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Major breakthrough in LGBTI ageing and aged care: National LGBTI Ageing and Aged Care Strategy
By Warren Talbot (Alliance General Manager)

Readers will be aware of the major breakthrough with the announcement by the Australian Government of the development of a National LGBTI Ageing and Aged Care Strategy. The Media Release from the Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, the Hon. Mark Butler, and the Alliance follow, as does a background information sheet.

It is important at the time of such a major announcement to recognise the work of the pioneering few in LGBTI ageing policy, advocacy and research over many years. Ageing and aged care has been a priority issue for the Alliance since its formation 2007, with important submissions made to government and the Productivity Commission in 2009 and 2010. This work has all contributed to the recent announcement.

There are several parameters for the development of the Strategy. The main ones are:

- The Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) are leading the development of the Strategy, which will be a Government document.
- the document needs to be submitted to the Minister by late November this year.
- the Strategy document itself will be short (20 pages).
- a broad-based Steering Committee has been appointed by DoHA with a first meeting on 2 August. Following an internal EOI process, Alliance nominees Dr Catherine Barrett, Corey Irlam, Dr Daniel Parker and Jessica Williams have been appointed to the Steering Committee by the Minister, with Catherine as Co-Chair.
- the Alliance has been funded to conduct a range of consultations, in each State/Territory, to prepare a report for DoHA by the end of October.

For the Alliance to conduct the consultations in the required time will involve substantial input from our Members and others in the wider LGBTI communities. We will be working to short deadlines.

The Alliance is still awaiting advice from DoHA concerning the submission made (in partnership with ACON and ACSA NSW/ACT) to conduct LGBTI training for aged care providers in each State/Territory.

I am pleased to welcome Steven Kennedy to the Alliance staff group. Steven has been appointed to a part-time five month position as Project Officer (Ageing and Aged Care Strategy).

Resources:
1. Media Release: Alliance welcomes LGBTI Aged Care Strategy Australia’s first LGBTI Health Plan a significant step forward
2. Media Release from the Hon Mark Butler MP: Equality for LGBTI Australians in Aged Care
Background to LGBTI Ageing Strategy

In April 2010, the Australian Government commissioned a Productivity Commission Inquiry into Aged Care. During the Productivity Commissions consultation, various aged care groups and LGBTI groups including the National LGBTI Health Alliance advocated for an aged care system that was more appropriate for LGBTI older Australians. Amongst the various recommendations three key reforms were advocated for by the National LGBTI Health Alliance:

- recognition as “special needs status” under the Aged Care Act;
- funded national training for aged care workers on LGBTI older issues; and
- an LGBTI ageing strategic plan to ensure the changes to the aged care industry were sensitive and supportive of LGBTI older peoples needs

In August 2011 the Productivity Commission’s Caring for Older Australians report endorsed these three key recommendations. In terms of the strategic plan it stated “In the Commission’s view, consideration of the development of a specific GLBTI strategy is warranted given the anticipated increase in demand for aged care services by this group and the limited recognition of their needs and preferences in the current policy framework, delivery of services and accreditation processes.”1

The Aged Care Industry endorsed these statements as can be seen by the National Aged Care Alliance (NACA) November 2011 factsheets on the Productivity Commission report where stated that “It is also encouraging to see the GLBTI issues being discussed and the Alliance supports the development of a national aged care approach to ensure providers are more aware of, and address, these needs.”2

The recommendations were further endorsed by older consumers, including LGBTI older people who attended the Ministerial conversations around the country to discuss the proposed reforms. In the concluding report, the conversation coordinators, COTA Australia noted that “The Conversations acknowledged, and supported, the Productivity Commission’s recommendation for the development of a specific Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) aged care strategy.”3

In April 2012, the Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, the Hon. Mark Butler MP, announced LGBTI people would be recognised with special needs status under the Aged Care Act and dedicated $2.5 Million over 5 years towards training the Aged Care sector about LGBTI issues.4 These initiatives are further supported by including LGBTI people within funding for Community Visitor Schemes and a fund for targeted special needs ageing initiatives.5

Todays announcement of an LGBTI Aged Care Strategy will ensure that the concerns raised by the LGBTI older people, the National LGBTI Health Alliance and other organisations in recent years may be considered by the Government as part of its implementation of the Governments reforms to aged care.

