

Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the LGBTQ+ community in San Mateo County: a community-centered needs assessment

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Background

- The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted many underserved and vulnerable communities
- To our knowledge, there hasn't been a specific, targeted effort to look at how COVID-19 has affected LGBTQ+ community members in San Mateo County
- Knowing this information will help guide San Mateo County to better support the LGBTQ+ community during the pandemic

Community partner

The Pride Center is the first and only LGBTQ+ center in San Mateo County. The Pride Center offers a broad range of programs for LGBTQ+ community members of all ages, including direct mental health services, social events, and educational programming.



Project description

- Online survey assessed the impacts of COVID-19 on financial stability, housing stability, safety and access to supportive resources, mental and emotional health, and physical health
- The survey was distributed by the Pride Center and community partners, and the survey was also made available in alternative phone and paper formats

Survey results

532 participants 21% gender-diverse participants
100+ narrative comments 78% non-heterosexual participants

Gender-diverse participants were **2.6x more likely** than cis participants to have experienced violence or harassment

Participants with disabilities were **7.3x more likely** than participants without disabilities to have moved into unsafe/unstable housing

Non-white participants were **2.5x more likely** than white participants to have had trouble getting stipend checks/unemployment benefits

*Percentages
of negative
impacts
reported by all
participants*

36%	Financial stability
18%	Housing stability
85%	Emotional or mental health
65%	Physical health
17%	Safety or access to supportive resources

Lessons learned

- COVID-19 has significantly impacted the LGBTQ+ community in San Mateo County and this survey helps to identify the magnitude of these impacts
- Many people left narrative comments, meaning that the community really wanted to share their stories and have their voices heard!
- Important intersections of identity include but are not limited to race, income, and ability status

- There were limits to digital survey distribution, including differential access to technology, wi-fi, and social media accounts
- It's important to prioritize inclusivity, accessibility, and transparency when collecting stories and experiences from community members
- It's important that we have the resources and infrastructure to collect data about the LGBTQ+ community

Reflections and next steps

- There is clearly an urgent need to address the immense impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the LGBTQ+ community in San Mateo County
- The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on community members with multiple minority identities underscores the importance of resources, programming, and support specifically for community members who don't benefit from specific axes of privilege
- The Pride Center will target programs and services towards the identified areas of need
- Next steps include securing funding to enhance the Pride Center's programmatic work, prioritizing the work of the Pride Center's mental health team, and enhancing the capacity-building work of the Pride Center and other community partners in San Mateo County
- Continue to collect information, stories, and experiences from the LGBTQ+ community to identify and refine specific needs
- **The most important element is working with community, for community**

Acknowledgements

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- Background/Need: The identified health need and some of the pertinent epidemiology/policy history
- Community Partner: Information about your community partner (mission, program areas, how your project fits with these)
- Project Description: Description of your project, objectives, major activities and analytic approaches, if appropriate
- Outcomes: Main results and outcomes, milestones, impact(s) on the community partner/community
- Lessons Learned: A reflection on your role as a health professional in engaging with your community partner and implementing your project and project challenges
- Recommendations: Next steps for sustaining and disseminating the project, ideas for future projects to build on results and additional needs that were identified
- Acknowledgements: Recognize project mentors and funders (e.g., Medical Scholars, Funding sources)