Selected Bibliography on Lesbian & Bisexual Women’s Health

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British Columbia Centre of Excellence for Women’s Health
Vancouver, BC CANADA

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Documenting Visibility

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Contents

I. Introduction ........................................................................................................... 1
II. Aging ..................................................................................................................... 2
III. Attitudes of Health Professionals Toward Lesbian and Bisexual Women .......... 5
IV. Bibliographies .................................................................................................... 8
V. Body Image and Disordered Eating .................................................................... 9
VI. Cancer ................................................................................................................. 10
VII. Coming Out to Health Professionals (Disclosure) .......................................... 11
VIII. Consumer Health Information ........................................................................ 13
IX. Disability ............................................................................................................. 14
X. Education and Training ........................................................................................ 15
XI. Guidelines and Best Practices ............................................................................ 17
XII. Health and Social Planning (Needs Assessment) .............................................. 20
XIII. Health Care Interactions (Patients/ Clients) .................................................... 22
XIV. Health Care Interactions (Health Professionals) .............................................. 24
XV. Health Services ................................................................................................ 25
XVI. Health Status ................................................................................................... 27
XVII. HIV/AIDS ....................................................................................................... 31
XVIII. Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Women of Colour .............................. 34
XIX. Mental Health .................................................................................................. 36
XX. Parenting ........................................................................................................... 41
XXI. Physical Activity (Sports) ................................................................................. 43
XXII. Policy, Legislation and Law ............................................................................ 44
XXIII. Reproductive Health and Gynaecology .......................................................... 45
XXIV. Research Methodology .................................................................................. 47
XXV. Sexually Transmitted Infections ..................................................................... 49
XXVI. Substance Use ............................................................................................... 51
XXVII. Violence ........................................................................................................ 53
XXVIII. Youth ............................................................................................................ 58
Introduction

Documenting Visibility: A Selected Bibliography of Lesbian and Bisexual Women’s Health brings together literature published between 1990 and 2000. Developed as a tool for researchers, educators, health practitioners and policy makers, this bibliography makes readily available references to qualitative and quantitative health studies that focus substantively on women who identify as lesbian or bisexual. Prepared by using on-line databases and networking with community and university based researchers, one of our goals was to identify contemporary Canadian research into queer women’s health issues, health experiences and health status. Publications known to contain Canadian content are highlighted throughout the bibliography.

Bibliographies capture a body of literature at a particular moment in time, offering insights to the cultural and political contexts which influence research topics and funding for both research and the dissemination of results. For example, Janice Hitchcock (1989) provides readers with valuable references from 1960 to the mid-1980s which examine “homosexuality” and “lesbianism” from clinical and psychologizing perspectives. Also included in Hitchcock’s bibliography is an emerging body of literature aimed at depathologizing the “difference” of being lesbian or gay and revisioning lesbian and gay health issues. Liza Rankow (1995) demonstrates a shift in “lesbian health” research; an earlier emphasis on the study of “lesbianism” was replaced by research focusing on lesbian and bisexual women’s health care interactions and experiences of health and illness. Documenting Visibility was prepared in order to provide access to studies published over the past decade. While for the most part limited to Canadian and American English publications, the references in this bibliography provide a sense of the on-going development of lesbian and bisexual women’s health knowledge and the ways in which this growing field of research is shaped by contemporary perspectives on identity, sexuality, gender, women’s health and the social determinants of health. We invite you to contribute citations to this bibliography by emailing celeste.wincapaw@bccewh.bc.ca
Aging

This section includes material which addresses the experiences and health issues facing lesbians as they age. While aging in fact is a lifelong process, the material here focuses on mid-life and the senior years. Some articles include material on gay men aging as well as lesbians. Health needs and concerns associated with aging are a particular focus.


Kehoe, M. (1988). Lesbians over 60
speak for themselves. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 16(3-4), 1-111.


Attitudes of Health Professionals Toward Lesbian and Bisexual Women

The articles in this section discuss or identify attitudes toward lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgendered persons, particularly within the health sector. Such material contributes to the understanding of what it is to be a lesbian and hence is also about the definition or construction of lesbianism. Articles about identity are included in this section.


patients. *Journal of Medical Education, 62*(7), 549.


Bibliographies

Materials in this section are those which did not fit elsewhere in the classification scheme. The material included here includes bibliographies on lesbian health developed elsewhere.


