

Hospitals crisis:
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CIRCULATED IN THE INNER WEST
AND EASTERN SUBURBS

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By NEALE PRIOR

Bashed homosexuals will be encouraged to report the incidents, in a campaign mounted by the Gay-Lesbian Rights Lobby to combat what many see as a worsening problem, particularly in the inner suburbs.

Co-convenor of the lobby, Mr Gary Cox, said police statistics on bashings of homosexuals were inadequate because many victims were afraid to report the incidents.

The lobby would try to establish where and when the bashings took place, and pass the information on to

the Police Gay Liaison Unit in an attempt to get police patrols changed accordingly, he said.

Mr Cox said he could not confirm or deny reports made to *The Eastern Herald* in the past week that the number of bashings of homosexuals had increased lately, because no accurate statistics were kept.

A civilian co-ordinator of the Police Gay Liaison Unit, Mr Fred Miller, said the police had not had a

complaint about such bashings in the past nine months in the Paddington-Moore Park area, and none had been received in recent months from the Newtown area.

Several homosexual men telephoned *The Eastern Herald* after reading last week's cover story on teenage gangs.

The story quoted members of bomber and skinhead gangs bragging about their "poofter-bashing".

Tony, 30, of Surry Hills, said the bashing of homosexual men in the Darlinghurst and Taylor Square areas had increased substantially in the past year.

Three of his friends had been bashed in recent months, and he had been told about numerous other homosexual men being bashed.

Another man, 30, said the incidence of bashings in the Newtown area had increased greatly in the past

18 months, with gangs of youths attacking lone men whom they believed were homosexual.

A spokesman for the Gay-Lesbian Rights Lobby said the number of bashings had increased steadily since AIDS became a public issue.

The Taylor Square-Bourke Street area was one of the prime areas for bashing of homosexual men, he said, but the incidence of bashings in the Moore Park area had decreased because of warnings to gay men about gangs.

He also said the bashing problem had worsened in the Newtown area.