

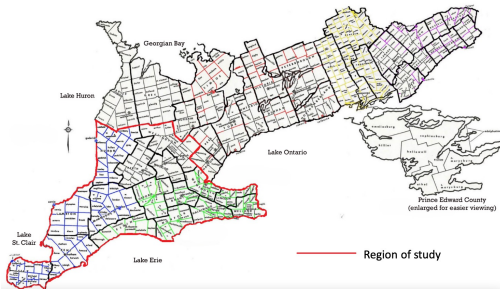
Exploring Service Delivery for Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Other Men Who Have Sex with Men in AIDS Service Organizations in Southwestern Ontario, Canada

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BACKGROUND

- Gay, bisexual, trans, and other men who have sex with men (GBTMSM) experience adverse health outcomes than their heterosexual/cisgender counterparts^{1,2,3,4}
- Continued research is needed to better understand how service organizations and providers can best support the health and wellbeing of heterogeneous GBTMSM
- Most research exploring the sexual health and broader health of GBTMSM is from large urban centres
- Data gaps exist in relation to the experiences of GBTMSM outside of these metropolitan centres
- This research aims to characterize service delivery, region-specific nuances, and facilitators/barriers to implementing knowledge uptake for GBTMSM within AIDS Service Organizations (ASOs) in Southwestern Ontario



Source: <https://globalgenealogy.com/countries/canada/ontario/resources-ontario/map-of-counties.htm>

METHOD

- Second part of a larger multi-phase project
- Semi-structured interviews (n=14) with leaders and GBTMSM sexual health workers within six ASOs in Southwestern Ontario
- Transcribed interviews analysed using NVIVO software
- Code report generated, thematically capturing commonalities and differences across regions⁵

RESULTS

- Four global themes emerged:
 - Organizational and sector characteristics
 - Data and informational availability and utility
 - Outreach and engagement with GBTMSM
 - Sexual health and broader health of GBTMSM

Theme 1: Organizational and Sector Characteristics



- Characterizing Funding**
 - Sector- & Funding-Related Issues
 - limited funding can create challenges for implementing programming and services
- Relationships with Other ASOs, Agencies or Service Providers**
 - Some indicated ASOs can be somewhat siloed from one another - limits information and resource sharing
 - Others highlighted limits of traditional services/public health bodies - limited in their capacity to provide 2SLGBTQ+-competent care
- Changes in the Sector & Moving Forward**
 - Ideas about what the sector might look like in the future
 - Participants described efforts to provide more meaningful and culturally-informed services for BIPOC GBTMSM

Theme 2: Data and informational availability and utility



- Region-Specific & Race-Related Data**
 - Participants mentioned having relying on data/information from Toronto or Montreal, which may not represent the experiences of GBTMSM in SW Ontario
 - A significant lack of race-related data was highlighted - creates issues for informing programming; need to ensure this data is owned by BIPOC communities
- Quality of Data & Information**
 - Many participants described a lack of relevant and timely information and data
 - Other participants mentioned that aggregated data has limits for describing region-specific nuances
- Useful Resources**
 - Data/information/knowledge products of usefulness
 - OHTN, CATIE & GMSH resources/training often mentioned
- Needed Data & Information**
 - Participants underscored a need for greater funding/support and data/information to effectively implement programming and services
 - e.g., race- and region-specific data, epidemiologic & qualitative data

Theme 3: Outreach and Engagement with GBTMSM



- Connecting with GBTMSM**
 - Descriptions of how/where an ASO reaches the GBTMSM in their catchment area
 - Barriers to Connecting with GBTMSM**
 - Participants described barriers reaching racialized GBTMSM, GBTMSM who use substances, and discrete GBTMSM
- Characterizing Referral Networks**
 - Descriptions of where an ASO refers GBTMSM to or where they often receive referrals from (public health, other 2SLGBTQ+ organizations)
- COVID-19-Related Outreach & Engagement Barriers**
 - COVID-19 creates barriers to in-person engagement and STBBI testing services
 - The digital divide was often mentioned - not all GBTMSM have access to online services
- Outreach & Engagement Innovation and Solutions**
 - Participants described collaborating with local businesses and clinics to enhance outreach and engagement
 - Use of social media and video-conferencing platforms maintained connection with GBTMSM during lockdowns

Theme 4: Sexual Health and Broader Health of GBTMSM



- Stigma, Discrimination, Violence and Identity Non-Disclosure**
 - Participants described how racialized and differently abled GBTMSM and trans/non-binary GBTMSM experience additional marginalization
 - Some GBTMSM may face anti-gay/anti-trans violence in their communities
- Sexual Education & Other Resource and Information Gathering**
 - Descriptions of where/how GBTMSM access sexual health information/resources and the limits of these sources
- COVID-19-Related Implications for the Wellbeing of GBTMSM**
 - COVID-19 has created barriers to accessing STBBI testing and care and creates limits for GBTMSM seeking to experience community and connection
- Community, Connection & Social Support**
 - Social support seems to be an important resource for bolstering well being among GBTMSM, but barriers to accessing spaces for GBTMSM with intersecting marginalized identities
- HIV Non-Disclosure Laws & HIV-Related Stigma**
 - In general, HIV non-disclosure laws/U=U not well known by both those in the 2SLGBTQ+ and general population; perpetuates HIV-related stigma
- Sexual Health, PrEP, HIV and STBBI Testing & Service Provision**
 - PrEP uptake remains relatively low, but those on PrEP content with it
 - Some service providers in the SW Ontario lack the 2SLGBTQ+ competence to provide affirming and meaningful care; may inadvertently be perpetuating harm

CONCLUSIONS & NEXT STEPS

- Findings have implications for local service delivery.
- Next steps include:
 - ongoing discussions with ASO representatives about themes;
 - Interviews with GBTMSM from each catchment area (n=30), completed April 2022)
 - collection of in-depth, relevant quantitative data (~2023);
 - using several data sources to holistically inform future service provision for GBTMSM in Southwestern Ontario

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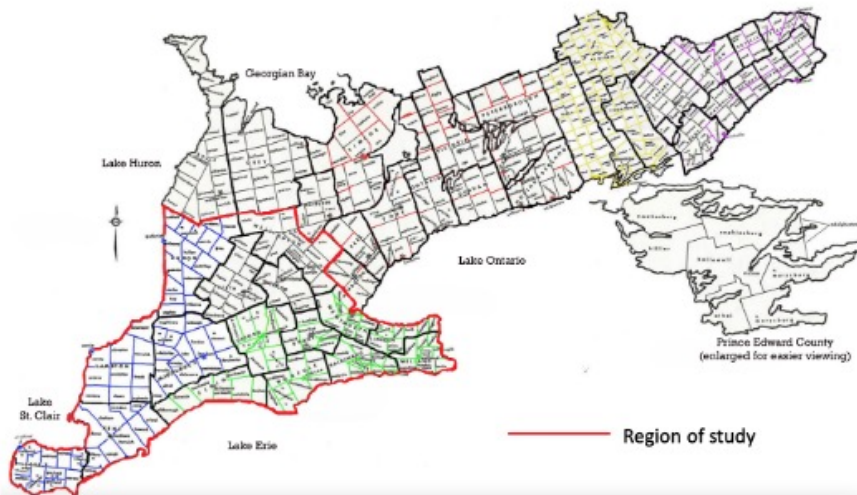
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