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2 SPECIAL NEEDS GROUPS ACCESS AND CONSUMER PROTECTIONS, Aged Care Reform Information Sheet, National Aged Care Alliance, November 2011 http://www.naca.asn.au/nacalogin/Info_sheets/Special%20needs%20groups%20%20access.pdf
3 SUMMARY REPORT ON THE CONVERSATIONS ON AGEING, Council of the Ageing (COTA) Australia, released May 2012 (See http://goo.gl/VVQVF)
Health Policy Report

Diverse Sex and Gender (DSG): Australia’s first National Diverse Sex and Gender Health Roundtable follow-up.

The Roundtable was held on 18-19 June, with the venue kindly provided by the Australian Human Rights Commission in Pitt Street, Sydney. Intersex, Sistagirl, Trans men and Trans women and Genderqueer people from every state and territory, as well as others working on their behalf, met together to identify the top priority issues faced by Australians of diverse sex and gender, and to develop a program of action in response.

The Participants’ Report has been completed, and we are now working on the Final Report, entitled ‘Health Priorities of Australians of Diverse Sex and Gender - A National Plan of Action’. This is designed to be a stand-alone document, which can be publicly distributed in its entirety, for example to media, politicians, LGBTI organisations, etc. We have also developed a work plan for the Alliance to progress some of the recommendations from the Roundtable.

The Australian Human Rights Commission has created a new Senior Policy Officer position on their Sexual Orientation, Sex and Gender Identity Team, dedicated full-time to LGBTI Human Rights. Nick Burrage, who attended some of the sessions of our recent DSG Health Roundtable, has been appointed to the role. Nick held a meeting at the Alliance telling us what his role entails. We briefed him about the work of the Alliance. We look forward to working with Nick and the Australian Human Rights Commission on health and wellbeing as a fundamental human right of LGBTI Australians.

Department of Human Services LGBTI Working Group

At the last meeting of the DHS LGBTI Working Group, the Department informed us about Case Coordination, a new process under Service Delivery Reform to help the Department identify customers in need of additional support. It will connect customers to appropriate services in the community and will provide greater assistance to people with complex needs. Trials are taking place in 19 sites around Australia, with a total of 44 sites by 2013-14.
Expressions of interest are being sought for membership of task group to develop an LGBTI Mental Health Promotion Outcomes Framework.

The purpose of the Framework is to inform and promote evidence-based and safe mental health promotion and suicide prevention activity undertaken by LGBTI organisations and individuals.

Membership of the task group would require:

- Participation in up to 6 teleconferences
- Attendance at one day meeting in Melbourne
- Reviewing and commenting on Framework Document

For further information about the task group please contact:

Barry Taylor, Senior Project Officer (Capacity Development)
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Phone (02) 8568-1124
Network MindOUT!: LGBTI Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Community of Practice

The sharing of information and facilitating learning opportunities for people are essential elements of capacity building. It was with this in mind, that Network MindOUT!: LGBTI Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Community of Practice has been created. Rather than taking a traditional network approach, the concept of a community of practice is being fostered. Cognitive anthropologists Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger observe that a community of practice consists of those who have a shared interest or profession and that through the process of sharing information and experiences with the group, members learn from each other, and have an opportunity to develop themselves personally and professionally.

The purpose of the Network MindOUT! community of practice is to link people who have an interest in promoting positive mental well-being among lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons and communities. Rather than being for one profession, Network MindOUT! is multi-disciplinary with members coming from clinical, research, policy, community action, human rights and LGBTI communities.

