

PLANNING FOR ACTION

LGBTI-inclusive actions to undertake NOW

Val's LGBTI Ageing & Aged Care has compiled some achievable actions to help your service become LGBTI aware and inclusive.



1. Develop an LGBTI Inclusive Action Plan for your service (or review an existing plan).

- Download the **LGBTI-inclusive Practice Audit Tool for Health and Human Service Organisations** and the **Rainbow Tick Guide to LGBTI-inclusive Practice** from the **Rainbow Health Victoria** website. Use them to:
 - Determine LGBTI-inclusive practice status in your organisation. Undertake the simple, yet comprehensive audit to help identify existing LGBTI-inclusive aspects of your organisation, practice and service delivery models.
 - Identify and address gaps. Use the audit tool to identify aspects for improvement to achieve LGBTI-inclusive practice. These can assist in the development of a comprehensive plan of action, or can be used in existing organisational or service diversity planning initiatives.
 - Utilise the evidence-based guide – Rainbow Tick Guide to Inclusive Practice. This provides examples to assist in developing LGBTI-inclusive practice. Used with the Audit Tool and in the development of an Action Plan, the Guide can help identify key actions to improve LGBTI-inclusive outcomes for LGBTI consumers, staff and volunteers.
- Keep up-to-date with the **Department of Health Aged Care Diversity Framework** requirements including the LGBTI Action Plans (consumer & service provider). www.agedcare.health.gov.au/support-services/people-from-diverse-backgrounds/aged-cworkare-diversity-frame
- If you have an organisational diversity plan, include some key actions for LGBTI people and inclusive practice. Val's can assist you to understand and meet the needs of older LGBTI people.

2. Utilise LGBTI-inclusive terminology, language and communication strategies.

- Review and implement LGBTI-inclusive communication strategies within your organisation.
- Provide education opportunities for staff, volunteers and other service users regarding LGBTI-inclusive language and communication approaches.
- Download an **LGBTI-inclusive language guide**, such as from the **Victorian Government Equality Branch** or National LGBTI Health Alliance, www.vic.gov.au/inclusive-language-guide www.lgbtihealth.org.au/resources/inclusive-language-guide/
- Ensure staff are aware of, and respect, the use of pronouns and preferred names. Include your pronouns on your online platform (such as Zoom), email signature or wear a pronoun badge to help send a sign of inclusion regarding gender diversity.
- Ensure all communication approaches are LGBTI-inclusive. Review documentation and questions/requests for information (intake, service forms, employment forms etc.) to ensure they are LGBTI-inclusive (questions about title, gender, relationships, emergency contact, etc.).
- Understand and address the specific needs of each of the diverse communities of the L-G-B-T-I rainbow.

3. Provide messages of welcome for LGBTI consumers, staff and volunteers.

Signal to LGBTI consumers, staff and volunteers that they are welcome at your service and that you aim to ensure their experience is LGBTI-inclusive:

- Provide explicit LGBTI-inclusive indications of welcome (e.g. posters, stickers, flags, inclusivity statements, lanyards, badges, signage, forms, Zoom backgrounds, email signatures) to welcome and support LGBTI people to access your service.
- Ensure all staff along the service continuum (including frontline staff) receive LGBTI-inclusive education and are confident in authentically welcoming and interacting with LGBTI consumers.
- Review entry points to your service including intake processes and documentation to ensure they are LGBTI-inclusive.
- Provide a range of avenues for feedback. Welcome both positive and negative feedback. Communicate to LGBTI consumers, staff and volunteers that, their feedback is important to building LGBTI safety and inclusivity.

4. Design, develop and program activities that model LGBTI inclusion.

- Include activities for consumers, staff and volunteers that acknowledge and celebrate key LGBTI dates (e.g. IDAHOBIT Day, Intersex Awareness Day, Trans Day of Remembrance, International AIDS Day). Utilise these days to build awareness and provide opportunities for ongoing education. Remember this is even more important during COVID19 restrictions.
- Consider creating an LGBTI and Allies Social Committee to build knowledge and engage consumers, staff and volunteers.
- Provide a range of activities for LGBTI consumers and allies in social support and seniors groups, or in residential settings. Consider:

- Screen films or TV shows with LGBTI themes (e.g. *Cloudburst*, *Gen Silent*, *Intersexions*, *Love Simon*, *Carol*, *Brokeback Mountain*, *Pride*, *The Adventures of Pricilla Queen of the Desert*, *Untold Histories LGBTI Seniors*, *The Coming Back Out Ball The Movie*, *Becoming Colleen*, *Pose*, *Grace & Frankie*, *Tales of the City*, *Will & Grace*).
- Consider providing or linking to a range of activities and events that are LGBTI inclusive and welcoming. Ensure virtual activities programs have content that is welcoming and relevant to older LGBTI people, and friends
- Promote the LGBTI Elders Digital Dance Club to clients and residents conducted online during COVID19 restrictions. www.allthequeensmen.net/projects/digital-dance-club/



