Trans and Gender Diverse Homelessness Pilot Project Model of Care

Training Resource For Service Providers

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www.lgbtihomeless.org.au

Contents

Introduction

This project began in August 2016 as a collaboration between The University of Melbourne (Ruth McNair and Cal Andrews), the Gay and Lesbian Foundation of Australia (GALFA), Transgender Victoria (TGV – Brenda Appleton and Sally Goldner), Launch Housing (Tony Keenan and Anna Wark), and Drummond Street Services (Karen Field and Kate Foord), to develop and pilot test a model of care to support trans and gender diverse (TGD) people who are experiencing, or are at risk of, homelessness in Victoria. Four distinct service sites within Launch Housing were chosen for the pilot, which involves systems change and staff training. The pilot is funded by a grant from Community Sector Banking and also forms part of a larger research project on LGBTI homelessness that was initiated by GALFA and commenced in January 2016.

The model of care has been informed by international best practice, and the Rainbow Tick accreditation scheme for training on LGBTI inclusivity. The Rainbow Tick is designed to ensure inclusive LGBTI practice in health services. There are 6 standards: organisational capability, LGBTI cultural safety, professional development, consumer consultation and participation, disclosure and documentation, and access and intake processes. The model is also informed by existing data collected within the broader LGBTI homelessness research project, and by a community reference group. The community reference group includes individuals and representatives from a range of organisations, such as Transgender Victoria, Drummond Street Services – queerspace, The Shed, Rainbow Network, Redefining Androgyny, Zoe Belle Gender Collective, and Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Council.

This pilot resource sets out a specific model for organisations that provide services to trans and gender diverse people who are experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing homelessness. The model includes 9 main areas:

1. Organisational culture

2. Consumer participation

3. Respectful communication

4. Confidentiality

5. Safe environment

6. Changing identity documentation

7. Diversity inclusion

8. TGD-specific support and advocacy

9. Facilitating social engagement

This document, which has been updated following evaluation at the pilot sites, provides information and links to key resources, corresponding Rainbow Tick Standards, training suggestions, and examples of relevant service types for each area. Links to these resources are also available through the website: **www.lgbtihomeless.org.au**. The final evaluation report, which is similarly available on the website provides more detailed information about the project outcomes and quality improvement processes at the selected service provider.

The training for this pilot project was delivered by TGV, with financial support from Drummond Street Services.

We are deeply grateful for the support of many members of the trans and gender diverse community in preparing and evaluating this model.

1. Organisational Culture

This section includes suggestions for making a more friendly, inclusive, and culturally appropriate service. To begin with, please complete the attached **audit tool** (at the back of this document). The audit tool has been adapted for this project from the LGBTI-inclusive practice audit tool developed by GLHV@ARCSHS, La Trobe University with their kind permission. It is designed for services to understand how trans and gender-diverse (TGD)-inclusive they are, and as a preparation for the TGD training. It can assist in identifying achievements, and determining where improvements are required. The results of the audit can inform forward planning, including change management, systems redesign/improvement and cultural reform (see 'Developing a model of care to support trans and gender diverse people experiencing homelessness – Final Report' at **lgbtihomeless.org.au** for detailed quality improvement plan informed by the audit tool at Launch Housing).

An important aspect of organisational culture is **respectful policies** for working with TGD clients. This can include:

- Providing and displaying a diversity and anti-discrimination statement or charter
- Developing a **code of conduct** for employees, clients, and visitors that explicitly supports TGD people
- **Evaluation and complaints pathways**, which TGD clients are advised and aware of [1].

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[1] GLHV@ARCSHS, La Trobe University (2016). 'The Rainbow Tick guide to LGBTI-inclusive practice'. Prepared by Pamela Kennedy, Melbourne, La Trobe University.

Marksamer, J. (2011). 'A Place of Respect: A Guide for Group Care Facilities Serving Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Youth'. National Centre for Lesbian Rights & Silvia Rivera Law Project. San Francisco, US.

Lambda Legal (2016). 'Creating equal access to quality health care for transgender patients: Transgender-affirming hospital policies'. New York.

Box 1: Example of diversity statement and code of conduct

All of our guidelines, policies, procedures and practice aim to ensure substantive equality and participation, at all levels of the organisation, regardless of gender identity, age, ethnicity, cultural background, disability, religion, sexual orientation and/or professional background. Our service welcomes lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse and intersex (LGBTI) people (adapted from the **Lifeview Diversity Statement**).

Staff **Code of Conduct** example:

Employees must at all times maintain a respectful and appropriate relationship with all clients of this service. They shall deliver quality, inclusive services, regardless of the Resident's gender identity, age, ethnicity, cultural background, disability, religion, sexual orientation and/or professional background. Discrimination, harassment, any displays of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and/or bullying of any kind, will not be tolerated within the workplace, and will be dealt with through the performance management and /or existing disciplinary system. Our aim is always the delivery of inclusive and respectful care and services, to all, including people from the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse and intersex (LGBTI) communities (adapted from the **Lifeview code of conduct**).

See also: J. Marksamer (2011). **A Place of Respect: A Guide for Group Care Facilities Serving Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Youth** - Appendix C: Draft Model Policy & Practice Guidelines for Providing Non-Discriminatory Services to LGBT and Gender Non-Conforming Youth in Group Care Facilities. US: National Centre for Lesbian Rights & Silvia Rivera Law Project, p.65-72. http://www.nclrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/A_Place_Of_Respect.pdf

In drafting and revising respectful policies for TGD clients, it can be helpful to consult with TGD groups in the community (see groups listed in sections 2 and 9).

