



Trans and Gender Diverse Homelessness

Pilot Project Model of Care

Training Resource For Service Providers

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lgbtihomeless.com

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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 representation from organisations such as Transgender Victoria, GASP, Rainbow Network, Redefining Androgyny, The Shed, Seahorse Victoria, Zoe Belle Gender Collective, YGender, GenDA, Victorian Aids Council, and LGBTI Jobs.

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 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: lgbtihomeless.com (see **Resources**). The training for this pilot project is being 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.

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.

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**).

¹ GLHV@ARCSHS, La Trobe University (2016). 'The Rainbow Tick guide to LGBTI-inclusive practice'. Prepared

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.

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.

<http://safehousingpartnerships.org/sites/default/files/2017-01/Equal-Access-for-Transgender-People-Supporting-Inclusive-Housing-and-Shelters.pdf>

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

- **Recruitment questions** that concern TGD clients
- 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.

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 and signs that welcome TGD people), especially near check-in and waiting areas
- Include at least one **gender neutral toilet** and clear signs to all facilities, without assuming which option TGD clients prefer².

SUMMARY: ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Rainbow Tick Standards

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

Key Elements

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

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.

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**
<http://lgbtihealth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Champions-of-Inclusivity.pdf>
- **Rainbow eQuality Guide: Building Inclusive Services**
<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/populations/lgbti-health/rainbow-equality/building-inclusive-services>
- **Rainbow Tick Guide To LGBTI Inclusive Practice**
<http://www.glhv.org.au/sites/www.glhv.org.au/files/2017-02/Rainbow%20Tick%20guide%20to%20LGBTI%20inclusive%20practice%20web.pdf>
- **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**
<http://vac.org.au/site/assets/uploads/622ef9ea-vac2503-reference-guide-05-web.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 opportunities³. 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>

³ Gooch (2011).

- **Genderqueer Australia**
<https://www.genderqueer.org.au>
- **GenDA**
<https://genda.org.au>

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**
http://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>

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 diverse⁴.

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 otherwise⁵.

A client should be addressed using the gender/s and name they identify with - noted in the client's file - regardless of whether they have changed these legally or had surgery. Neglecting to use 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**

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).

the phone, and provide a range of options in **screening and intake forms**⁶. Below is one example of TGD-friendly gender options on an intake form:

Box 3: 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 4: 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

<http://vac.org.au/site/assets/uploaded/622ef9ea-vac2503-reference-guide-05-web.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, individuals should be given the option to select M (male), F (female) or X (Indeterminate/Intersex/Unspecified)” (Australian Government guidelines 2013, p. 4).

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

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**.

Note that sexual orientation is different to gender identity. A gender diverse or trans person could identify with any sexual orientation including for example lesbian, gay, heterosexual, bisexual, pansexual, or asexual. So, intake forms should also include sexual orientation questions.

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. Asking about gender identity and sexual orientation 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 5: Example script – Asking about gender identity, explaining why it is necessary

I need to know about your gender identity so that I can be sure that you receive the most appropriate services here.

Would you mind letting me know your gender identity?

What was your gender assigned to you at birth? (this follow up question can be helpful if it is not clear to you whether the person is trans or gender diverse)

What pronouns (if any) do you use for yourself?

Thank you for telling me.

(see next section for issues regarding clarifying confidentiality)

SUMMARY: RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

Rainbow Tick Standards

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

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

Relevant Service Types

- 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**
http://lgbtihealth.org.au/sites/default/files/Alliance%20Health%20Information%20Sheet%20Inclusive%20Language%20Guide%20on%20Intersex%2C%20Trans%20and%20Gender%20Diversity_0.pdf
- **Supporting Sex and Gender Diverse (Trans) Clients**
http://www.qahc.org.au/sites/default/files/trans_resource_181010.pdf

- **Creating equal access to quality health care for transgender patients: Transgender-affirming hospital policies**

http://www.lambdalegal.org/sites/default/files/publications/downloads/fs_20160525_transgender-affirming-hospital-policies.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 otherwise⁷. 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 6: 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.