- Keep an eye on **Seniors Online Social Support Hub** for LGBTI inclusive programs www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/services-information/social-support-hub/lgbti-community and the **Victorian Pride Centre** www.pridecentre.org.au/
 - Develop innovative ways to support LGBTI elders – perhaps develop a regular (weekly or monthly) Zoom get-together or activity. Be creative and consult with your consumers about what they would like and how they can access offerings.
- 5. Plan regular LGBTI awareness and LGBTI-inclusive practice education and professional development opportunities for all staff, volunteers and stakeholders (consumers).**
- Ensure all staff and volunteers have participated in LGBTI Awareness Training that includes aspects of history and its impacts on older LGBTI people. A range of training programs are available through **Val's LGBTI Ageing and Aged Care** including online sessions.
 - Build LGBTI-inclusive practice training into regular professional development opportunities including staff meetings, staff days, staff and volunteer induction programs, staff supervision and performance development to ensure opportunities for continuous learning. Ask **Val's** for alternative ideas to ensure ongoing learning and LGBTI inclusive professional development.
 - Ensure all consumers and service users are aware of codes of conduct, rules of engagement and other requirements and that LGBTI people are welcome and provided with a safe and inclusive service.
 - Visit **Val's LGBTI Ageing and Aged Care** website for resources, information, training details and opportunities, events and more to support LGBTI inclusive ageing and aged care.
- 6. Access and utilise resources, referral pathways and networks to assist with appropriate care and support of LGBTI elders.**
- Access the **Safeguarding the End of the Rainbow** resource. Encourage older LGBTI people to put in place end of life planning so their wishes and needs will be understood and carried out. www.cotavic.org.au/2018/03/safeguarding-end-of-life-for-older-lgbti-victorians
 - Recognise, respond and refer appropriately to LGBTI elder abuse and family violence. Be aware of aspects of elder abuse and family violence that are unique to LGBTI people. www.withrespect.org.au
 - Understand and support LGBTI carer relationships. Learn more about the specific experiences and needs of informal carers* www.carersvictoria.org.au/how-we-help/LGBTI-carers www.carergateway.gov.au/resources-for-lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-intersex-carers
*Informal carers are family, friends or neighbours who provide unpaid support for family members or friends with disability, mental health challenges, chronic illness or age-related care needs.
 - Understand the needs of people ageing with HIV and ensure staff are aware of the impacts of ageing with HIV on a person's health, wellbeing and care needs. Contact **Thorne Harbour Health** or **Living Positive Victoria** for education and support.
 - Download the resource *Positive Caring: A handbook for people caring for older people living with HIV and a guide for people living with HIV* from the **Living Positive Victoria** website.
 - Contact Living Positive Victoria and host education provided by **Senior Voices Project**. www.livingpositivevictoria.org.au/positive-speakers-bureau/senior-voices-project
 - Refer to, and/or promote the range of LGBTI specific community visitor programs to older LGBTI – contact **Matrix Guild**, **Switchboard Victoria** or **Thorne Harbour Health** for information and referral
 - Be aware of organisations providing support, services, education, advocacy, resources and more in Victoria:
 - **All the Queens Men** – including LGBTI Elders Dance Club www.allthequeensmen.net
 - **Department of Health** LGBTI Aged Care resources www.agedcare.health.gov.au/support-services/my-aged-care/lgbti-ageing-and-aged-care-resources
 - **Intersex Human Rights Australia (IHRA)** www.ihra.org.au
 - **Living Positive Victoria** www.livingpositivevictoria.org.au
 - **Matrix Guild** www.matrixguildvic.org.au/ including [Lesbian Volunteer Visitors](#)
 - **Rainbow Health Victoria** (formerly GLHV) www.rainbowhealthvic.org.au
 - **Switchboard Victoria** www.switchboard.org.au/ including [Out and About Community Visitors Program](#)
 - **Thorne Harbour Health** www.thorneharbour.org including [Rainbow Connections](#) community visitor program
 - **Transgender Victoria** www.tgv.org.au
 - **Victorian Government Equality Branch** www.vic.gov.au/equality
 - **Victorian Pride Centre** www.pridecentre.org.au
 - **Victorian Seniors Online** www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/services-information/social-support-hub/lgbti-community



Val's LGBTI Ageing & Aged Care is a Victorian state-wide program working to improve healthy ageing pathways, care and visibility of older LGBTI people. We work directly with service providers and facilitate a network of individuals and organisations to foster an understanding of the histories and experiences of older LGBTI people, and how these may impact access to services, care and support as they age. Val's aims to create safe and inclusive services that recognise and value older LGBTI people.



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