

Lesbian, bisexual and queer women have sex with MSM:

PrEP should be made available to these women

Lesbian, bisexual and queer women have unprotected sex with gay, bisexual and queer men (trans and cis) who have sex with men (GBQMSM)

8%

of lesbian, bisexual and queer women reported sex with a man who has sex with man in the last 6 months; 32% had ever done so. Similar rates are shown in other surveys and communities^{2,3}

58%

occasionally or often had sex involving a vagina and not used a condom

24%

occasionally or often had sex involving an anus and not used a condom⁴

I don't think I could go in and say, 'my partner's HIV-positive and I would like to take PrEP'. I don't think that would work... Nobody's ever suggested I should take PrEP. That's just not part of the healthcare that is considered relevant to me.⁷

Lesbian, bisexual and queer women are invisible in HIV notification data and PrEP Prescriber Guidelines

NSW Health's HIV Notification reporting form records all HIV transmission occurring as a result of sex between a woman and a man as 'heterosexual transmission' even though neither party may identify as heterosexual or be entirely heterosexual in practice. The form doesn't capture sexuality either. There's no mention of lesbian, bisexual and queer women in PrEP prescriber guidelines at all, despite the NSW HIV strategy 2021-2025 listing sexual partners of members of priority populations as a priority population.

63%

of LBQ women had ever heard about PrEP⁵. Of the 12 who reported seeking PrEP, four had been unsuccessful. Emerging qualitative data⁶ shows lesbian, bisexual and queer women in Australia did not consider PrEP to be relevant to their own lives and they are not confident a GP would prescribe PrEP if they requested it. Participants who were knowledgeable about HIV were more likely to understand themselves as having the tools to advocate for their use of PrEP.

Lesbian, bisexual and queer women need to be visible and included in HIV prevention

With NSW HIV targets now at 91:95:95, we need to understand who is left behind by current HIV health promotion and prevention strategies such as PrEP. Lesbian, bisexual and queer women need to be:

Seen

Accurate data collection in HIV surveillance and reporting and research with GBQMSM making lesbian, bisexual and queer women visible.

Heard

Review and update Australian PrEP prescriber guidelines to include lesbian, bisexual and queer women who have sex with GBQMSM. Develop education initiatives for LBQ women, who might be suitable for PrEP.

Included

HIV testing recommendations extended to all partners of GBQMSM, including lesbian, bisexual and queer women.

SCAN TO FIND OUT MORE



Abstract title: **SWASH data, lesbian, bisexual and queer (LBQ) women and HIV risk**

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