

Perinatal mental health interventions in LGBT+ parents: a scoping review

Dr Ariana Axiq^{1,2}, Dr David Mongan¹, Dr Emily Boyd³, Dr Carly McCollough¹, Audrisha De¹, Dr Gail Anderson¹, Prof John Gilmore⁴

1. School of Biomedical Sciences, Medicine and Dentistry, Queen's University Belfast

2. College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, University of Edinburgh

3. Great Western Hospitals NHS Trust

4. School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systemcs University College Dublin



Background:

LGBT+ parents are at higher risk of PMI. This is attributed to higher incidence of pre-existing mental health (MH) conditions, poor social support, minority stress, healthcare-associated discrimination and artificial insemination-related stress.

'Perinatal mental health services should be aware of a range of family structures, including LGBTQ+, and seek to provide care that recognises the challenges and needs of these families, including barriers to care, the double stigma associated with mental health problems and being an LGBTQ parent, and how the challenges of being an LGBTQ parent affect both the individual and the partner/co-parent (where there is a partner/co-parent) and the impact of this on mental health.'

Royal College of Psychiatrists 2021, CR 232

However, services are yet to adapt. This scoping review explores literature available on mental health interventions : screening and treatment for LGBT+ individuals during the perinatal period.

Aims:

1

To synthesise published studies on prevention and treatment for perinatal mental illness in LGBT+ populations.

2

To evaluate the experiences of LGBT+ parents, including non-birth and adoptive parents, during the perinatal period, regarding healthcare-provided mental health services and support

3

To identify research gaps in prevention and treatment for perinatal mental illness in LGBT+ populations.

Methods:

Inclusion criteria:

Population of individuals, self-identified as LGBT+ during the perinatal period (including fertility treatments, surrogacy bearing and pregnancy losses)

intervention which aimed to screen for, prevent or reduce parental symptoms of mental illness (mood and affective disorders and psychosis).

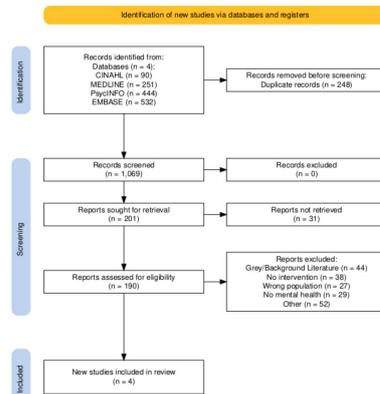
4 databases screened: Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), PsycINFO, MEDLINE, Embase using librarian devised search strategy.

Title and abstract, and Full text both conducted by two independent researchers with conflicts settled by a third reviewer.

Exclusion: Sexual orientation or gender identity not recorded, Studies where interventions focused on physical health only, studies based on health professionals' perspective only, no mention of mental health support interventions or services.

Narrative synthesis of included primary studies.
Discourse analysis of secondary studies with recommendations for future practice.

Results:



4 primary studies identified using selection criteria using PRISMA guidelines.
Paucity of literature limited risk of bias assessment
15 secondary studies identified for discourse analysis

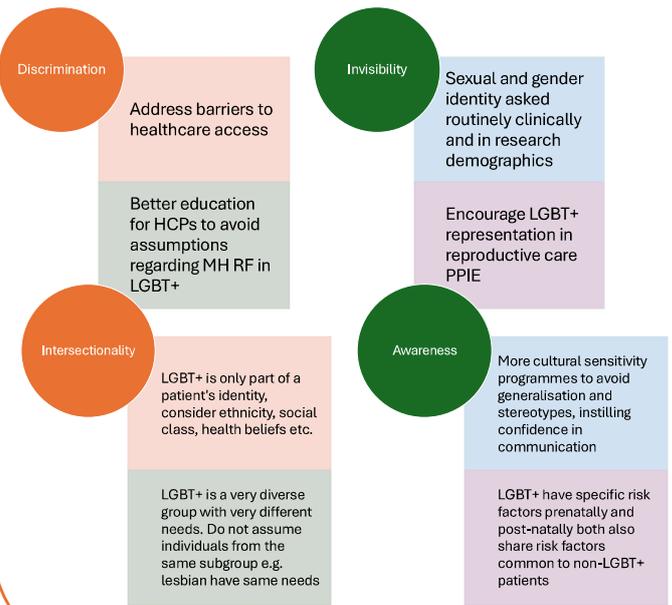
Narrative synthesis of primary studies:
Range of publication: 16 - 2023, 2024, another in 2015
Location of publication: US

- 1 protocol for a mental health intervention for infertility-related distress; mixture of lesbian and heterosexual couples, population did not have mental illness at baseline.
- 1 screening study for perinatal depression in lesbian and bisexual women
- 2 qualitative studies, including perinatal mental health experiences and experiences of related interventions – one in lesbian parents, the other in transgender and non-binary parents.

Future studies required:

- Homosexual male parents underrepresented
- No studies evaluating effectiveness of tailored interventions for LGBT+ individuals
- No studies comparing preventative and therapeutic interventions for mental health disorders perinatally.
- Samples small and unrepresentative of LGBT+ population

Discourse analysis results and recommendations:



Conclusion:

There is increased awareness of a minority of parents identifying as LGBT+, and how they are at higher risk of PMI than non-LGBT+ parents. However, the scarcity of literature on focused interventions reflects how services are still to adapt to target PMI in this population. With higher consideration of LGBT+ identity of patients, both clinically and academically, we can improve tailored preventative and mental health care for this population, in a sensitive and safe environment.

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