Body Image and Disordered Eating

These articles are concerned with body image and eating, including issues such as weight and restrained eating and sexual orientation as a factor in body dissatisfaction and eating disorders.


Cancer

The focus of the materials in this section is on cancer, including personal experiences with cancer. The articles address issues around lesbians and breast and cervical cancer, including questions of screening.


Coming Out to Health Professionals (Disclosure)

Materials in this section deal with aspects of disclosure between gays or lesbians and health and social services providers or between providers who are gay or lesbian and the people they serve. One contribution of these materials is the recognition that disclosure operates in both directions and that it is not only the identity or behaviour of patients or clients which operates in the dynamics of the provision of health care but also that of the provider. Issues of disclosure include aspects of “coming out”, the risks of disclosing one’s sexual orientation, and cultural diversity as it relates to disclosure.


Dardick, L., & Grady, K. E. (1980). Openness between gay persons and health professionals. *Annals of Internal Medicine, 93*(1), 115-119.


Consumer Health Information

These citations are primarily consumer health guides directed at self-care for lesbians. Health is defined broadly and includes physical, mental, social, sexual and spiritual wellbeing.


Disability

The materials in this section focus on the experience of lesbians and bisexual women with disabilities.

Doucette, J. (1990). Redefining the difference - Disabled lesbians resist. In S. C. Stone (Ed.), Between the lines (pp. 61-71). Toronto, Canada: Between the Lines. CDN


O’Toole, C. J., & Bregante, J. L. Lesbians with disabilities. Sexuality and Disability, 10(3), 163-172.

Education and Training

These are either tools for anti-homophobia training or discussions of the importance of anti-homophobia education within professional education, particularly of health care providers.


Harrison A. E. (1996). Primary care of lesbian and gay patients: Educating ourselves and our students. Family Medicine, 28(1), 10-23 [see also comment in Family Medicine, 28(1), 57-58].


Long, J. K. (1996). Working with lesbians, gays and bisexuals: Address-
ing heterosexism in supervision. 


Canadian Medical Association 
*Journal, 155*(6), 709-711. CDN


Guidelines and Best Practices

This section includes materials directed at providing care to lesbians and bisexual women. The majority of material is directed at conventional health care but some of it includes more general care provision, which is applicable to practitioners from various fields, including social work. Best practices and clinical guidelines are included if available.


Health and Social Planning (Needs Assessment)

These materials refer to aspects of planning for provision of care or services for lesbian, bisexual, gay or transgendered persons. Some articles are from local organizations which have undertaken a planning process, including needs assessment, to develop services or programs for lesbian or gay clients.


Gender Dysphoria Clinic. (1990). Appropriate health care to British Columbia residents with true transsexualism. [Report to the Royal Commission on Health Care and Costs]. Vancouver, Canada: Vancouver General Hospital. CDN


Olivier, C., & Targett, L. (1993). Within reach: Meeting on the holistic health needs of lesbians and gay men, and on the related needs of the persons in helping professions. Fredericton, Canada: The New Brunswick Coalition for Human Rights Reform Inc. CDN


Health Care Interactions (Patients/Clients)

This section includes materials which focus on the nature of the interaction between patients and providers in the context of issues of sexual orientation. Topics include expectations of gay, lesbian and bisexual clients of care providers, and experiences between health care providers (nurses, physicians, social workers) and gay, lesbian and bisexual clients.


about experiences with physicians. Canadian Family Physician, 44, 1634-1640. CDN


Health Care Interactions (Health Professionals)

Material in this section addresses the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered health and social service providers and interactions with professionals, patients and clients.


Health Services

The items included here describe system-related preferences and/or access to health care services for lesbians and gays. This section lists materials which document or describe health status and/or the health care needs of lesbians and gays.

Bergeron, S. Utilization of traditional and non-traditional health services: A Canadian lesbian perspective. Thesis research in progress, Department of Psychology, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada.


Schneider, J. S., & Levin, P. (1999). Uneasy partners: the lesbian and
gay health care community and
the AMA. Journal of the American
Medical Association, 282, 1287-1288.

Stevens, P. (1993). Marginalized
women’s access to health care: A
feminist narrative analysis. Advances
in Nursing Science, 16(2), 39.

