

Media Release

Workshop Wrap-Up

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Workshop Wrap-Up

There are particular pressures gay and same sex attracted men face that, if not unique, are perhaps more heightened within the realm of gay culture and community.

The body beautiful ... youth ... fun ... achieving great and many things ... earning big bucks ... living a fast-paced and exotic life ... it can be hard keeping up with just one of these things, let alone more than one.

And a number of men, in various ways and through the various services *Gay Men's Health* offers (Thursday Night Drop-Ins, counselling, Man2Man InfoLine calls, casual chats, feedback from other workshops and groups) have expressed their concerns about these issues.

So, responding to these concerns, Gay Men's Health recently held two workshops – *Getting into ... Body Image* and *Getting into ... Ageing*.

Held on Thursday 20th September at Darling House, *Getting into ... Body Image* focused on the way we look at ourselves, the way others look at us, and how we can come to terms with our own body shape. As rates of eating disorders and body image dissatisfaction are increasing among men, and even more so among gay men, *Getting into ... Body Image* was a timely glimpse into the issues that are affecting (and at times isolating) members of our community, and how to reconcile ourselves with this.

Interestingly, much of the Australian research into (gay) men and body image has been conducted in South Australia by UniSA academic Murray Drummond. (Visit his webpage: <http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/staff/Homepage.asp?Name=Murray.Drummond> or google *Murray Drummond*.)

Held on Thursday 11th and 18th October, *Getting into ... Ageing* took a more in-depth approach and investigated the issues that older gay men face and are feeling.

Topics of the workshop included: still feeling OK about your body as you get older, imagery in gay culture, ageism in our culture, living up to the expectations of others and yourself, support services and systems, physical and emotional health, finding a partner and lifestyle choices.

More workshops are planned for 2008.

If you are interested in being involved in future workshops or have suggestions or issues you believe would make interesting and relevant topics for future workshops, please contact Matt Potter at *Gay Men's Health* via email at matt.potter@gmhealth.org.au or via 'phone on 8334 1606. Country callers should call 1800 888 559.