

CHAPTER 7

Gay Men and Prostate Cancer

Learning from the Voices of a Hidden Population

Murray Drummond, James Smith, and Shaun Filiault

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Ten years ago, we published a study on gay men and prostate cancer. The paper gave a voice to gay men with prostate cancer whose voices had been largely unheard or, in some respects, silenced. Fortunately, there has been a groundswell of work in this area since the publication of our study. This chapter begins with a personal vignette of the first author, Murray Drummond, to provide important contextual information for how gay men and prostate cancer are perceived at a primary healthcare level. We then draw on contemporary health promotion scholarship to discuss what is known about men's health promotion and describe how this promotion intersects with gay men and prostate cancer. We then use some of the concerns voiced by the original group of gay men with prostate cancer in our study to illuminate the key issues they faced—and in many cases continue to face. We then reflect on some of the legal aspects associated with these concerns in the face of the rapidly changing landscape of LGBTQI rights (and lack thereof) in contemporary Western cultures. We conclude by describing a way forward in light of the sociocultural, legal, and physical health concerns these men face with respect to their illness.

KEY WORDS

gay and bisexual men, health promotion, LGBTQI rights, prostate cancer

REFERENCES

1. Robertson S, Galdas PM, McCreary DR, et al. Men's health promotion in Canada: Current context and future direction. *Health Education Journal*. 2009; 68 (4): 266–272.
2. Robertson S, Baker P. Men and health promotion in the United Kingdom: 20 years further forward? *Health Education Journal*. 2017; 76 (1): 102–113.
3. Smith JA. Beyond masculine stereotypes: Moving men's health promotion forward in Australia. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*. 2007; 18 (1): 20–25.
4. Smith JA, Robertson S. Men's health promotion: A new frontier in Australia and the UK? *Health Promotion International*. 2008; 23 (3): 283–289.
5. Cordier R, Wilson NJ. Community-based Men's Sheds: Promoting male health, wellbeing and social inclusion in an international context. *Health Promotion International*. 2014; 29 (3): 483–493.
6. Linnell S. Involving men in targeted primary health care: Men's health MOTs. *Community Practitioner*. 2010; 83 (5): 31.
7. Moffatt J, Hossain D. *Pit Stop at FarmFest 2010: Evaluation: Is Pit Stop effective?* Brisbane: GP Connections, University of Queensland; 2010.
8. Robinson M, Robertson S. The application of social marketing to promoting men's health: A brief critique. *International Journal of Men's Health*. 2010; 9 (1): 50.
9. Russell N, Harding C, Chamberlain C, Johnston L. Implementing a "Men's Health Pitstop" in the Riverina, South-west New South Wales. *Australian Journal of Rural Health*. 2006; 14 (3): 129–131.
10. Wilson NJ, Cordier R, Doma K, et al. Men's Sheds function and philosophy: Towards a framework for future research and men's health promotion. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*. 2015; 26 (2): 133–141.
11. Courtenay WH. Constructions of masculinity and their influence on men's well-being: A theory of gender and health. *Social Science & Medicine*. 2000; 50 (10): 1385–1401.
12. Courtenay WH. Behavioral factors associated with disease, injury, and death among men: Evidence and implications for prevention. *Journal of Men's Studies*. 2000; 9 (1): 81–142.
13. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). *The health of Australia's males*. Canberra: AIHW; 2011.

