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**Methods LGBT HHS Survey 2015**

For further information or permission to cite the survey or this methods report, please contact Somjen Frazer at [sfrazer@strengthinnumbersconsulting.com](mailto:sfrazer@strengthinnumbersconsulting.com).

**Survey Design**

Questions about general health and days of poor mental and physical health are taken from Health Related Quality of Life measures. 1 HRQoL screeners define “frequent mental distress” as experiencing 14 or more days of poor mental health in the past month (30 days).

The depression screener used in the survey is the Patient Health Questionnaire 2 item measure (PHQ-2). The cutoff score is >=3. The screener has a sensitivity of 83% and a specificity of 92% for major depression.2

The items measuring loneliness are from the UCLA loneliness scale. It has no specific cutoff point. The scale in the original study has a reliability of 0.72; as used in this study, it has a Chronbach’s alpha of 0.83.3

The items measuring barriers to care adapted from a scale measuring HIV-related barriers to care, with the addition of two barriers to care related to ineligibility for services added as a result of themes arising from focus group discussions4

The question wording for the housing insecurity indicator is taken from the National Survey of America’s Families and can be accessed at <http://tools.nccor.org/css/system/53/> .

The question wording for our food insecurity indicator is taken verbatim from the first stage screener of the USDA food insecurity (HH2-HH4) screener and can be accessed at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/survey-tools.aspx#adult> .

The question wording for the disability indicator

is a modification of the question from the Health Reform Survey, which can be accessed at <http://hrms.urban.org/survey-instrument/HRMS-Quarter-1-2015-survey.pdf> . The question was modified as a result of input from advocates for disabled adults who run an LGBT-specific support group.

**Inclusion**

Responses were included if they selected a valid age category, answered either sexual orientation or gender identity questions with at least one response and were not both straight and non-transgender. Exceptions were made to the last criteria if respondents said they had ever used LGBT health and human services. In other words, responses were excluded if they did not select a valid age category, if they did not answer either sexual orientation or gender identity questions with at least one response and if they were straight and non-transgender and had never used LGBT health and human services.

This inclusion criteria was selected because the survey is of the LGBT community, so survey respondents who are neither from that community nor using its services should not be included in the final analysis.

**Data Cleaning and Analysis: Race/ethnicity, gender identity and sexual orientation**

Race/ethnicity, gender identity and sexual orientation were asked using a combination of categories that could be selected by the respondent and write-in responses for those who identify with identities other than those in the list of categories. All three questions allowed respondents to check all identities that apply. Within each question, respondents who did not answer the question or who answered using an irrelevant response were coded as “missing” for that variable but were otherwise included in data analysis.

It was decided that new categories would be created from open-ended responses only if there were 20 or more write-in responses of the new category. Thus far, the only category that has been newly created according to this criteria is “asexual” (see below)

*Race and Ethnicity*

Race and ethnicity categories included (1) American Indian, Native American, Native Hawaiian or Alaska Native, (2) Arab American or Middle Eastern, (3) Asian, Asian American or Pacific Islander, (4) Black or African American, (5) Caribbean, (6) Latino/a, Hispanic or Spanish and (7) White or Caucasian. Survey respondents who selected “Any other race or ethnicity not listed here” and wrote in responses equivalent to existing categories were recoded into those categories. For example, respondents who wrote “Italian American” or “Irish” were recoded into White or Caucasian.

Respondents who selected more than one race or ethnicity were recoded into a multiracial/multiethnic category, as were respondents who wrote in responses such as “mixed,” “multiracial” or “biracial”. Respondents who did not select any race or ethnicity categories and wrote non-racial/non-ethnic responses such as “human” or “alien” were coded as missing for race/ethnicity.

*Sex and Gender Identity*

Sex assigned at birth was ascertained by asking “What was the sex on your original birth certificate? Please select one answer” with the answer choices male, female, intersex and not sure. While New York State birth certificates allow only male or female as assigned sex at birth, because survey respondents could be from other locations, intersex was included to assure inclusivity.

Current gender identity categories that could be selected by survey respondents included (1) Male, man or boy, (2) Female, woman or girl, (3) Transgender, (4) Male-to-female, MTF, transwoman, transfeminine or transgirl, (5) Female-to-male, FTM, transman, transmasculine or transguy, (6) Genderqueer or gender nonconforming, (7) AG, Aggressive or stud, (8) Butch, (9) Femme, (10) Intersex and (11) Two-spirit.

Survey respondents who selected “Any other gender identity not listed here” and wrote in responses equivalent to existing categories were recoded into those categories. For example, “soft butch” was recoded into “butch” and “queer” into “genderqueer”.

Respondents who selected male for their sex assigned at birth and female, woman or girl were recoded as “male-to-female, MTF, transwoman, transfeminine or transgirl”; respondents who selected female for their sex assigned at birth and male, man or boy were recoded as “female-to-male, FTM, transman, transmasculine or transguy”. All respondents who selected or were recoded as transgender or as male-to-female or female-to-male were included in the category “transgender”.

Respondents who selected genderqueer or gender nonconforming were recoded into a new category of genderqueer, gender nonconforming, genderfluid and non-binary gender, along with those who wrote in genderfluid and non-binary. This variable is referred to as “Gender nonconforming” or “GNC” in the text.

True “other” categories included agender, demi- prefix genders, questioning and write-in genders that had no resemblance to any other categorical or write-in gender.

Respondents who selected no current gender identities but did select a birth sex were recoded as their birth sex.

*Sexual Orientation*

Sexual orientation categories that could be selected by respondents included (1) Gay or homosexual, (2) Lesbian, (3) Bisexual, (4) Queer, (5) Pansexual and (6) Heterosexual or straight. Survey respondents who selected “Any other sexual orientation not listed here” and wrote in responses equivalent to existing categories were recoded into those categories. The category of “asexual” was also created from open-ended responses.