Box 2: Sample anti-discrimination policy for clients

See: HUD (2011). **Equal Access for Transgender People: Supporting Inclusive Housing and Shelters***. US Department of Housing and Urban Development, p.8.
https://safehousingpartnerships.org/node/102

Another key area is **recruitment and staff training**. Recruitment and training methods could involve:

- **Recruitment questions** that concern TGD clients
- Including a TGD inclusive **bi-line** in job advertisements and position descriptions
- Have a **TGD introductory module** for all new staff during induction
- **Face-to-face training** on TGD inclusivity with board, management, and front-line staff where possible
- Completion of the TGD introductory module for all new staff and new board members within 6 months of employment
- Completion of TGD training module by all current staff and board members within 12 months.

Box 3: Sample TGD inclusive bi-line and recruitment interview questions

Bi-line example:
"Launch Housing is an Equal Opportunity employer and supports accessible working arrangements for all. This includes people with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, culturally, religiously and linguistically diverse people, young people, older people, women, and people who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse, intersex or queer. We acknowledge Lived Experience as a unique expertise, and encourage people with a Lived Experience of Homelessness to apply."

Example interview questions:
"What barriers might a person who identifies as trans and/or gender diverse face in accessing a Specialist Homelessness Service?"
"Many different people access Launch Housing services including people of diverse gender identities. Tell me about a situation when you worked effectively with a person who had a previous experience of discrimination, how did you build trust and rapport?"

What to look for in a response:
- Awareness and understanding of the discrimination experienced by people who identify as TGD.

Other ways of making the organisational environment more TGD-friendly are:

- Providing **TGD-specific information** where relevant (e.g. books, pamphlets, newsletters, other resources) and displaying **TGD-inclusive images** (e.g. posters, flags, and signs that welcome TGD people), especially near check-in and waiting areas (see 'Developing a model of care to support trans and gender diverse people experiencing homelessness – Final Report' at **lgbtihomeless.org.au** for example posters at Launch Housing)

- Adding the Transgender Pride Flag, Non-Binary Flag, Rainbow Flag, and an inclusive statement to staff **email signatures**

- Replace binary-gender language in current **communications** with gender neutral language

- Include at least one **gender neutral toilet** and clear signs to all facilities, without assuming which option TGD clients prefer[2].

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[2] Gooch, B. (2011) 'Shining the Light: 10 keys to becoming a trans positive organisation', Galop. London, UK.

MTPCPC (2013). 'Shelter for All Genders: Best practices for homeless shelters, services, and programs in Massachusetts in serving transgender adults and gender non-conforming guests'. Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition Policy Committee. Massachusetts.

VAC (2017). 'TGD Support Reference Guide: Policy and Practice Recommendations for Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Service Providers Supporting the Trans and Gender Diverse (TGD) Community'. Victorian Aids Council in partnership with VAADA. Melbourne.

SUMMARY: ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Rainbow Tick Standards

- ✓ Organisational capability
- ✓ Workforce development
- ✓ Consumer participation
- ✓ A welcoming and accessible organisation

Key Elements

- Inclusive environment and images
- Respectful policies
- Staff recruitment and training
- Continuous improvement

Relevant Service Types

- All staff and management
- Research, service development and advocacy
- Human resources

Further resources

Championing Inclusion: A Guide to Creating LGBTI-Inclusive Organisations
https://lgbtihealth.org.au/resources/championing-inclusion/

Rainbow eQuality Guide: Building Inclusive Services
https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/rainbowequality

Rainbow Tick Guide To LGBTI Inclusive Practice https://www.glhv.org.au/lgbti-inclusive-practice

Victorian Aids Council TGD Support Reference Guide: Policy and Practice Recommendations for Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Service Providers Supporting the Trans and Gender Diverse (TGD) Community https://vac.org.au/site/assets/uploaded/012f7e37-tgd-support-reference-guide-aod.pdf

2. Consumer Participation

Consumer participation is important to further identifying and prioritising client needs, respecting lived experience, reducing barriers for clients, promoting mental health, and continuously improving service provision for TGD people. A few ways of increasing TGD consumer participation in your service provision and decision-making are:

- Having a clear **evaluation and complaints pathway**
- Having a **TGD liaison officer or peer mentor**
- Having a **lived experience advisory group**, and fostering leadership opportunities
- **Reaching out and communicating services** to the TGD community; and partnering with other TGD or TGD-inclusive organisations on new initiatives, or seeking their advice on referral options and training opportunities[3]. Some examples include:

- **Transgender Victoria**
  http://www.transgendervictoria.com

- **The Shed**
  http://www.transshedboys.com

- **Zoe Belle Gender Collective** (ZBGC)
  http://www.zbgc.com.au

- **Seahorse Victoria**
  http://seahorsevic.com.au/main/

- **Ygender**
  https://ygender.org.au

- **Minus18**
  https://minus18.org.au

- **GenDA**
  https://genda.org.au

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[3] Gooch (2011).

SUMMARY: CONSUMER PARTICIPATION

Rainbow Tick Standards

- ✓ Organisational capability
- ✓ Consumer participation

Key Elements

- Invite feedback from clients
- Formalise TGD representation in a lived experience advisory group
- TGD liaison officer or peer mentor
- Secondary consultation with TGD community
- Evaluation and complaints pathway

Relevant Service Types

- Research, service development and advocacy
- Lived Experience Advisory Group

Further resources

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Strategy: A new strategy for inclusion and action
https://lgbtihealth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/LGBTI_Report_MentalHealthandSuicidePrevention_Final_Low-Res-WEB.pdf

Shining the Light: 10 keys to becoming a trans positive organisation
http://www.galop.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/final-shine-report-low-res.pdf

Inclusive Practices for Non-Binary Clients
http://www.monashhealth.org/images/content/document/189102_1517373747.pdf

3. Respectful Communication

Respectful communication includes (but is not limited to) choice of language, intake and screening procedures, using client-preferred name and pronouns, recognising non-binary gender, responses to disclosure, and recording of information.

