

# LGBT Health – Data Brief

## 2014 Vermont Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFSS)

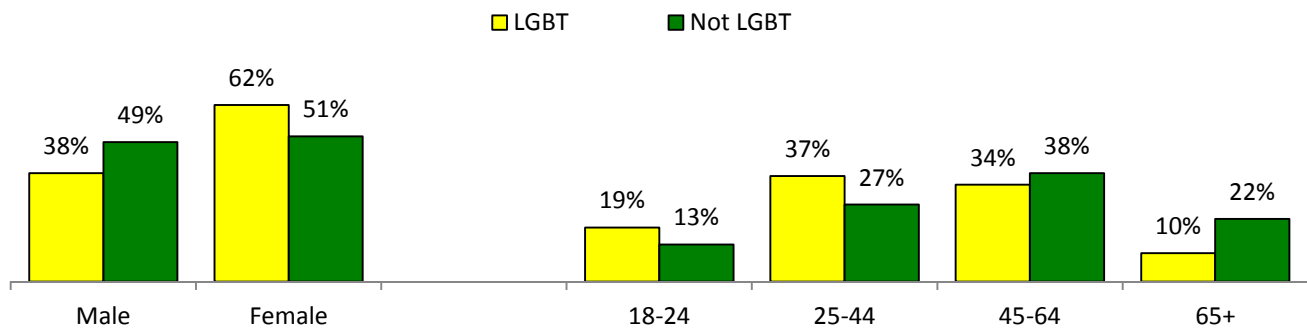
### Background

There is growing recognition of the health challenges and disparities faced by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender communities (LGBT). This population has been demonstrated to experience higher participation in risk behaviors such as smoking and alcohol use, as well as increased rates of depression and other mental health challenges<sup>1,2</sup>. Vermont BRFSS data from 2014 allows us to look at the health of the LGBT adult population.

### Overall

Five percent of the Vermont adult population identified as either Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or other sexual identity (LGBT). Six in ten (62%) LGBT adults identify as female, while 38% identify as male. This is significantly different from the non-LGBT population where half of the population is each gender. The LGBT adult population in Vermont is younger than the non-LGBT population. More than half of LGBT are ages 18-44 (56%), which is significantly higher than the 40% seen among those who are not LGBT. Vermont adults who are LGBT are also more likely to be a racial or ethnic minority, compared with non-LGBT adults (10% vs. 5%).

**Gender and Age Distribution by LGBT Status**

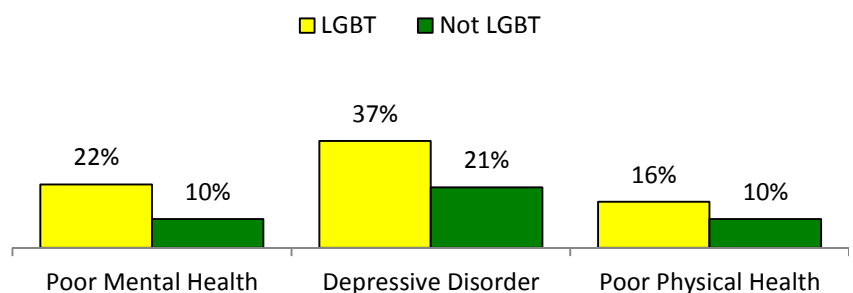


There are no statistically significant differences between the LGBT and non-LGBT adult population by education status, annual household income level, employment status, or the presence of children in the home.

### Mental and Physical Health

Vermont LGBT adults are twice as likely as non-LGBT adults to report poor mental health<sup>3</sup> (22% vs. 10%). Likewise they are also significantly more likely to have been diagnosed with a depressive disorder (37% vs. 21%). Reported poor physical health<sup>1,3</sup> was also higher among the LGBT population, however the difference was

**Mental and Physical Health**



<sup>1</sup> Healthy People 2020: <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-health?topicid=25#twentyeight>

<sup>2</sup> National Alliance on Mental Illness: <https://www.nami.org/Find-Support/LGBTQ>

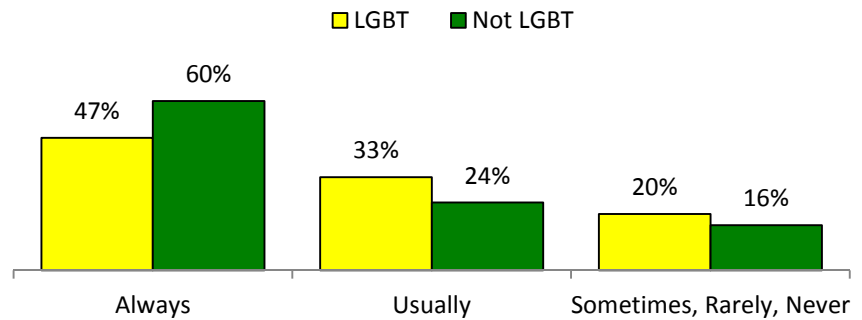
<sup>3</sup> Poor physical health is defined as 14 or more days in the last month with poor physical health; poor mental health defined as 14 or more days with poor mental health.

not statistically significant (16% vs. 10%).

