

How Many LGBTQ+ People with Disabilities Live in the United States and Need Long-Term Supports?

Plain language summary by Ian Moura, Kaitlin Stober, Christina Melendez-Waring, and Madeline Crowley

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Words to Know



LGBTQ+ is a short way of saying Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer. The plus sign (+) means that these are not the only words people may use to describe their identity. This summary uses a rainbow flag when talking about LGBTQ+ people.



Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) are services that some people with disabilities need to live a healthy and independent life. Services can include at-home nursing, accessible transportation, and much more. This summary uses an icon of a hand helping a person with the letters LTSS to represent people who need LTSS services.

Common Pictures We Use In this Summary



LGBTQ+ person
without disabilities



LGBTQ+ person
with disabilities



Non-LGBTQ+
person without
disabilities



Non-LGBTQ+
person with
disabilities



Someone who
needs LTSS



Someone who does
not need LTSS

Why is this an important issue?

Some research says that people with disabilities might be more likely to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) than people without disabilities. However, we don't know enough about how many people with disabilities are also LGBTQ+. We also don't know how many disabled people who need long-term services and supports (LTSS) are LGBTQ+.

What was the purpose of this study?

This study tried to answer **four questions**:

Question 1: How many people with disabilities are LGBTQ+?



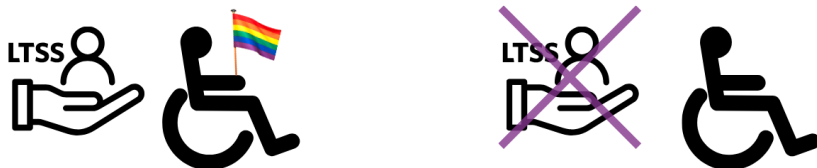
Question 2: How many people who need long-term services are LGBTQ+?



Question 3: Are people with disabilities more likely to be LGBTQ+ than people without disabilities?



Question 4: Are people who need long-term services more likely to be LGBTQ+ than people with disabilities who do not need long-term services?



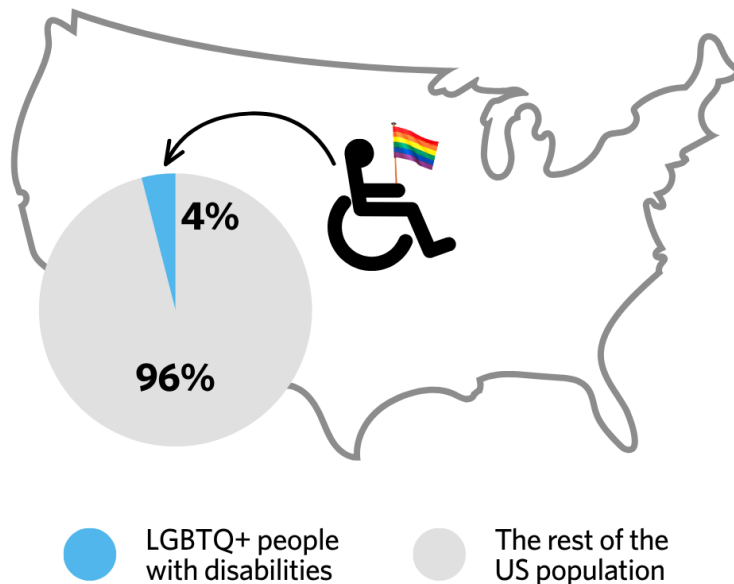
What did the researchers do?

We used data from a survey from 2022 that asked people if they had different kinds of disabilities. The survey also asked about people’s sexual orientation and gender identity. We used the data to figure out how many people who have a disability are also LGBTQ+. We also did tests to see if people with disabilities are more likely to be LGBTQ+ than people who are not disabled.

Based on the questions we had, what did we learn?