The community of practice is predominantly a cyber-community communicating mainly through a monthly e-bulletin, a twice yearly newsletter, MindOUT! Facebook page and the Alliance webpage. From time to time network members may meet in person at national or regional gatherings. Planned meetings are the MindOUT! Symposium in Sydney in October and the Health in Difference Conference in Melbourne in April 2013. A series of webinars covering a range of topics related to suicide prevention and mental health in LGBTI populations is also planned over the next twelve months.

Join Network MindOUT! here
Standing Strong, Living Long: The opportunities and challenges for suicide prevention in LGBTI populations

Wednesday 10 October 2012

McDonald Room, Sancta Sophia College
8 Missenden Road, Camperdown, Sydney

Cost $40.00 (GST incl.)

www.lgbtihealth.org.au/mindoutsymposium

Presentations will cover:

- Safe and Effective LGBTI Suicide Prevention
- Mental health promotion in LGBTI populations
- Mental Health and Suicide in Older Persons
- Mental Health and Suicide in Intersex People
- Mental Health and Suicide in Transgender People
- Showcasing of examples of LGBTI suicide prevention in Australia

RSVP: Wednesday 3 October 2012

Registration is essential as places are limited.

Further information and to register online: www.lgbtihealth.org.au/mindoutsymposium

A limited number of travel scholarships to attend the symposium are available. Further information application form is available www.lgbtihealth.org.au/mindoutsymposium

Standing Strong, Living Long is sponsored by MindOUT! Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Project – a project funded under the National Suicide Prevention Program
The National LGBTI Health Alliance is providing a limited number of travel and registration scholarships for participants to attend the MindOUT! LGBTI Suicide Prevention Symposium in Sydney on Wednesday 10 October.

Scholarships cover:

- Travel: Return Economy airfares to Sydney from the applicant’s closest airport. If the Alliance determines that in order to attend the start of the symposium, the person needs to fly into Sydney on the Tuesday night, then one night’s accommodation will be provided. The Alliance will also cover the cost of breakfast at the hotel. All other expenses (e.g. phone, mini bar, internet) must be paid by the scholarship recipient.

To be eligible for a scholarship, applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Demonstrated personal or professional experience with LGBTI mental health or suicide prevention
2. Demonstrate ability to apply the learnings from the symposium in your work (paid or unpaid) for the betterment of LGBTI peoples’ mental well-being

Click here to download an application form or to find out more about the MindOUT! Symposium.
MindOUT! Consumer Consultations: Help us to improve mental health services for LGBTI people!

Get Involved!

Come to a one hour Consultation Meeting on Saturday 15th September 2012 at Level 1, 222 King Street Newtown, at 2pm.

or

Send an email becky.walker@lgbtihealth.org.au to provide email input

If you have used a mental health service recently, we invite your input.

The Alliance is interested in hearing your views on:

• What makes a service LGBTI friendly or unfriendly?
• Which services have been helpful and why?
• Do you think services should ask about your sexuality, sex or gender identity?
• What kinds of support do you think mental health services should offer?

About these consultations:

We are looking into the ways that policies and practices affect LGBTI people and their mental health outcomes.

These consultations will also seek feedback on our LGBTI Inclusive Practice Standards: a cultural competency framework for LGBTI people in mental health and suicide prevention organisations.
**beyondblue highlights link between discrimination and LGBTI mental health**

In a recent news item, beyondblue has taken time to articulate the link between discrimination and LGBTI mental health.

Excerpt:
“Discrimination is a major risk factor for depression and anxiety and can be a daily occurrence for gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans and intersex (GLBTI) people.

As a result of discrimination, GLBTI people are at least two to three times more likely to experience depression or anxiety than the broader population”

[Click here to read the full item](#)
[Click here to read their GLBTI position statement](#)

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**Report: ‘Let’s talk about sex: Young people’s views on sex and sexual health information in Australia’**

The Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC) and Youth Empowerment Against HIV/AIDS (YEAH) recently released their report, “Let’s Talk About Sex”: Young People’s views on sex and sexual health information in Australia. 1,219 young people aged 15-29 responded to an online survey about their opinions, experiences and needs around access to sexual health information and education.

