or drugs for sex, had anal sex without a condom or had 4+ sex partners in the past year, age 18-64
2018 Regional Summary
LGBT Health Needs Assessment

We have 2018 health and wellness feedback from 4,679 LGBT+ Pennsylvanians! These data can be used to inform program planning, outreach efforts, and service proposals. While these data have some limitations, we can also explore data from different parts of Pennsylvania. The South Central Health District in Pennsylvania has information from 604 respondents. Check out some highlights below!

South Central PA

- **28.1%** current smoking
  - 18% BRFSS 2016 comparison for all PA adults
- **75.3%** overweight or obese
  - 64% BRFSS 2016 comparison for all PA adults
- **34.1%** at least one primary risk factor for HIV*
  - 7% BRFSS 2016 comparison for PA adults 18-64

Interest in Healthy Living

- 2.2% Not at All
- 12.0% Somewhat
- 20.4% Moderately
- 40.9% Very
- 24.5% Extremely

South Central Pennsylvania respondents also demonstrate resiliency and are ready to incorporate healthy living strategies into their lives (such as healthy eating, exercise, tobacco cessation, etc.)...

65.4% report being very or extremely interested!


*Risk factors are: treated for STDs/VDs, traded money or drugs for sex, had anal sex without a condom or had 4+ sex partners in the past year, age 18-64
We have 2018 health and wellness feedback from 4,679 LGBT+ Pennsylvanians! These data can be used to inform program planning, outreach efforts, and service proposals. While these data have some limitations, we can also explore data from different parts of Pennsylvania. The Northeast Health District in Pennsylvania has information from 1,123 respondents. Check out some highlights below!

**Northeastern PA**

- **37.4%** current smoking
- **70.9%** overweight or obese
- **35.4%** at least one primary risk factor for HIV*


*Risk factors are: treated for STDs/VDs, traded money or drugs for sex, had anal sex without a condom or had 4+ sex partners in the past year, age 18-64

Northeastern Pennsylvania respondents also demonstrate resiliency and are ready to incorporate healthy living strategies into their lives (such as healthy eating, exercise, tobacco cessation, etc.)... 64.8% report being very or extremely interested!
We have 2018 health and wellness feedback from 4,679 LGBT+ Pennsylvanians! These data can be used to inform program planning, outreach efforts, and service proposals. While these data have some limitations, we can also explore data from different parts of Pennsylvania. The Southeast Health District* in Pennsylvania has information from 967 respondents. Check out some highlights below!


*Risk factors are: treated for STDs/VDs, traded money or drugs for sex, had anal sex without a condom or had 4+ sex partners in the past year, age 18-64.

Southeastern Pennsylvania respondents also demonstrate resiliency and are ready to incorporate healthy living strategies into their lives (such as healthy eating, exercise, tobacco cessation, etc.)... 65.6% report being very or extremely interested!
We have 2018 health and wellness feedback from 4,679 LGBT+ Pennsylvanians! These data can be used to inform program planning, outreach efforts, and service proposals. While these data have some limitations, we can also explore data from different parts of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania has information from 501 respondents. Check out some highlights below!

**Philadelphia County PA**

- **Current smoking**: 22.0%
  - 18% BRFSS 2016 comparison for all PA adults

- **Overweight or obese**: 59.1%
  - 64% BRFSS 2016 comparison for all PA adults

- **At least one primary risk factor for HIV**: 46.2%
  - 7% BRFSS 2016 comparison for PA adults 18-64

**Interest in Healthy Living**

- Not at All: 0.9%
- Somewhat: 8.6%
- Moderately: 18.6%
- Very: 39.8%
- Extremely: 32.1%

Philadelphia County respondents also demonstrate resiliency and are ready to incorporate healthy living strategies into their lives (such as healthy eating, exercise, tobacco cessation, etc.)... 71.9% report being very or extremely interested!


*Risk factors are: treated for STDs/VDs, traded money or drugs for sex, had anal sex without a condom or had 4+ sex partners in the past year, age 18-64
We have 2018 health and wellness feedback from 4,679 LGBT+ Pennsylvanians! These data can be used to inform program planning, outreach efforts, and service proposals. While these data have some limitations, we can explore health opportunities and differences within the LGBT community. One hundred eighty one of the 2018 needs assessment respondents are Black or African American. Below are a few data points specific to this subgroup and comparisons to all needs assessment respondents.