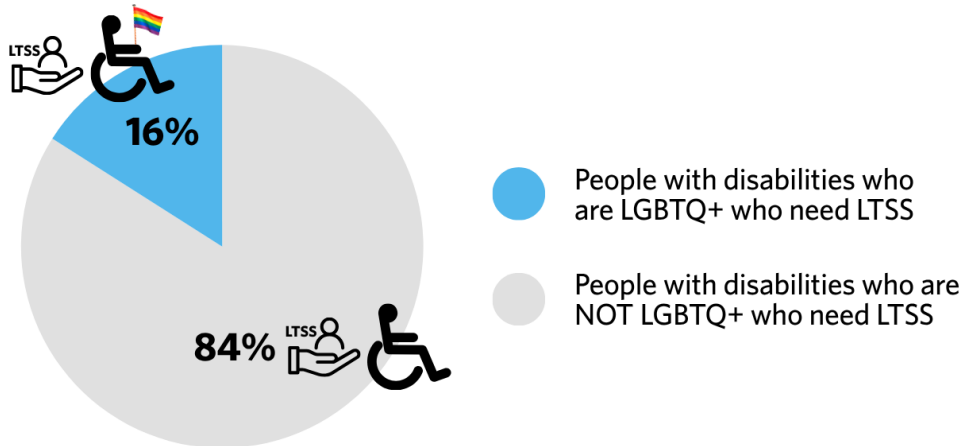
Question 1: How many people with disabilities are LGBTQ+?

A very small number of people in the United States are both disabled and LGBTQ+. Only about 4% of people living in the United States are both disabled and LGBTQ+.



Question 2: How many people who need long-term services are LGBTQ+?

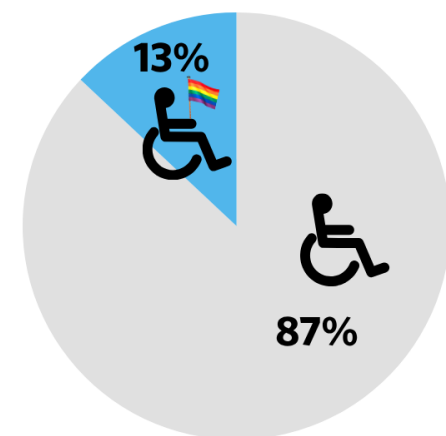
About 16% of people who need LTSS are LGBTQ+.



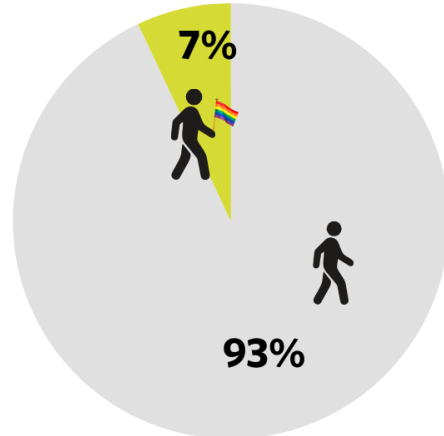
Question 3: Are people with disabilities more likely to be LGBTQ+ than people without disabilities?

YES. People with disabilities are more likely to be LGBTQ+ than people without disabilities. 13% of people with disabilities are LGBTQ+. 7% of people without disabilities are LGBTQ+.

All people with disabilities



All people without disabilities



Question 4: Are people who need long-term services more likely to be LGBTQ+ than people with disabilities who do not need long-term services?

YES. People who need long-term services are more likely to be LGBTQ+ than people who are disabled but do not need long-term services.



What do these findings add to what is already known?

Our study tells us more about how many people with disabilities are LGBTQ+. We are also the first researchers to try to find out how many people who need long-term services are LGBTQ+. This is important so that people can understand that services for disabled people need to accept LGBTQ+ people. Our study also shows that it is important for programs for LGBTQ+ people to be accessible, because disabled people are more likely to be LGBTQ+.

What are potential weaknesses in the study?

Some people who are LGBTQ+ might not have wanted to say so when they took the survey. The survey questions about disability are not perfect either. Some people with disabilities might not have answered yes to these questions. There might be disabled people who are LGBTQ+ who we could not find in the survey data. The number of people we found to be LGBTQ+ and disabled might be a little inaccurate if the survey missed people. People who live in institutions do not get to take the survey, so we also do not know how many of them are LGBTQ+.

How will these findings help people with disabilities now or in the future?

It is important to know how many people with disabilities are LGBTQ+ so we can make sure that healthcare, services, and support programs are inclusive. Sometimes people think that disabled people are not part of the LGBTQ+ community. Our study shows that people with disabilities are also part of the LGBTQ+ community. People with disabilities deserve to feel included in the LGBTQ+ community. Our study also helps people understand that LGBTQ+ rights relate to disability rights.

Thank You

Thank you to Pauline Bosma for feedback on this brief. Pauline is the founder and coordinator of the [Rainbow Support Group](#), a network for people with IDD that identify as LGBTQ.

How to Cite This Brief

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Source

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