Importantly, there is **a range of genders and pronouns** in the trans and gender diverse community, including non-binary, and clients may identify with more than one of these. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients may describe themselves as sistergirls and brotherboys rather than trans and gender diverse[4].

Clients should never feel pressured to disclose their TGD status, and staff need to understand the significance to TGD people of disclosing their gender identity and practice **sensitive responses to disclosure**.

While not recognising and respecting a client's gender and misgendering can have negative health impacts, it is also important not to assume that someone identifies as TGD based on their appearance; it is better to **ask how someone describes their gender and what pronoun/s they use**. Information about a client's gender should be collected from the client themselves or from their nominated representative, and this should be asked discretely and privately where possible. If it is necessary to ask what gender a person was assigned at birth, it should also be explained why this information is required, and that the information will remain confidential unless the client permits otherwise[5].

A client should be addressed using the gender/s and name their identify with - noted in the client's file - regardless of whether they have changed these legally or had surgery. Not using a person's gender pronoun can be an example of discrimination. It is also important to **use gender neutral greetings and recognise diverse voices when on the phone**, and provide a

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[4] QAHC (2008). 'Supporting transgender and sistergirl clients: Providing respectful and inclusive services to transgender and sistergirl clients'. Queensland Association for Healthy Communities Inc. (QAHC).

[5] Lambda Legal (2016).

range of options in **screening and intake forms**[6]**.** Below is one example of TGD-friendly gender options on an intake form:

Box 4: Example of intake form

Please indicate your gender identity/expression:

Female	Male	Trans	Sistergirl	Brotherboy	GenderQueer
Trans feminine	Trans woman	Trans masculine	Trans man	Non Binary	Prefer Not To Say

Other (Please specify: kathoey, kinnar, hijra etc) _____

What was the gender assigned at birth?	Male	Female	Other	Prefer Not To Say
Do you identify as Intersex?	Yes	No	Prefer Not To Say	
What are your preferred pronouns:	She	He	They	Other: _____
Do you identify as:	Aboriginal	Torres Strait Islander	Aboriginal /Torres Strait Islander	
	Non Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander		Other (Please specify): _____	

Source: **Equinox Gender Diverse Health Centre**

Box 5: Another example of TGD-inclusive gender options on intake form

☐ M ☐ F GENDER _____

Trans and Gender Diverse people are welcome at this service

Source: **Victorian Aids Council TGD Support Reference Guide: Policy and Practice Recommendations for Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Service Providers Supporting the Trans and Gender Diverse (TGD) Community**, p.6

https://vac.org.au/site/assets/uploaded/012f7e37-tgd-support-reference-guide-aod.pdf

Note that Australian Government services are now required to include a third gender category: "Where sex and/or gender information is collected and recorded in a personal record,

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[6] HUD (2011). 'Equal Access for Transgender People: Supporting Inclusive Housing and Shelters'. US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

VAC (2017).

individuals should be given the option to select M (male), F (female) or X (Indeterminate/Intersex/Unspecified)" (Australian Government guidelines 2013, p. 4).

Box 6: Example changes to SRS data fields

Pronouns	[dropdown]
Gender identity	She/her
	He/him
Do you have an intersex	They/them
variation?	Name only
	Prefer to self-describe (specify)

Gender identity	[dropdown]
Do you have an intersex	Female
variation?	Male
	Trans
Sexual orientation	Sistergirl
	Brotherboy
Date of Birth	Genderqueer
	Trans feminine
	Trans woman
	Trans masculine
	Trans man
Identifies as	Non binary
	Prefer not to say
	Prefer to self-describe (specify)

Source: **Launch Housing**

Note that others to include are queer, questioning/unsure, agender, bigender, genderfluid, and that there may be differences in the spelling of some identities (such as Sistagirls).
A 'Prefer to self-describe' free text box is important for clarification.

TGD people are a highly stigmatised community. As TGD people who access homelessness and other services may have experienced family rejection, intake forms need to ensure that emergency contact information and next-of-kin options do not default to biological family options, but have an open category for **preferred contact**.

It will often also be important to ask about gender identity and sexual orientation during an intake visit or during other encounters with clients. Some clients will prefer to disclose in person rather than on an intake form, so may leave this section of the form blank. These questions should be made relevant to the context of the discussion, rather than apparently being voyeuristic. Also, the information may not be revealed with the initial question.

Box 7: Example script at Launch Housing

'Having information about your gender identity and sexual orientation will help ensure you receive the most appropriate services and support. This will also influence the advocacy work the organisation undertakes in regards to gender identity, sexual orientation and homelessness. I would like to respect your gender and sexuality.

What pronouns, if any, do you use for yourself?

Can you please tell me your gender identity/expression? Do you have an intersex variation? What is your sexual orientation? Thank you for telling me. Do you consent for this information to be recorded in your client record?'