### Emotional and Social Support

LGBT adults are significantly less likely than non-LGBT ones to ‘always’ get support, and more likely to ‘usually’ get supported emotionally and socially. Indicating, that while LGBT adults feel they generally get the support they need, they get this support somewhat less frequently than non-LGBT adults.

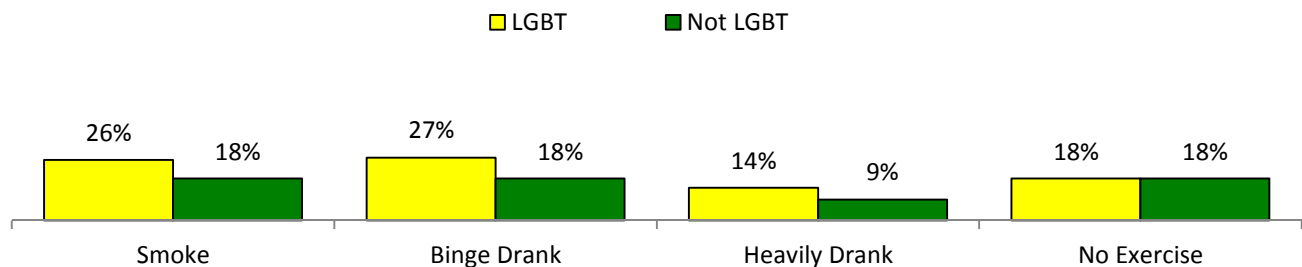
Level of Emotional and Social Support



### Risk Behaviors

LGBT adults are significantly more likely than those who are not LGBT to report current smoking (26% vs. 18%) and binge<sup>4</sup> drinking (27% vs. 18%). Heavy<sup>2</sup> drinking rates are elevated among the LGBT population however the difference as compared with those who are not LGBT is not statistically significant (14% vs. 9%).

Prevalence of Risk Behaviors

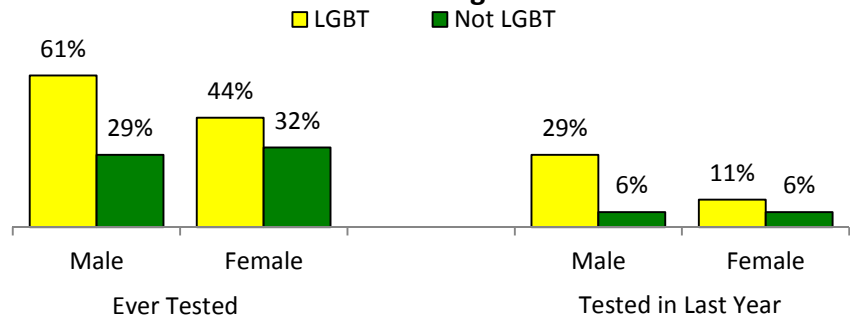


The same proportion of LGBT and non-LGBT adults reported no leisure time physical activity in the last month, 18%.

### HIV Testing

LGBT adults, particularly men, are at an increased risk of HIV infection. Half of the Vermont adult LGBT population has ever been tested for HIV and 18% were tested in the last year. Reported ever and recent HIV testing rates are significantly higher among the adult LGBT population vs. those who are not LGBT.

HIV Testing



LGBT men are significantly more likely than non-LGBT men to have received HIV testing, both ever and in the last year. Women who are LGBT are significantly more likely than their counterparts to have ever been tested. They are also more likely to have been tested in the last year, however this difference is not statistically significant. Likewise, differences in testing between LGBT men and women are not statistically significant.

For more information on the BRFSS or to suggest ideas for future BRFSS Data Briefs, contact Jessie Hammond, M.P.H. ([jessie.hammond@vermont.gov](mailto:jessie.hammond@vermont.gov)).

<sup>4</sup> Binge drinking is defined as five or more drinks on an occasion for men and four or more for women. Heavy drinking is defined as more than two drinks per day for men and more than one per day for women.