

## 1. ABOUT

This report summarises findings from a major study into Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender employee networks in the NHS.



The research was funded by the Economic & Social Research Council & carried out by the University of York in partnership with NHS Employers, Stonewall & Employers Networks for Inclusion.



## 2. METHODS

Surveys of over  
**4000**  
NHS employees in trusts in England



**9 CASE STUDIES**  
of LGBT+ networks in NHS organisations comprising of

**45** observations of network meetings and activities  
&  
**66** interviews

## 3. FINDINGS

Report looks at networks'

- PURPOSE & FUNCTION**
- MEMBER COMPOSITION**
- SUSTAINABILITY & IMPACT**

### THE REPORT FOUND THAT...

People join for different reasons from social to strategic

Members are more open about their sexuality compared to non-members

Networks lack diversity as dominated by gay men

Most networks chairs have no formal time allocation



# Understanding LGBT+ employee networks & how to support them



### MEETINGS ARE CENTRAL

Operationalising networks can increase organisational status & access to resources BUT meetings feel impersonal

### UNCLEAR PURPOSE OF NETWORKS

Lack of information & guidance

Pressure to be active & evidence impact means activities are generic

Culture change is difficult to measure

### DIVERSITY ISSUES

Focus on size of the network NOT diversity

Lack of information about members means that collective voice is not representative

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

## NETWORKS FOCUS ON 3 MAIN AREAS:



Raising Awareness & Visibility



Influencing The Organisation



Creating A Supportive Space & Work Environment

But, right now LGBT+ networks are subsumed by long agendas with limited space for personal sharing

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS



### FOR NETWORKS

- 1 Be clear on purpose to unite members & garner organisational support
- 2 Make space for personal stories to build mutual support
- 3 Get to know your members to address under-representation
- 4 Seek support when you need it to access resources
- 5 Work with external partners & other staff networks for new ideas & impact



### FOR ORGANISATIONS

- 1 Help raise LGBT+ networks' profile by promoting, resourcing & endorsing them
- 2 Support & consult networks to discuss policy & practice
- 3 Formalise time allocation & release to support networks as two thirds of chairs had no time