

# HOME SPACE, A SAFE PLACE: OR IS IT?

*Nancy Clark*

*Canterbury Christ Church University*

[nancy.clark@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:nancy.clark@canterbury.ac.uk)

# HOME SPACE, A SAFE PLACE: OR IS IT?

Demographics

Scoping study

Key Themes

Quotes

Opportunities for Occupational Therapists

- People
- Environment
- Occupations

Conclusion

Key message

References

# DEMOGRAPHICS

- The LGBT population are three times more likely to be single and live alone
- They are less likely to have children
- They are more likely to be estranged from family
- They are significantly more likely to experience mental health problems

Age UK, 2017

### Inclusion criteria:

- Aged 60 or over
- Receiving health or social care provision
- Directly related to older LGBT issues
- Living in their own home, or supported housing
- Living in the UK.
- Published in a peer reviewed English speaking journal.

### Exclusion criteria:

- Under 60
- In temporary hospital accommodation
- Related to foster care, or adoption.
- Living outside the UK
- Not primary research
- Not related to LGBT issues

# SCOPING STUDY

## Population of Interest

### LGBT

## Terms related to population of interest (combined with Boolean AND, OR).

Lesbian; woman to woman; gay; homosexual; queer; bi-sexual; same sex; man to man; transgender; questioning; intersex; LGB; LGBT; LGBTQ OR LGBTQQI

### Housing

Housing; home; sheltered; supported; care AND residential OR nursing

### Ageing

Old; elder; aged AND people OR adult OR parent OR sibling OR spouse OR partner OR friend

# THREE KEY THEMES



HOME AS A SAFE  
PLACE TO BE MYSELF



HOME SPACE AS A  
SAFE PLACE



ANTICIPATED  
FUTURES

# 1. HOME AS A SAFE PLACE TO BE MYSELF

## QUOTES

- *I have never or rarely, come out in the sense of telling people. Too often it is interpreted as a confession. I behave as though the fact is obvious. Westwood, 2015, p4.*
- *In my sheltered accommodation, nobody knows I am a lesbian. They mustn't. It is so gossipy and they pick on anyone who is different. Westwood. 2015, p4.*
- *Oh that's right, how long have you two been together? ...And I'm thinking, Oh God just shut up! Out of the corner of my eye I could see the staff just staring. Price, 2009, p166.*

# 1. HOME AS A SAFE PLACE TO BE MYSELF

- *I don't want too much choice in healthcare etc...I just want good, clean, local, efficient services where my sexuality isn't an issue. Knocker, 2012, p11.*
- *I want to have a maximum of three people who provide me with support...who through their work enable me to live with independence, agency, privacy, respect and dignity. Price, 2009, p164.*
- *What we do is, we establish in our house a climate which very clearly says certain things are not acceptable...anyone coming into our home and expressing homophobic ideas are shown the door immediately. This is where we hold the power, and we make the rules. Price, 2009, p164.*





## 2. HOME SPACE AS A SAFE PLACE

- *Be nice if you could have your partners photo up...without all the nudge-nudge-wink-wink.*  
Westwood, 2015. p4.
- *No, I wouldn't display the (rainbow) flag...we have passed that stage..... this flag (Scottish Salter) is flown at Holyrood House when the Queen is in residence.* Pilkey, 2014. p1151.



- *I want to connect to my community. I want to still go to my lesbian group...If I'm lucky I will have friends that can take me, but what if I have dementia – will it be assumed that I'm heterosexual, so don't need these friends to come and talk to me about my past?*

Westwood, 2016.

- *What if they (staff) took a dislike to me? I don't think many people here would understand it or accept it somehow (in residential care)*

Westwood, 2016, p1504.

- *..be an exemplar of best practice; a place where people and organisations across the country can learn about what it takes to build an inclusive environment for older LGBT people, which supports living a fulfilling and happy life. Tonic Housing report, 2015.*

### 3. ANTICIPATED FUTURES

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS

## PEOPLE

- CPD opportunities in relation to learning more than just the diversity and equity yearly updates.
- Using person-centred practice gives choice surrounding personal care for clothing, hair, shaving and make-up are key areas of occupational therapy assessment and interventions.



# OPPORTUNITIES FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS

## ENVIRONMENT

- Own home, residential/nursing homes and other accommodation
- What is in **that** environment? Aim to improve awareness through education and inclusive involvement
- Housing opportunities – be a part of it!



