

Do lesbian, bisexual and queer women have chemsex? Examining contexts of drug use

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SWASH survey

- Cross-sectional survey of lesbian, bisexual and queer (LBQ) women connected to Sydney's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer communities



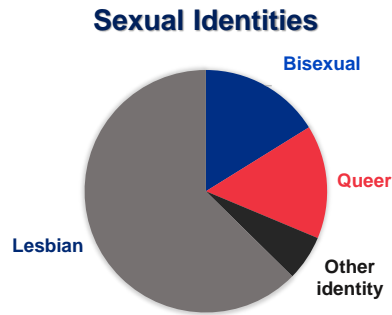
Credit: Michelle Ring,
ACON Here for Women, 2016



2016: Demographics

Number recruited:
623

Ages:
33 years median
range 16-68



2016: Illicit drug use

- Consistently high rates of illicit drug use:

Type	2016 last 6m	Type	2016 last 6m
Cannabis	29%	Amyl/poppers	8%
Ecstasy	19%	LSD	6%
Cocaine	16%	Ketamine	4%
Benzodiazepines	18%	Injecting drug use	2%
Methamphetamine	9%	Any illicit drug use	45%

- Comparable to other Australian and international research among LBQ women
- Implications for harm minimisation and treatment – but little/no data available on contexts of use



2016: Contexts of drug use

- Of women reporting using each drug:

	Used at home n (%)	Used at venue/party n (%)	Used during sex, n (%)
Cannabis	98 (54)	49 (27)	14 (8)
Benzodiazepines	71 (62)	13 (11)	1 (1)
Ecstasy	24 (20)	66 (56)	16 (14)
Methamphetamine	21 (34)	28 (49)	7 (11)
Cocaine	25 (25)	55 (54)	9 (9)
Amyl/poppers	12 (24)	29 (58)	9 (18)
LSD	12 (34)	17 (49)	2 (6)
Ketamine	7 (25)	21 (75)	3 (11)



**Of women who used drugs,
15% used during sex**



Food for thought

- Why do we want to know?
 - Given high rates of drug use, important to understand social and cultural significance of use
 - This will inform meaningful harm reduction and models of treatment
- Is knowing about chemsex important?
- Future work
 - Further data collection with refined questions in 2018



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