

The background features a large, stylized chevron shape on the left side, composed of multiple parallel diagonal stripes in shades of blue, pink, and brown. To the right of this, a horizontal rainbow flag is displayed with its characteristic six bands of color: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. The text is centered over the yellow and green bands of the rainbow flag.

Inequalities in mental health, self-rated health,

# Background

- The COVID-19 pandemic has magnified existent social inequalities
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer (LGBQ+) young people may have been particularly harmed by the consequences of lockdown, closure of educational institutions, and social distancing measures as they are likely to:
  - have been confined in households that may not be supportive of their sexual orientation,
  - have missed on opportunities to connect to their community,
  - have difficulties accessing safe spaces.

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# Aims and Data

- To examine inequalities in the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the **health and mental health** among young adults who self-identify with a sexual orientation other than heterosexual/straight, compared to their heterosexual/straight peers.
- We also assess the role of social support and economic adversity and other sociodemographic factors in explaining possible unequal outcomes among sexual minority youth.
- We analysed data from singletons who participated in waves 6, 7, and the wave 1 COVID-19 survey (n=2211) of the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS).
- Models adjust for age, gender, ethnicity, region of residence, socioeconomic status of household, and social support\*.

# Findings

- One in four young adults self-identified with a sexual orientation or attraction other than completely heterosexual/straight.
- Findings show that LGBTQ+ young adults (compared to straight peers) had:
  - 
  - poorer self- 
  -   

- Adjusting for social support attenuated but did not explain inequalities in health and mental health.

# Implications

- Inequalities in health and mental health across sexual orientation are a result of increased levels of social stress, including stigma, discrimination, and prejudice (Brooks, )
- Implications for policy and practice include a stronger provision of safe spaces in the community and in institutions, and policies that address marginalisation and harassment.