14. Gough B, Robertson S. Promoting “masculinity” over health: A critical analysis of men’s health promotion with particular reference to an obesity reduction manual. In Gough B, Robertson S, eds. *Men, masculinities & health: Critical perspectives*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan; 2010: 125–142.
15. Creighton G, Oliffe JL. Theorising masculinities and men’s health: A brief history with a view to practice. *Health Sociology Review*. 2010; 19 (4): 409–418.
16. Evans J, Frank B, Oliffe JL, Gregory D. Health, illness, men and masculinities (HIMM): A theoretical framework for understanding men and their health. *Journal of Men’s Health*. 2011; 8 (1): 7–15.
17. Robertson S, Williams B, Oliffe J. The case for retaining a focus on “masculinities” in men’s health research. *International Journal of Men’s Health*. 2016; 15 (1): 52–67.
18. White A, de Sousa B, de Visser R, et al. *The state of men’s health in Europe: Extended report*. European Commission. 2011; http://ec.europa.eu/health/population_groups/docs/men_health_extended_en.pdf2011.
19. Australian Government, Department of Health and Ageing. *National male health policy: Building on the strengths of Australian males*. Canberra, 2010.
20. Smith JA, Robertson S, Richardson N. Letter: Understanding gender equity in the context of men’s health policy development. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*. 2010; 21 (1): 76.
21. Department of Health. *National Men’s Health Action Plan Healthy Ireland: Working with men in Ireland to achieve optimum health and wellbeing*. Dublin: Department of Health; 2016.
22. Macdonald J. Building on the strengths of Australian males. *International Journal of Men’s Health*. 2011; 10 (1): 82.
23. MacDonald J. A different framework for looking at men’s health. *International Journal of Men’s Health*. 2016; 15 (3): 283.
24. Pedrana A, Hellard M, Gold J, et al. Queer as F**k: Reaching and engaging gay men in sexual health promotion through social networking sites. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*. 2013; 15 (2): e25.
25. Crossley ML. The “Armistead” project: An exploration of gay men, sexual practices, community health promotion and issues of empowerment. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*. 2001; 11 (2): 111–123.
26. Crossley ML. Making sense of “barebacking”: Gay men’s narratives, unsafe sex and the “resistance habitus.” *British Journal of Social Psychology*. 2004; 43 (2): 225–244.
27. Bancroft J, Janssen E, Strong D, et al. Sexual risk-taking in gay men: The relevance of sexual arousability, mood, and sensation seeking. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. 2003; 32 (6): 555–572.
28. Patton M. *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage; 2002.
29. Filiault SM, Drummond MJ. Athletes and body image: Interviews with gay

- sportsmen. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*. 2008; 5 (4): 311–333.
30. Ussher JM, Perz J, Rose D, et al. Threat of sexual disqualification: The consequences of erectile dysfunction and other sexual changes for gay and bisexual men with prostate cancer. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. 2017; 46 (7) 2043–2057.
 31. Filiault SM, Drummond MJN, Smith JA. Gay men and prostate cancer: Voicing the concerns of a hidden population. *Journal of Men's Health*. 2008; 5 (4): 327–332.
 32. Rose D, Ussher JM, Perz J. Let's talk about gay sex: Gay and bisexual men's sexual communication with healthcare professionals after prostate cancer. *European Journal of Cancer Care*. 2017; 26(1).
 33. Belt R. Disability: The last marriage equality frontier. *Stanford Public Law Working Paper No 2653117*. 2015; <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2653117>.
 34. Chance TF. "Going to pieces" over LGBT health disparities: How an amended Affordable Care Act could cure the discrimination that ails the LGBT community. *Journal of Health Care Law & Policy*. 2013; 16 (2): 375–402.
 35. Kamen C, Mustian K, Johnson MO, Boehmer U. Same-sex couples matter in cancer care. *Journal of Oncology Practice*. 2015; 11 (2): e212–e215.
 36. Perone AK. Health implications of the Supreme Court's *Obergefell vs. Hodges* marriage equality decision. *LGBT Health*. 2015; 2 (3): 196–199.
 37. Manne S, Badr H, Zaider T, et al.. Cancer-related communication, relationship intimacy, and psychological distress among couples coping with localized prostate cancer. *Research and Practice*. 2010; 4 (1): 74–85.
 38. Knoll N, Burkert S, Kramer J, et al.. Relationship satisfaction and erectile functions in men receiving laparoscopic radical prostatectomy: Effects of provision and receipt of spousal social support. *Journal of Sexual Medicine*. 2009; 6 (5): 1438–1450.
 39. Goldsen J, Bryan AE, Kim H-J, et al. Who says I do: The changing context of marriage and health and quality of life for LGBT older adults. *Gerontologist*. 2017; 57 (suppl. 1): S50–S62.