Source: **Launch Housing**

Note that a trans or gender diverse person could identify with any sexual orientation, and as having an intersex variation, so intake forms should be inclusive of this. Examples of drop-down categories to include for sexual orientation: asexual, bisexual, gay, heterosexual, lesbian, pansexual, prefer not to say, queer, questioning/unsure, prefer to self-describe (specify). For information on making your service inclusive of intersex people see:

- **Making Your Service Intersex Friendly**
  https://ihra.org.au/services/

- **Intersex Human Rights Australia (formerly OII)**
  https://ihra.org.au

SUMMARY: RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

Rainbow Tick Standards

- ✓ Culturally safe and acceptable services
- ✓ Disclosure and documentation
- ✓ A welcoming and accessible organization

Key Elements

- Inclusive language – appreciating the range of genders and pronouns
- Respect preferred name and self-identified gender/pronoun
- Recognising different voices on the phone
- Intake form and screening questions, including range of gender options and preferred contact
- Appropriate response to disclosure

- Recording and reporting

- All

Further Resources

Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender
https://www.ag.gov.au/Publications/Documents/AustralianGovernmentGuidelinesontheRecognitionofSexandGender/AustralianGovernmentGuidelinesontheRecognitionofSexandGender.pdf

National LGBTI Health Alliance Inclusive Language Guide
https://lgbtihealth.org.au/resources/inclusive-language-guide/

Supporting Sex and Gender Diverse (Trans) Clients
http://www.atsaq.com/files/Supporting%20Transgender%20and%20Sistergirl%20Web%20verision.pdf

Guidelines for the Primary and Gender-Affirming Care of Transgender and Gender Nonbinary People
http://transhealth.ucsf.edu/pdf/Transgender-PGACG-6-17-16.pdf

Creating equal access to quality health care for transgender patients: Transgender-affirming hospital policies
https://www.lambdalegal.org/know-your-rights/article/trans-affirming-hospital-policies

Providing affirmative care for patients with non-binary gender identities
https://www.lgbthealtheducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Providing-Affirmative-Care-for-People-with-Non-Binary-Gender-Identities.pdf

4. Confidentiality

As previously mentioned, information about a TGD client's gender (and any medical procedures or other health-related information) should be **gathered directly from the client or from their nominated representative**. If a client is also required to document their legal name which has not been changed, or gender assigned at birth, this too should remain confidential – reassuring the client that this is the case – unless the client gives permission otherwise[7]. Staff should also **consult with TGD clients about how and why this information is recorded, stored, and shared**, in accordance with clear privacy and confidentiality procedures established by the organisation or service that all staff are familiar with.

Recording gender identity and sexual orientation in the client file is important for the client, so that they do not have to disclose these things repeatedly to staff. It is also important for the service, to accurately record the diversity of clients. However, seeking permission to record gender identity and sexual orientation is important.

Box 8: Example script – Explaining Confidentiality

The staff at this service have been trained in the importance of confidentiality, and not revealing personal or private information about clients to other services without permission. Please let me know if there are people or agencies that you would prefer not to know about your gender identity or sexual orientation.

Breaches of confidentiality can jeopardise the mental and physical health and safety of TGD clients. When staff refer on to other agencies and support services, a client's TGD status should not be disclosed without the client's consent.

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[7] Marksamer (2011).

MTPCPC (2013). 'Shelter for All Genders: Best practices for homeless shelters, services, and programs in Massachusetts in serving transgender adults and gender non-conforming guests'. Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition Policy Committee. Massachusetts.

SUMMARY: CONFIDENTIALITY

Rainbow Tick Standards

- ✓ Disclosure and documentation
- ✓ A welcoming and accessible organization

Key Elements

- Upon disclosure – ask about preferred level of confidentiality
- Permission to record gender identity
- Permission to share gender identity in referrals

Relevant Service Types

- All

Further Resources

Victorian Aids Council TGD Support Reference Guide: Policy and Practice Recommendations for Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Service Providers Supporting the Trans and Gender Diverse (TGD) Community https://vac.org.au/site/assets/uploaded/012f7e37-tgd-support-reference-guide-aod.pdf

It's Not Rocket Science: Policies and procedures for services working with transgender clients https://gendercentre.org.au/resources/human-resources?download...not-rocket-%20science

Supporting Sex and Gender Diverse (Trans) Clients http://www.atsaq.com/files/Supporting%20Transgender%20and%20Sistergirl%20Web%20verision.pdf

Shelter for All Genders https://www.masstpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Shelter-for-all-Genders.pdf

5. Safe Environment

TGD clients can have additional safety risks, concerns, and privacy requirements with implications for sleeping arrangements, use of facilities, and client code of conduct. This is due to the widespread nature of transphobia that can manifest as overt discrimination, verbal abuse, prevention from accessing spaces, or physical abuse. The physical bodies of TGD people can be diverse and changing, and subject to vilification, which necessitates the need for additional privacy.

Box 9: Case study – Perception of transphobia in services

One gender diverse person interviewed recently had not accessed homelessness services due to fears of transphobia:

"I would've felt safer in a squat or an empty somewhere, and I don't know if I could've gone to any homelessness shelter or temporary accommodation because all I'd heard about the youth and queer and women's shelters were just that they were all incredibly transphobic. You don't want to even try to access those services if there's that history of transphobia or queerphobia".

Services need to make overt reference to creating a safe environment to change experiences and perceptions of transphobia that affect help-seeking.

A **zero tolerance approach to harassment** from other clients should be enshrined and codes of conduct for clients should be provided to this effect.

If the service has a **dress code**, this should not be gender-based or reinforce gender stereotypes, but be as inclusive as possible of diverse gender presentations and expressions[8]. Awareness about sex work and the **rights of sex workers** should also be promoted.

Sleeping arrangements and **bathroom** facilities should be discussed with TGD clients and offered **on the basis of individual preference and self-identified gender** – regardless of whether they have had surgery or changed legal documentation[9]. TGD clients should be given

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[8] Marksamer (2011).

MTPCPC(2013).

[9] Ibid.

priority if private rooms are available, unless they prefer otherwise; if a client is particularly vulnerable, they should be offered a bed where it is easy to readily contact staff[10]. To further promote the safety of TGD clients, bathroom facilities should be as private as possible – including single-stall options with lockable doors, or at least curtains on showers or other privacy measures. At least one shower at the facility should be completely private; if shower facilities are communal, staff could create a schedule for their use[11]. Staff can also enquire if TGD clients have any additional safety concerns or needs.

