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## Mental health disparities in the LGBT community: The role of stigma

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It is widely known that people who identify themselves as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender (LGBT) face systematic oppression and devaluation due to social stigmas. The purpose of this integrative review was to explore the impact of stigma on mental health outcomes in the LGBT community. A literature search was performed utilizing several electronic databases resulting in 15 primary and secondary sources for analysis. These sources included participants from adolescent to oldest adult and also studies from three countries. Current research indicates LGBT people experience higher rates of mental health problems, substance abuse, suicide and poor physical health compared to their heterosexual peers. A lack of culturally sensitive care is a common complaint which may delay individuals from seeking treatment or from being forthcoming during examinations. Additional findings indicate future research is needed to develop specialized assessments and treatment guidelines to obtain best patient outcomes for this vulnerable population.

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