Introduction
Attitudes towards sex and relationships influence sexual behaviour, the wellbeing of those marginalised and the provision and use of services. Some countries conduct repeated surveys on sexual attitudes, but to our knowledge no longitudinal studies have investigated individuals’ changes in opinion over time.

Aims
To quantify
- Prevalence of opinions on same sex partnerships in the Dunedin Study birth cohort at 26 years of age (1998-1999) and 38 years of age (2010-2012), and
- Consistency and change in opinions among individuals

Methods
Participants answered computer-presented questions about the acceptability of same-sex partnerships, based on the National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (Natsal-1) from the UK.

Results
Prevalence of opinions among individuals.
Results of consistency and change in opinions over time.

Consistency and change in opinions
Although aggregate changes were small, at an individual level 42% of men and 35% of women changed their opinion about sex between men, and the same proportions changed opinions about sex between women.

Conclusions
A fairly stable level of acceptance of same-sex sexual behaviour over 12 years was seen in this cohort but it obscures considerable flux in opinions among individuals.

For both men and women, consistent acceptance of same-sex partnerships was associated with having had same-sex experience before age 26 and higher educational level, but not with occupational social class (NZSEE). Consistent acceptance of same-sex partnerships was inversely associated with having had a child before age 26, for both men and women, after adjusting for education, own same-sex experience, experience of abortion, and occupational class.

Conclusions
A fairly stable level of acceptance of same-sex sexual behaviour over 12 years was seen in this cohort but it obscures considerable flux in opinions among individuals.

Generally the cohort had more accepting attitudes towards same sex partnerships at both ages than those of similar ages in national studies from Britain, Australia and the United States.

The patterns of difference by age were similar to findings from cross-sectional studies, but this analysis suggests that overall changes in prevalence of opinions are driven by individual change with age (age effects) as well as period effects (younger generations replacing older ones)

Further investigation of factors associated with attitude change could be used to improve health promotion by advancing the understanding of sexual lifestyles and choices.

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For more information contact: jennie.connor@otago.ac.nz