Terry, J. (1999). Agendas for lesbian
health: Countering the ills of homo-
phobia. In A. E. Clarke & V. L. Oleson
(Eds.), Revisioning women, health
and healing: Feminist, cultural, and
technoscience perspectives. New
York: Routledge.
Health Status

Materials in this section document or describe the health status of lesbians and bisexual women. Many of the articles examine the impact of homophobia and heterosexism—in society and the health care system—on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered persons' health status.


Silvestre, A. J. (1999). Gay male,


HIV/AIDS

These materials are all concerned with HIV/AIDS as it relates to lesbians and gay men. This is an eclectic assortment of materials ranging from the epidemiology of HIV/AIDS to offering support groups for women with HIV.


Lesbian AIDS project: Bibliography of resources relevant to lesbians and HIV/AIDS. (Available from the Gay Men’s Health Clinic, 119 West 24 Street, New York, NY 10011-1913)


Mertz, D., Sushinsky, M. A., &


Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Women of Colour

This section contains materials on various health-related phenomena involving people of varying ethnocultural backgrounds. Some of the issues covered include disclosure, identity, mental health, and providing services. The common thread in this section is a concern with questions of ethnocultural diversity.


Mental Health

This section includes various aspects of mental health and illness, including questions of identity and the associations between being lesbian, bisexual, gay or transgendered and mental health conditions, as well as material on the experience of internalized homophobia, identity formation and survey data on the mental health care needs of lesbians.


Zacks, E., Green, R. J., & Marrow, J. (1988). Comparing lesbian and

Parenting

These materials deal with aspects of lesbian parenting, including issues of choice to parent, reproductive health as it relates to parenting, and the lesbian parent-child relationship.


Medicine, 32(3), 198-200.


Physical Activity (Sports)

A single item addresses aspects of the experience of lesbian athletes.

Policy, Legislation and Law

Linked to aspects of health services and health and social planning, these materials are concerned with issues of rights and the legal system’s response to such issues as domestic violence among lesbians, adoption, and health care.


Reproductive Health and Gynaecology

This section includes articles concerned with gynecologic and reproductive health care and health needs for lesbians and bisexual women.


Lesbian childbearing couples’ dilemmas and decisions. In P. N. 
Stern (Ed.), Lesbian health: What are the issues? (pp. 119-129). 
Washington, DC: Taylor and Frances.

Kjerulff, K. H., Erickson, B. A., & 
gynecological conditions reported 
by US women: Findings from the 
National Health Interview Survey, 
1984 to 1992. American Journal of 
Public Health, 86(2), 195-199.

and Lesbian Social Services, 5(1), 49-58.

Lynch, M. A. (1993). When the patient is also a lesbian. AWHONNS 

women <50 years old. American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, 
174(3), 903-907.

Rosser, S. V. (1997). The next millennium is now here: Women’s studies perspectives on bioethics and reproductive technologies. 
Transformations, 8(1), 1-27.

attitudes and experiences during gynecologic care among lesbians and bisexuals. American Journal of Public Health, 75(9), 1085-1087.

**Research Methodology**

These articles offer critical reflections on research methodologies used to study the health of lesbians.


James, T., & Platzer, H. (1999). Ethical considerations in qualitative research with vulnerable groups: Exploring lesbians’ and gay men’s experiences of health care - A personal perspective. *Nursing Ethics, 6*(1), 73-81.


Sexually Transmitted Infections

The materials in this section include items concerned with sexually transmitted infections other than HIV/AIDS, which has its own section.


in gay men and in lesbians. *Sexually Transmitted Diseases, 8*(4 suppl.), 330-332.
Substance Use

These materials are concerned with a wide range of substance use and abuse issues, including tobacco, alcohol and other drug use by lesbian and bisexual women and/or gay men.


Violence

These materials cover a wide range of violence issues pertinent to lesbian and bisexual women, including physical and sexual abuse, child abuse, rape, partner abuse, and hate crimes.


Renzetti & C. H. Miley (Eds.), Violence in gay and lesbian domestic partnerships (pp. 1-8). New York: Harrington Park Press.


Youth

This section includes a growing literature on gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered youth and their health care needs, experiences, and health-related behaviours. Topics covered include health status, mental health, primary care, identity, self-esteem, reproductive health, substance use and HIV/AIDS, with a focus on young people.


Ce rapport de recherche sur la santé des femmes est offert en français et sous des formes utilisables par les personnes handicapées. Pour plus de détails, veuillez communiquer avec le Centre d’excellence de la C.-B. pour la santé des femmes.