Below is an example of some phrases to include that recognise these safety aspects from the Open Doors Youth Service Clients Rights and Responsibilities Charter.

Box 10: Example of Client Code of Conduct from Open Doors Youth Service Inc. – Safety aspects

"When using our service, you have the right to…

Receive support in a respectful and professional manner to meet your identified needs in an environment that is safe, respectful and which positively affirms and celebrates your sexuality and/or gender identity"

"Receive support that respects and appreciates your diversity such as sexuality, gender identity, gender, culture, religion, political belief, age, ability, economic status and personal values"

"Expect that your privacy will be respected and confidentiality protected to the fullest extent we can provide by law"

"When using our service, you have responsibility for…

"Treating staff, volunteers and other clients with respect"

"Respecting the building and allow others to receive services in a safe environment"

Lambda Legal (2016).

National Alliance to End Homelessness (2012). 'Supporting Homeless Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Youth'. Washington

The Gender Centre. 'It's Not Rocket Science: Policies and procedures for services working with transgender clients'. The Gender Centre and the Women's & Girls' Emergency Centre. Sydney.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

"Keeping this space free from physical and verbal violence and aggression, including threats of violence, bullying and harassment"

"Keeping this space free from homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, sexism, racism, or discrimination of any kind"

"Respecting the privacy and confidentially of others"

Source: **Open Doors Youth Service Clients Rights and Responsibilities Charter** http://www.opendoors.net.au

If a client is experiencing harassment or violence, further information about the clients' rights and **complaints pathways** should be readily available, such as:

- **Victorian Legal Aid**
  https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/discrimination-harassment-%20and-bullying/discrimination-and-victimisation/sexual-orientation-and-gender-%20identity-discrimination

- **Fitzroy Legal Service**
  https://www.fitzroy-legal.org.au

- **Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission**
  http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/discrimination/making-a-complaint

- **How to contact your local GLLO**
  http://www.police.vic.gov.au/files/documents/533_How-To-Contact-Your-Local-GLLO.pdf

Other examples of how staff can handle 'problem situations' involving other residents can be found here:

- **Transitioning Our Shelters: A Guide to Making Homeless Shelters Safe for Transgender People**, p. 37-38
  https://srlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/TransitioningOurShelters.pdf

- **It's Not Rocket Science: Policies and procedures for services working with transgender clients**, p. 11-12

https://gendercentre.org.au/resources/human-resources?download...not-rocket-%20science

SUMMARY: SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Rainbow Tick Standards

✓ A welcoming and accessible organisation

Key Elements

- Individualised care allowing self-identity including non binary
- Sleeping arrangements - placement according to client preferences
- Other facilities (bathrooms, showers)
- Code of conduct for clients – discrimination, harassment and sexual assault from other clients actively discouraged
- Dress codes
- Information about rights available
- Sex work awareness

Relevant Service Types

- Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) service entry points
- All organisation offices, waiting rooms & foyers
- Crisis Accommodation
- Education First Youth Foyer
- Community Rooming Houses
- Transitional Housing

Further resources

Equal Access for Transgender People: Supporting Inclusive Housing and Shelters
https://safehousingpartnerships.org/node/102

Shelter for All Genders
https://www.masstpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Shelter-for-all-Genders.pdf

RhED Resources
http://sexworker.org.au/publications-and-resources/rhed-resources/

6. Changing Identity Documentation

TGD clients may need information or assistance from staff at homelessness services to change their identity documentation (such as birth certificates, passports, Medicare or Centrelink details) in order to affirm their gender. This should be covered in TGD staff training modules.

Information on **how to change gender marker and name details on birth certificates, passports, and other identity documents** can be obtained from:

- **Transgender Victoria**
  http://www.transgendervictoria.com/what-we-do/resources/item/sex-and-gender-diverse-people-and-identity-documents

- **Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**
  https://www.passports.gov.au/passportsexplained/theapplicationprocess/eligibilityovervi ew/Pages/changeofsexdoborpob.aspx

- **Victorian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages** - Application for Alteration of Sex in Birth Register or a Recognised Details Certificate form
  https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/changes-and-corrections/sex-affirmation/alteration-of-sex-application-form

- **Department of Health and Human Services - Transgender and gender diverse health and wellbeing: Background paper**
  https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/getfile/?sc_itemid=%7B9628310C-8018-4F8C-81CA-663424297A12%7D

If it is necessary for a client to provide their legal name, and if this is not their preferred name, staff should clearly explain why this is required, and again reassure the client that their details will remain confidential.

If a letter of support is required from a medical or other professional to change details on personal documents, an example is provided below. However, it is important to be mindful of how pathologising this process may feel for a TGD person if they aren't otherwise seeking assistance from a health professional.

Box 11: Example of letter of support from a health professional

To whom it may concern,

I am [affirmed name]'s [health professional]. I confirm that [affirmed name] has been assessed by a health professional as appropriately needing to affirm [gender pronoun] gender identity. I support [gender pronoun] application to have the [details] listed on [gender pronoun] [relevant identity document] changed to reflect [gender pronoun] affirmed gender.

See also: Transgender Victoria (2014). **Sex and gender diverse people and identity documents.** Melbourne, Australia, p.7 http://www.transgendervictoria.com/what-we-do/resources/item/sex-and-gender-diverse-people-and-identity-documents

Any Registered Medical Practitioner or a Registered Psychologist should be able to provide this letter of support, however, it may be up to their personal discretion. Thus it may be necessary to refer trans and gender diverse people to a Registered Medical Practitioner or a Registered Psychologist that try to engage in and/or have developed their skills in trans affirmative practices.

The National LGBTI Health Alliance have also recently developed the new Genders, Bodies and Relationships Passport, to further support intersex and TGD people.