# OPPORTUNITIES FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS

## OCCUPATIONS

- Within care homes, reminiscence and life history work is carried out to give focus to informal discussion and general conversations, as well as part of a range of group activities (COT, 2013). Ensure this includes LGBT and BME communities.
- Staying focused on the individual and ensuring inclusive person centred care happens at all stages.
- The Department of Health (2003) state that within admission procedures to care homes, staff should ensure that people have their own needs met in relation to:  
  
*‘social interests, hobbies, religious and cultural needs, along with carer and family involvement and other social contact’ (p3-4).*

# CONCLUSION<sup>13</sup>

- Occupational therapists are well placed to identify and highlight best practice and alternative ways of working inclusively with LGBT communities
- Research and reports have shown that perceptions focusing on future living accommodation raises concerns around phobia and disclosure, than actual research experiences have captured
- The part played by all health and social care professionals, needs to continue to be inclusive and person centred
- Occupational therapists are well placed to participate within research within these areas, and for this to be a higher priority on the research agenda

# KEY MESSAGE

- Occupational therapy connects across housing, social care and health
- Occupational therapists are well placed to be involved in existing and future collaborative working
- Current and future opportunities exist to feed into research with a wider range of partners than currently encountered
- Always ensure social and occupational justice is met.





# REFERENCES <sup>15</sup>

- Age UK (2017) Briefing: health and Care of Older People in England 2017. London: Age UK
- Almack, K., Yip, A., Seymour, J., Sargeant, A., Patterson, A., Makita, M., Smith, A., Jenkins, C. and Jones, R., 2014. The Last Outing: exploring end of life experiences and care needs in the lives of older LGBT people. *Online]. Nottingham: University of Nottingham*. Accessed June 2017. Available From: <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/groups/srcc/documents/projects/srcc-project-report-last-outing.pdf>.
- Arksey H., and O'Malley L., (2005) Scoping Studies: Towards a methodological framework *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 8: 19-32.
- Carr, S. and Ross, P., 2013. Assessing current and future housing and support options for older LGB people. *York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation*.
- Cronin, A., Ward, R., Pugh, S., King, A. and Price, E., 2011. Categories and their consequences: Understanding and supporting the caring relationships of older lesbian, gay and bisexual people. *International Social Work*, 54(3), pp.421-435.
- GB Gender Recognition Act 2004 Accessed 5 January 2018 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/7/contents>
- GB Equality Act 2010. Accessed 5 January 2018 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- GB Equality and Human Rights Commission Research report 34 2008 Accessed 5 January 2018 <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/research-report-34-sexual-orientation-research-review-2008>
- Heaphy, B., 2009. Choice and its limits in older lesbian and gay narratives of relational life. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 5(1-2), pp.119-138.
- Joanna Briggs Institute (2015) *Methodology for JBI Scoping Reviews*. University of Adelaide, South Australia: The Joanna Briggs Institute
- King, A., and Stoneman, P., 2017. Understanding SAFE Housing—putting older LGBT\* people's concerns, preferences and experiences of housing in England in a sociological context. *Housing, Care and Support*, 20(3), pp.89-99.
- Knocker, S., 2012. *Perspectives on ageing: lesbians, gay men and bisexuals*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Law, M., Cooper, B., Strong, S., Stewart, D., Rigby, P. & Letts, L. 1996. The Person-Environment-Occupation Model: A transactive approach to occupational performance. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*. 63(1):9-23
- McParland, J. and Camic, P.M., 2016. Psychosocial factors and ageing in older lesbian, gay and bisexual people: a systematic review of the literature. *Journal of clinical nursing*, 25(23-24), pp.3415-3437.
- Molineux M (2004) *Occupation for occupational therapists*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- PACE 2015. RARE research report: LGB&T Mental Health – Risk and Resilience. Accessed online 5 January 2018 [http://www.queerfutures.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/RARE\\_Research\\_Report\\_PACE\\_2015.pdf](http://www.queerfutures.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/RARE_Research_Report_PACE_2015.pdf)
- Pilkey, B., 2014. Queering heteronormativity at home: older gay Londoners and the negotiation of domestic materiality. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 21(9), pp.1142-1157.
- Pink News, 2017 Accessed 5 January 2018 <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2017/02/21/manchester-to-open-the-uks-first-lgbt-retirement-community/>
- Price, E., 2010. Coming out to care: gay and lesbian carers' experiences of dementia services. *Health & social care in the community*, 18(2), pp.160-168.
- RCOT 2017 Accessed 5 January 2018 <http://3clw1r2i0esn1tg2nq3xziww.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/ILSM-Phase-II-England-16pp.pdf>
- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., and Larkin, M., (2009) *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*. London: SAGE
- Shelley, J. (2016) *Building safe choices. LGBT housing futures: a feasibility study*. Stonewall Housing.
- Twinley, R. (2014) Sexual Orientation and occupation: some issues to consider when working with older gay people to meet their occupational needs. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*. 77 (12). 623-625
- Westwood, S., 2015. 'We see it as being heterosexualised, being put into a care home': gender, sexuality and housing/care preferences among older LGB individuals in the UK. *Health & social care in the community*, 24(6).
- Westwood, S., (2016). Dementia, women and sexuality: How the intersection of ageing, gender and sexuality magnify dementia concerns among lesbian and bisexual women. *Dementia*, 15(6), pp.1494-1514