- **39.0%** current smoking
- **30.2%** comparison across all respondents

- **29.1%** have not advised any providers they are LGBT
- **26.2%** comparison across all respondents

- **40.6%** at least one primary risk factor for HIV*
- **36.0%** comparison across all respondents

**Priority Health Issues**

- Depression - 60.8%
- HIV/AIDS - 40.9%
  Priority of HIV/AIDS was recognized more often among Black and African American respondents than among respondents in general (28.6%)
- Suicide - 40.3%

*To better understand and address health opportunities and disparities, further research and data collection among LGBT people of color is needed.*

Data sources: Pennsylvania’ 2018 LGBT Health Needs Assessment

*Risk factors are: treated for STDs/VDs, traded money or drugs for sex, had anal sex without a condom or had 4+ sex partners in the past year, age 18-64*
2018 - Hispanic and Latinx LGBT Health Needs Assessment

We have 2018 health and wellness feedback from 4,679 LGBT+ Pennsylvanians! These data can be used to inform program planning, outreach efforts, and service proposals. While these data have some limitations, we can explore health opportunities and differences within the LGBT community. Two hundred twenty three of the 2018 needs assessment respondents are Hispanic or Latino/a. Below are a few data points specific to this subgroup and comparisons to all needs assessment respondents.

- 29.0% current smoking
- 29.9% have not advised any providers they are LGBT
- 47.7% at least one primary risk factor for HIV*

Comparison across all respondents:
- 30.2%
- 26.2%
- 36.0%

Priority Health Issues:
- Depression - 70.0%
- Suicide - 50.2%
- HIV/AIDS - 44.8%

Priority of HIV/AIDS was recognized more often among Hispanic and Latino/a respondents than among respondents in general (28.6%).

To better understand and address health opportunities and disparities, further research and data collection among Hispanic and Latinx LGBT is needed. Future LGBT needs assessments can incorporate Spanish survey tools.

Data sources: Pennsylvania’ 2018 LGBT Health Needs Assessment

*Risk factors are: treated for STDs/VDs, traded money or drugs for sex, had anal sex without a condom or had 4+ sex partners in the past year, age 18-64
We have 2018 health and wellness feedback from 4,679 LGBT+ Pennsylvanians! These data can be used to inform program planning, outreach efforts, and service proposals. While these data have some limitations, we can explore health opportunities and differences within the LGBT community. Two hundred ninety one of the 2018 needs assessment respondents identify as transgender. Below are a few data points specific to this subgroup and comparisons to all needs assessment respondents.

- **33.3%** current smoking
- **30.2%** comparison across all respondents
- **90.4%** experienced any type of mental health issue in past 12 months
- **77.6%** comparison across all respondents
- **22.0%** at least one primary risk factor for HIV*
- **36.0%** comparison across all respondents

### Priority Health Issues

- **Depression - 68.7%**
- **Access to Welcoming Health Care - 55.0%**
  Priority of access to welcoming health care was recognized more often among transgender respondents than among respondents in general (27.6%)
- **Suicide - 50.9%**

*Data sources: Pennsylvania’ 2018 LGBT Health Needs Assessment

*Risk factors are: treated for STDs/VDs, traded money or drugs for sex, had anal sex without a condom or had 4+ sex partners in the past year, age 18-64

To better understand and address health opportunities and disparities, further research and data collection among transgender people is needed.
We have 2018 health and wellness feedback from 4,679 LGBT+ Pennsylvanians! These data can be used to inform program planning, outreach efforts, and service proposals. While these data have some limitations, we can explore health opportunities and differences within the LGBT community. Two hundred ninety nine of the 2018 needs assessment respondents are 65 years or older. Below are a few data points specific to this subgroup and comparisons to all needs assessment respondents.

- **Current smoking**: 10.6% (30.2% across all respondents)
- **Overweight or obese**: 73.1% (66.0% across all respondents)
- **Experienced any type of mental health condition in the past 12 months**: 47.7% (77.6% across all respondents)

**Priority Health Issues**

- **Isolation**: 45.8%
- **Depression**: 44.5%
- **HIV/AIDS**: 37.1%
- **Elder Care**: 34.4%

To better understand and address health opportunities and disparities, further research and data collection among LGBT older adults is needed.

Data sources: Pennsylvania’ 2018 LGBT Health Needs Assessment
We have 2018 health and wellness feedback from 4,679 LGBT+ Pennsylvanians! These data can be used to inform program planning, outreach efforts, and service proposals. While these data have some limitations, we can explore health opportunities and differences within the LGBT community. One thousand one hundred eighty eight of the 2018 needs assessment respondents are under age 25. Below are a few data points specific to this subgroup and comparisons to all needs assessment respondents.

- **41.7%** current smoking
- **30.2%** comparison across all respondents
- **46.4%** have not advised any providers they are LGBT
- **26.2%** comparison across all respondents
- **92.7%** experienced any type of mental health condition in the past 12 months
- **77.6%** comparison across all respondents

**Priority Health Issues**

- Depression - 63.6%
- Suicide - 49.5%
- Isolation - 32.2%
- Bullying - 30.2%

To better understand and address health opportunities and disparities, further research and data collection among LGBT youth and young adults is needed.

Data sources: Pennsylvania’ 2018 LGBT Health Needs Assessment