Box 12: National LGBTI Health Alliance Genders, Bodies and Relationships Passport

See: https://lgbtihealth.org.au/passport/

SUMMARY: IDENTITIY DOCUMENTATION

Rainbow Tick Standards

✓ Disclosure and documentation

Key Elements

- Legal issues and documents
- Support to change gender marker and name on identity documents
- Clarity when legal name is required

Relevant Service Types

- All

Further Resources

Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender
https://www.ag.gov.au/Publications/Documents/AustralianGovernmentGuidelinesontheRecognit
ionofSexandGender/AustralianGovernmentGuidelinesontheRecognitionofSexandGender.pdf

National LGBTI Health Alliance Genders, Bodies and Relationships Passport
https://lgbtihealth.org.au/passport/

7. Diversity Inclusion

Staff and volunteers should be aware and inclusive of diversity and further marginal identities among TGD clients including cultural, Indigenous, and faith-based identification, disability, chronic illness such as HIV, sex worker status, as well as younger and older people, and clients from rural/regional communities. Where possible, clients who identify with these groups should be provided with **specific resources and support**, and specifically included on the **Lived Experience Advisory Group**. Some specific resources are provided below:

- **Supporting Same-Sex Attracted and Gender Diverse Young People of Multicultural and Multifaith Backgrounds**
  https://lgbtihealth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Supporting-Same-Sex-Attracted-and-Gender-Diverse-Young-People-of-Multicultural-Multifaith-Backgrounds-Research-Report-1.pdf

- **Nothing for Them: Understanding the support needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) young people from refugee and newly arrived backgrounds**
  http://www.myan.org.au/file/file/Nothing_for_them_report.pdf

- **Swimming Upstream: Making places welcoming**
  https://www.glhv.org.au/report/swimming-upstream-making-places-welcoming

- **AGMC GLBTIQ multicultural directory**
  http://www.agmc.org.au/resources-support/

- **RhED resources**
  http://sexworker.org.au/publications-and-resources/rhed-resources/

- **Scarlet Alliance**
  http://www.scarletalliance.org.au

- **Supporting transgender and sistergirl clients**: **Providing respectful and inclusive services to transgender and sistergirl clients**
  http://www.atsaq.com/files/Supporting%20Transgender%20and%20Sistergirl%20Web%20verision.pdf

- **Sisters and Brothers NT**

  http://sistersandbrothersnt.com

- **Creative Spirits**

  https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/health/aboriginal-sexual-health#toc4

- **Pride Vic**

  https://www.pridevic.com.au

- **Australian Deaf LGBTIQA+ Community**

  https://www.facebook.com/groups/adgla/about/

- **Rural and Regional: A QLife guide for health professionals**

  https://qlife.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/14-Rural-and-Regional-for-web.pdf

- **Inclusive Practice: Working with rural communities**

  http://www.glhv.org.au/files/GLBTIinclusivePracticeInRuralCommunities.pdf

- **Supporting Homeless Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Youth**

  http://www.lgbtqi2stoolkit.net/pdf/HomelessnessTransgenderYouth.pdf

- **Young People: QLife Tip Sheet**

  https://qlife.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/19-Young-People-for-web.pdf

- **National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Strategy: A new strategy for inclusion and action**
  https://lgbtihealth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/LGBTI_Report_MentalHealthandSuicidePrevention_Final_Low-Res-WEB.pdf

- **Rainbow eQuality Guide: Building Inclusive Services**

  https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/rainbowequality

SUMMARY: DIVERSITY INCLUSION

Rainbow Tick Standards

- ✓ Culturally safe and acceptable services
- ✓ A welcoming and accessible organization

Key Elements

- Multicultural (including international students and other non-permanent residents)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Rural/regional
- Multi-faith
- Disability
- Sex workers
- Chronic illness (including HIV)
- All age groups

Relevant Service Types

- All
- Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) Service Entry Points
- Lived Experience Advisory Group

8. TGD-Specific Support and Advocacy

TGD people have tended to report lower levels of overall health, higher rates of poverty, higher rates of abuse, and generally experience more barriers to accessing appropriate health care and safe housing. They may have additional, complex healthcare needs and financial burdens associated with their TGD status, and services should take this into consideration. Pathologising a client can also have further negative impacts on their health and wellbeing.

Box 13: Case study – Example of advocacy with a TGD client

A homelessness service case manager described how they supported a trans client to navigate the bureaucracy of the system:

"My client is currently trying to find work to sustain their housing. She had to go through a whole changing of name, which I was able to assist her with, but until the name change went through, her legal name was discordant with her appearance. I think she found that really difficult… it was an administrative barrier in her applications for housing, for brokerage and for bond assistance, one of the issues is the name they would use, because a lot of the time they would have to use their birth name… I would always start with her preferred name because I didn't see that there was any need for the birth name, and just noted that there was another name, please let us know if you need that for any legal requirements, and some were really happy to just go with the preferred name. … I tried to shield her from…the trauma, and I know there'll be a lot of situations in which she's going to experience that, so if I can reduce that a little bit in some things that's alright".

