

AWARE

**OVERCOMING DEPRESSION.
CHANGING LIVES.**

LET'S TALK ABOUT



The Rainbow Project estimates the number of LGB+ people in NI is between 90k and 190k (6 – 13%), and the number of trans people is around 19k.

Those within the LGBTQ+ community are at an increased risk of mental ill-health in comparison to the general population.

AWARE-NI.ORG



LGBTQ+ Mental Health Statistics

33% of people who identify as LGBTQ+ in NI have experienced poor mental health.

(The Rainbow Project, 2021)

65% of those respondents from the above statistic have experienced depression.

(The Rainbow Project, 2021)

3 in 5 people who identify as LGBTQ+ experienced anxiety.

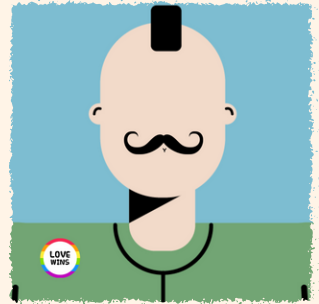
(Stonewall, 2024)

Almost 7 in 10 trans people have experienced depression.

(Rethink Mental Illness, 2023)

52% of LGBTQ+ people aged 18-24 have thought about taking their own life in the last year compared to 5% of adults in the general population.

(Stonewall, 2024)



Why are people who identify as LGBTQ+ more likely to experience mental ill-health?

It's important to highlight that identifying as LGBTQ+ does not cause mental ill-health. However, experiences of being in a minority community such as prejudice, stigma and discrimination can negatively impact your mental health.

These experiences are why LGBTQ+ people have a disproportionate rate of experiencing mental ill-health compared to the general population.

Social Risk Factors

For LGBTQ+ individuals, the risk is significantly heightened due to a combination of factors. Such as:

- **Experiences of discrimination, harassment or bullying in different avenues of their life such as school, family, workplace etc.**
- **Isolation or lack of acceptance within their family or community.**
- **Barriers to accessing healthcare.**
- **Experience of hate crime.**



What Can Help?

We understand that some of these suggestions might not be feasible, particularly if you can't safely be open about your LGBTQ+ identity. While finding ways to support yourself is important, it doesn't erase the discrimination you've faced. Only pursue what feels right for you, and remember to be gentle with yourself.

- **Talk to someone you trust about how you are feeling.**
- **Celebrate being LGBTQ+, this can be on your own or with others - do this in a way you are most comfortable with.**
- **Learn a new hobby or skill - are there LGBTQ+ groups in your area that you could join?**
- **Think about how you use social media, follow accounts that make you feel good and block any that make you feel negative.**



The 5 most evidence-based steps to improving your mental health are:



1. Be Active

Our bodies release feel-good hormones when we're active that can also reduce anxiety and stress, and help us sleep better.



2. Take Notice

Savour the moment, be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.



3. Give

Do something nice for a loved one or stranger. Smile, volunteer your time, or consider joining a community group.



4. Connect

With the people around you - family, friends or neighbours. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.



5. Keep Learning

Do not be afraid to try something new. Rediscover an old hobby or interest, or simply set a challenge you will enjoy.



Do One Thing:

Sometimes you may feel overwhelmed when taking steps to help yourself. But remember to focus on doing just one thing at a time. It will help you reach the goals you set and give you a real sense of achievement.

Additional Support

GENERAL PRACTITIONER (GP)

It's important to speak with your GP if you think you are experiencing mental ill-health, as they can advise on an appropriate course of treatment and rule out other causes.



THE RAINBOW PROJECT

The Rainbow Project is devoted to improving the health and wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ and questioning people and their families in Northern Ireland through partnership, advocacy and the development and delivery of appropriate support services.

 rainbow-project.org

CARA-FRIEND

Empowering the LGBTQIA+ community in Northern Ireland since 1974, Cara-Friend has a range of services for young people, individuals, and families, including mental health and mindfulness services.

 cara-friend.org.uk

HERE NI

HERE NI is an organisation for LGBTQIA+ women and their families in Northern Ireland. They are dedicated to improving their lives through providing information, peer support, training and lobbying.

 hereni.org

TRANSGENDER NI

TransgenderNI support and advocate for trans and gender diverse people across NI. They run an open community hub for trans people, families, and friends in Belfast.

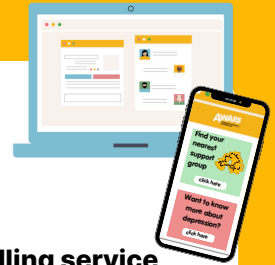
 transgenderni.org.uk

MERMAIDS

Mermaids supports trans young people and their families, and advocates for issues that matter to trans youth.

 mermaidsuk.org.uk

Who to Contact for Support



Lifeline

A telephone help and counselling service for anyone in distress. It is available 24/7 and free to call.

They can give you immediate support, offer face-to-face appointments, or give you information about other services in your area. **Call Lifeline on 0808 808 8000.**

You could also:

- See your GP or call the out-of-hours GP service
- Go to the A&E department
- Call emergency services on 999
- Call Samaritans on their freephone helpline 116 123 - a confidential listening service for those in distress

AWARE NI

You can read our guides for more information on support with depression and looking after your mental health.

Contact us by emailing info@aware-ni.org and visit our website at aware-ni.org

AWARE NI also have FREE mental health support groups for anyone aged 18 or over. You can find your nearest one by searching: aware-ni.org/support-groups/

