

## **Alcohol-related behaviours, beliefs, and knowledge regarding cancer risk related to alcohol in the New South Wales LGBTQ+ community**

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**Introduction:** Sexuality and gender diverse (LGBTQ+) people are a priority for cancer control due to experience of risk factors for cancer and lower participation in many cancer screening services. Alcohol use among LGBTQ+ people is typically higher compared to the general population. Awareness of alcohol-related cancer risk in the LGBTQ+ community is unclear. We aimed to examine alcohol-related behaviours, perceived health risks of alcohol use, awareness of alcohol-related cancer risk, and alcohol-related help-seeking behaviours among LGBTQ+ adults.

**Method:** Cross-sectional online survey of LGBTQ+ people aged ≥18 years who resided in NSW at the time of the survey (Nov-Dec 2022).

**Findings:** Mean age of participants was 34 years (n=1,499; 58% female, 25% male; 50% gay or lesbian). Around one-in-three (35%) drank at levels exceeding NHMRC guidelines (≥5 standard drinks/drinking day and/or ≥11 standard drinks/week). Liver disease, depression/anxiety, and weight gain were the top health risks perceived to be associated with alcohol use. Two-in-three (66%) participants were aware that alcohol increases risk of cancer. Cancers of the liver, stomach, and pancreas were most commonly perceived to be associated with alcohol use. Among people who exceeded NHMRC guidelines, common help-seeking barriers were beliefs that their drinking has reduced without help, feelings of shame/embarrassment, and lack of readiness.

**Conclusions:** Awareness of the link between alcohol use and cancer risk needs to be raised in the LGBTQ+ community. Public health campaigns to reduce risky alcohol use among LGBTQ+ people should take care to avoid judgemental messaging whilst encouraging immediate action.

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