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 organisation

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**
<http://vac.org.au/site/assets/uploads/622ef9ea-vac2503-reference-guide-05-web.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-science>
- **Supporting Sex and Gender Diverse (Trans) Clients**
http://www.qahc.org.au/sites/default/files/trans_resource_181010.pdf
- **Shelter for All Genders**
<http://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 7: 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 expressions⁸. Awareness about sex work and the **rights of sex workers** should also be promoted.

⁸ Marksamer (2011).

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 documentation⁹. TGD clients should be given 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 staff¹⁰. 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 use¹¹. 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 8: 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”

⁹ Ibid.

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.

“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”

“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 confidentiality 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-and-bullying/discrimination-and-victimisation/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-discrimination>

➤ **Fitzroy Legal Service (LGBTIQ service)**

http://www.fitzroy-legal.org.au/free_specialist_clinics

➤ **Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission**

<http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/index.php/making-a-complaint>

➤ **Victorian Police GLLO contacts**

http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media_ID=96743

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-science>

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://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Equal-Access-for-Transgender-People-Supporting-Inclusive-Housing-and-Shelters.pdf>
- **Shelter for All Genders**
<http://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/eligibilityoverview/Pages/changeofsexdoborpob.aspx>
- **Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**
<https://www.passports.gov.au/passportsexplained/theapplicationprocess/eligibilityoverview/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://assets.justice.vic.gov.au/bdm/resources/3e6a90ee-b59e-4e9c-ad02-53d50fb16be9/application_for_alteration_of_sex_online_2016.pdf
- **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&title=Transgender%20and%20gender%20diverse%20health%20and%20wellbeing

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.

A letter of support from a medical or other professional may be required to change details on personal documents. An example of such a letter is provided below.

Box 9: Example of letter of support from a medical professional

To whom it may concern,

I am X's (using the affirmed name) treating general practitioner. I confirm that X has been assessed by a mental health professional as appropriately needing to affirm their (using the affirmed gender pronoun) gender identity. I support their application to have the name (and/or gender) listed on their drivers license (or other relevant document) changed to reflect their 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>

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

Box 10: National LGBTI Health Alliance Genders, Bodies and Relationships Passport

See: www.lgbtihealth.org.au/gbrpassport

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/AustralianGovernmentGuidelinesontheRecognitionofSexandGender/AustralianGovernmentGuidelinesontheRecognitionofSexandGender.pdf>
- **National LGBTI Health Alliance Genders, Bodies and Relationships Passport**
www.lgbtihealth.org.au/gbrpassport

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**

<http://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**

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

- **AGMC GLBTIQ multicultural directory**

<http://www.agmc.org.au/resources-support/>

- **RhED resources**

<http://sexworker.org.au/publications-and-resources/rhed-resources/>

- **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%20version.pdf>

- **Sisters and Brothers NT**
<http://sistersandbrothersnt.com>

- **Creative Spirits**
<https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/health/aboriginal-sexual-health#toc4>

- **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/GLBTInclusivePracticeInRuralCommunities.pdf>

- **Supporting Homeless Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Youth**
http://www.endhomelessness.org/page/-/files/Supporting_Homeless_Transgender_and_Gender%20Nonconforming_Youth_toolkit.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**
<http://lgbtihealth.org.au/resources/national-lgbti-mental-health-suicide-prevention-strategy/>

- **Rainbow eQuality Guide: Building Inclusive Services**
<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/populations/lgbti-health/rainbow-equality/building-inclusive-services>

SUMMARY: DIVERSITY INCLUSION

Rainbow Tick Standards

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

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 11: 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_association_webpage=4655

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&title=Transgender%20and%20gender%20diverse%20health%20and%20wellbeing

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/>

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>
- **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 **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 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**
http://www.lambdalegal.org/sites/default/files/publications/downloads/fs_20160525_transgender-affirming-hospital-policies.pdf
- **From Blues to Rainbows: mental health and wellbeing of gender diverse and transgender young people in Australia**
<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/docs/default-source/research-project-files/bw0268-from-blues-to-rainbows-report-final-report.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>

- **Genderqueer Australia**
<https://www.genderqueer.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>

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 team behind this project is also currently working with the real estate sector to develop a list of LGBTIQ-friendly agents, safe housing network, and further resources for members of the TGD and LGBTIQ communities in Victoria.

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.com/) 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.			