General information about **professional standards of care** in the health sector for TGD consumers are provided by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH). You can find the most recent version of the standards here:

- **WPATH Standards of Care**
  http://www.wpath.org/site_page.cfm?pk_association_webpage_menu=1351&pk_associatio n%20_webpage=4655

Note that there now a new **informed consent model** (endorsed by ANZPATH and Monash Gender Clinic) that has been widely supported by the trans and gender diverse community, which means that GPs can now conduct mental health reviews (rather than referring to psychiatrists or psychologists) for TGD clients in certain situations. You can find out more about the protocols for this model here:

- **Protocols for the Initiation of Hormone Therapy for Trans and Gender Diverse Patients**
  https://vac.org.au/site/assets/uploaded/b3e096c2-equinox-informed-consent-guidelines.pdf

Further information about TGD health care needs, risks, and service settings in Victoria is available here:

- **Transgender and gender diverse health and wellbeing: Background paper**
  https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/getfile/?sc_itemid=%7B9628310C-8018-4F8C-81CA-663424297A12%7D

Some TGD-inclusive **medical clinics** around Melbourne are:

- **Equinox Gender Diverse Health Service**
  http://pronto.org.au/looking-for-a-trans-friendly-gp/

- **Northside Clinic**
  http://northsideclinic.net.au

- **Prahran Market Clinic**
  http://www.prahranmarketclinic.com

- **Monash Gender Clinic**
  http://www.beingproud.org.au/monash-gender-clinic/

The Royal Children's Hospital Gender Service is also available to children up to 17 years (www.rch.org.au)

Specific information and support with regards to **working with families** is available from:

- **Drummond Street Services - queerspace**
  http://ds.org.au/our-services/queerspace/

- **QLife Families Guide**
  https://qlife.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/5-Families-for-web.pdf

- **Gender Help for Parents Australia**

    http://www.genderhelpforparents.com.au

- **Transcend**

    http://www.transcendsupport.com.au

- **Transfamily**

    https://transfamilysite.wordpress.com

- **Parents of Gender Diverse Children**

    http://www.pgdc.org.au

General LGBTI-friendly **helplines and counseling services** that staff could refer clients to in Victoria include:

- **QLife**

    qlife.org.au

- **Switchboard Victoria**

    www.switchboard.org.a

- **Victorian AIDS Council**

    www.vac.org.au/counselling-services

For **bullying** and support in schools:

- **Safe Schools**

    http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/Pages/safe-schools-coalition.aspx

- **Rainbow Network**

    http://www.rainbownetwork.com.au

- **GASP**

    http://www.gaspgeelong.net.au

- **TSER**

    http://www.transstudent.org

For job-seeking and employment support:

- **WorkingOUT**
  http://www.senswide.com.au/content.asp?id=26&t=WorkingOUT&cid=3

- **LGBTI Jobs**
  http://www.lgbtijobs.com.au

- **Transgender Australian People at Work & Complying with the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 in employment**
  http://www.transgendervictoria.com/what-we-do/resources/item/guideline-transgender-people-at-work-complying-with-the-equal-opportunity-act-2010-in-employment

Transgender Victoria have also developed a resource guide listing a range of TGD groups, general support, advocacy organisations, and further contacts, and key reports:

- **Transgender Victoria Resource Guide**
  http://www.transgendervictoria.com/what-we-do/resources/item/tgv-resource-june-2016

Staff should be able to refer TGD clients to TGD-specific clinical, social and peer support programs as needed, and should not expect the client to educate them about TGD issues or services. If other agencies are not inclusive of TGD people, avoid referring clients to those, and ask the client's consent before disclosing their TGD status to another agency or support group.

SUMMARY: TGD-SPECIFIC SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY

Rainbow Tick Standards

- ✓ Workforce development
- ✓ Culturally safe and acceptable services

Key Elements

- Employment support
- Advocacy for clients with other services
- Medical and surgical issues for transitioning
- Awareness of the impact of pathologisation
- Mental health issues for clients with complex needs
- Working with families
- Rights and complaints pathways

Relevant Service Types

- Youth specific services, life skills programs
- Case Management Support
- Transitional Support

Further Resources

Creating equal access to quality health care for transgender patients: Transgender-affirming hospital policies
https://www.lambdalegal.org/know-your-rights/article/trans-affirming-hospital-policies

The First Australian National Trans Mental Health Study: Summary of Results
https://www.beyondblue.org.au/docs/default-source/research-project-files/bw0288_the-first-australian-national-trans-mental-health-study---summary-of-results.pdf?sfvrsn=2

9. Facilitating Social Engagement

There are a number of social and other groups in Victoria that TGD people can get involved with and seek support from. Staff should be aware of these and help clients access them if required:

- **Transgender Victoria**
  http://www.transgendervictoria.com

- **The Shed**
  http://www.transshedboys.com

- **Zoe Belle Gender Collective** (ZBGC)
  http://www.zbgc.com.au

- **Seahorse Victoria**
  http://seahorsevic.com.au/main/

- **Ygender**
  https://ygender.org.au

- **Minus18**
  https://minus18.org.au

- **GenDA**
  https://genda.org.au

- **Redefining Androgyny**
  https://www.facebook.com/RedefiningAndrogyny/

- **Eastern Diversity Group** (through Family Access Network)
  http://www.fan.org.au/

- **Rainbow Network – find a group**
  http://www.rainbownetwork.com.au/index.php/find-a-group

- **Way Out**
  https://www.cobaw.org.au/our-services/young-people/wayout/

- **Pride Vic**

    https://www.pridevic.com.au

- **Australian Deaf LGBTIQA+ Community**

    https://www.facebook.com/groups/adgla/about/

There are also two Facebook Groups specifically for TGD and LGBTIQ people who are looking for housing (single or shared) in the private rental market:

- **Trans Housing Melbourne**

- **Queer Housing Melbourne**

These are both 'closed' groups so people must send a request to join them.

The research team behind this project is also currently working to develop and pilot a LGBTIQ safe housing network in Victoria, and further resources. More information about the safe housing project can be found on the website (**lgbtihomeless.org.au**).

