

# A snapshot of people of diverse sexualities and genders in Newcastle

People of diverse sexualities and genders or Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, (LGBTIQ+) people and communities represent a diverse and often underrepresented population within Australia.

Unfortunately, there is a lack of detailed population level data for people of diverse sexualities and genders across Australia which makes it difficult to appropriately respond to the needs of these communities. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census records whether people identify as being in a same-sex union, however, does not record people's sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.

## Here are some things we do know from available data:



In 2021, **1,531** people were living in same-sex de-facto relationships in the Newcastle LGA<sup>1</sup> – approximately 1% of the general population, as compared to 779 same-sex couples and 0.5% of the population in 2016.



However, **up to 11%** of Australians may have a diverse sexual orientation, sex, or gender identity.<sup>2</sup> In Newcastle this equates to approximately **20,000** people.



In 2021, **there were 137** children living in a same-sex family in the Newcastle LGA, almost all in female same-sex couple families, as compared to 109 children in 2016.



In 2021, people living in a same-sex de-facto relationship had generally attained higher levels of education i.e. 40% having a Bachelor degree or higher, compared with approximately 23% of the general population<sup>3</sup>.





## Key indicators of health and wellbeing for people of diverse sexualities and genders in Australia are:

- **LGBTIQ+ young people are 4x more likely** to engage in self-injury and transgender people aged 18 and over are 6.5x more likely than the general population.
- Access to gender affirming surgeries cuts severe psychological distress and suicide attempts by **more than 50%**<sup>4</sup>.
- A national survey of people of diverse sexualities and genders found that **57% were treated unfairly** because of their sexual orientation and **39.5% reported experiencing social exclusion** in the past 12 months<sup>5</sup>.
- **18% of LGBT** people aged 16 years and over were born overseas<sup>6</sup>.
- **More than half (52%) of multicultural and multifaith LGBTQ people** are out to their families who are supportive of their identity (whether it is discussed openly or not)<sup>7</sup>.
- Seeing Gender Neutral language on forms helped **more than 59% of LGBTQIA+** patients view their healthcare provider as inclusive.
- **More than 60% of people of diverse sexualities and genders** feel a health setting is more trustworthy if they see visible symbols of inclusion<sup>8</sup>.



## When considering regional and rural experiences of diverse sexualities and genders:

- **22% of LGBTIQ+ people aged 18 and over** reported residing in regional cities or towns and **6.4% in rural and remote regions**<sup>9</sup>.
- **57% of regional residents** saw visible signs of inclusion compared to **71% of metropolitan residents**.
- **42% of regional residents** were aware of active allies compared to **72% in cities**<sup>10</sup>.

The key indicators as presented above, demonstrate that people of diverse sexualities and genders continue to share a disproportionate level of the burden of disease currently attributed to mental health, social isolation, sexual health, and community safety.



## In consultation with ACON Hunter, the top LGBTQ community health and wellbeing priorities within the Newcastle LGA in 2020 were identified as:

1. Mental Health Support
2. Sexual Health
3. Community Safety and Inclusion
4. Social Isolation support
5. Domestic and Family Violence and Relationship Support

<sup>1</sup> Australia Bureau of Statistics, 2021

<sup>2</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission, (2014) Face the Facts

<sup>3</sup> Australia Bureau of Statistics, 2021

<sup>4</sup> Association between gender-affirming surgeries and mental health outcomes, Almazan et al., 2021.

<sup>5</sup> Hill, A. O., Bourne, A., McNair, R., Carman, M. & Lyons, A. (2020). Private Lives 3: The health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ people in Australia. ARCSHS Monograph Series No. 122. Melbourne, Australia: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University

<sup>6</sup> Snapshot of mental health and suicide prevention statistics for LGBTIQ+

people, LGBTIQ+ Health Australia, 2021

<sup>7</sup> Navigating intersectionality: Multicultural and multifaith LGBTIQ+ Victorians talk about discrimination and affirmation, Pallota-Chiarolli et al., 2021.

<sup>8</sup> Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Perceptions & Health Care Experiences, Quinn et al, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Snapshot of mental health and suicide prevention statistics for LGBTIQ+ people, LGBTIQ+ Health Australia, 2021

<sup>10</sup> Pride in Diversity (2019) Regional Inclusion – A How to Guide