SUMMARY: FACILITATING SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Rainbow Tick Standards

✓ Consumer participation

Key Elements

- Accessing safe housing e.g. private rental market and share-housing
- Referring to TGD-specific community groups

Relevant Service Types

- Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) service entry points
- Private Rental Brokerage Programs
- Case management and transitional Support

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Trans and gender diverse-inclusive practice audit tool for homelessness services

About the audit tool

This audit tool has been adapted by the LGBTI homelessness project team (www.lgbtihomeless.org.au) from the LGBTI-inclusive practice audit tool developed by GLHV@ARCSHS, La Trobe University with their kind permission. The content is informed by the literature, research findings from interviews with homelessness services and LGBTI people, and advice from a broad range of TGD individuals and organisations in Victoria.

It is designed for services to understand how trans and gender-diverse (TGD)-inclusive they are, and as a preparation for TGD training. It can assist to identify achievements and to determine where improvements are required. The results of the audit can inform forward planning including change management, systems redesign/improvement and cultural reform.

The audit tool follows the six Rainbow Tick Standards. Each of the Standards is accompanied by its own set of quality-based indicators that organisations can use to gauge how well their current systems, practices and protocols are meeting the intent of that particular Standard. (www.glhv.org.au/LGBTI-inclusive-practice).

The six LGBTI-inclusive practice Standards are:

Organisational capability

Workforce development

Consumer participation

A welcoming and accessible organisation

Disclosure and documentation

Culturally safe and acceptable services.

Please tick one of the three columns for each indicator:

Achieved

Needed

Not needed

We will ask you to complete the tool again after staff training and a period of time to embed any changes, and reflect on improvements and further developments needed.

Standard 1 - Organisational capability and culture

The organisation embeds TGD-inclusive practice across all its systems and continuously seeks opportunities for improvements.

Indicator	Achieved	Needed	Not needed
1.1 TGD-inclusive practice is reflected in the organisation's policies and procedures including position descriptions, service contracts, performance management system, service models, quality management plan, and anti-discrimination policy.			
1.2 The organisation facilitates TGD inclusion amongst staff and volunteers, including recruitment and selection.			
1.3 The organisation has an integrated TGD client feedback system that ensures continuous TGD- quality improvement and planning.			
1.4 The organisation's service delivery risk management system includes strategies to identify and manage potential risks to the cultural safety of TGD clients.			

Standard 2 - Workforce development

All staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities to TGD clients and are trained and able to deliver TGD-inclusive services.

Indicator	Achieved	Needed	Not needed
2.1 The organisation has a systematic process for assessing the TGD-inclusive practice professional development needs of the Board, leadership team, staff and volunteers.			
2.2 The organisation facilitates access to professional development to the Board, leadership team, staff and volunteers that includes their legal responsibilities, TGD cultural safety and a consideration of the impact of employees' attitudes and beliefs on TGD- inclusive practice.			

Standard 3 - Consumer participation

TGD clients are consulted with, and participate in the planning, development, and review of the service.

Indicator	Achieved	Needed	Not needed
3.1 The organisation works with TGD clients and community representatives to identify TGD clients' needs and develop and continuously improve their provision of TGD-inclusive services.			
3.2 The staff is willing and able to advocate for the needs of their TGD clients within the broader health and services sector.			
3.3 The organisation engages a TGD liaison officer to assist with meeting TGD client needs.			

Standard 4 - A welcoming and accessible organisation

TGD clients can easily and confidently access services because the physical and virtual environments, including information, structures, resources and processes, are welcoming.

Indicator	Achieved	Needed	Not needed
4.1 The organisation's communication and educational materials are TGD-inclusive (e.g. inclusive language and images, and TGD specific information where relevant).			
4.2 The organisation effectively communicates its services to the TGD community.			

Standard 5 - Disclosure and documentation

TGD clients, staff and volunteers feel safe to provide personal information, including their sexual orientation, gender identity and/or intersex status, because they know information will be treated respectfully and that there are systems in place to ensure their privacy.

Indicator	Achieved	Needed	Not needed
5.1 The organisation has systems for collecting, storing, using and sharing TGD client's personal information, including their gender identity, sexual orientation, intersex status and/or relationship status, and preferred contact person.			
5.2 The organisation only collects information about a client's gender identity, sexual orientation, intersex status and/or relationship status from the client themselves or from their nominated representative.			
5.3 Staff understand the significance to TGD people of disclosing their gender identity and that the organisation has strategies to ensure that staff respond in a respectful and affirming way to disclosure.			
5.4 The organisation ensure that TGD clients understand that their gender identity information is confidential and that they will be consulted on whether, how and why this information is recorded, stored and shared.			
5.5 Staff and volunteers can support TGD clients to change identity documentation (e.g. birth certificates, Medicare or Centrelink identity) to affirm their gender			

Standard 6 - Culturally safe and acceptable services

Services and programs identify, assess, analyse and manage risks to ensure the cultural safety of TGD clients.

Indicator	Achieved	Needed	Not needed
6.1 The organisation understands the specific needs of TGD clients and addresses these needs in the design and delivery of services and programs.			
6.2 The organisation has a code of conduct for all clients including a zero tolerance approach to discrimination and harassment on the basis of gender identity, sexual orientation and intersex status			
6.3. The organisation uses language that is TGD inclusive, including - use of client-preferred pronouns - use of client-preferred name - recognition of non-binary gender identification - recognition of diverse voices on the phone			
6.4 The organisation ensures that TGD clients are placed in residential services with sleeping and bathroom arrangements that are safe, appropriate, and acceptable to the client.			
6.5 Staff and volunteers understand and are inclusive of diversity among TGD clients including cultural, Indigenous, and faith-based identification, disability, and sex worker status.			
6.5 The staff can refer TGD clients to TGD-specific clinical, social and peer support services as needed.			
6.6 The organisation disseminates information about TGD cultural safety across its programs and services and to other organisations.			