- 31% of respondents identified as Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender/ Queer/Intersex.
- More than 80% of respondents want sexual health education in schools, but the majority would prefer it to be delivered by sexual health peer educators (i.e. trained young people) and community organisations, rather than teachers.
- Ninety four percent of respondents want sexuality included in school-based sex education.

YEAH and AYAC are currently looking at next steps. If you would like to be involved in any way, please contact Maia Giordano: [maia@ayac.org.au](mailto:maia@ayac.org.au); 02 9212 0500.

[Click here to read the full report](#).
World First: HPV Vaccine Approved for Boys

In a world first, Australian schoolboys will be able to get the successful Gardasil® vaccine, which will protect them against developing a range of cancers and bolster the effectiveness of this vaccine in women.

Providing the vaccine to boys will help protect them against HPV related disease such as anal and penile cancer. 12-13 year old boys will be immunised through a school-based program with a catch up program over the next two years for boys in Year 9.

The HPV vaccine, which was developed in Australia, has been available to girls since 2007 as a measure to prevent cervical cancer. Minister for Health Tanya Plibersek said “Already the HPV vaccine has had an impact - significantly reducing the number of lesions that lead to cervical cancer.”

The HPV vaccination program for boys is expected to cost $21.1 million over four years. This will include an information campaign, a vaccine register and monitoring of adverse reactions.

Click here to read the full media release

ACON Launches ‘Peace of Mind’ Mental Health Project.

A new education program is aiming to reduce the impact of mental distress in the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) community by helping people improve their understanding of mental health and their ability to help people experiencing mental health issues.

The program has been developed by ACON, in partnership with the Mental Health Coordinating Council (MHCC) and in collaboration with the National LGBTI Health Alliance and Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria.

The Alliance’s MindOUT! Project will be presenting workshops on LGBTI Suicide as part of the Peace of Mind program.

Click here to read more about ‘Peace of Mind’
LGBTI Homeless Engagement in National Reconnect Program

Author: Julian Punch OA (Rainbow Communities Tasmania)

From the report:
“I was asked by the National LGBTI Health Alliance to attend the National Reconnect Good Practice Forum in Adelaide at The Stamford Plaza, North Terrace – Adelaide on 16 and 17 May. Reconnect providers (over 200 delegates) from all over the country attended the Conference including staff from two especial dedicated LGBTI Reconnect projects in the Valley Brisbane (Open Doors) and 20/10 Surrey Hills Sydney (20/10).

Reconnect is a national community based early intervention program for young people aged 12 to 18 years (young people aged 12 to 21 for Reconnect-Newly Arrived Youth Specialist services), who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and their families...It is part of a suite of programs that address homelessness and is therefore critical that it has an engagement strategy as regards young LGBTI people ‘coming out’ with the potential to experience rejection by their family and possible loss of peer support.”

Click here to read the full report

QAHC and their LGBTI Seniors Visiting Service

A new project is underway at Healthy Communities linking trained volunteer visitors with isolated LGBT seniors who might find it difficult to leave the house and stay connected with their community.

QAHC are looking for volunteer visitors to attend a training day in early July and then be willing to commit to regular visits of one or two hours weekly or fortnightly for a minimum six months. Volunteers will be matched with a client and then set up a regular time for visiting for a chat, going for a coffee or spending time on a hobby, activity or outing.

Project worker Ann Matson said LGBT seniors were more likely to live alone and could be at risk of having smaller support networks of relatives or friends to help them maintain social connections with others.

Click here to get involved!
The Experiences of Transgender People Living in Australia

You are invited to participate in an online survey looking at the experiences and needs of transgender people living in Australia.

We are looking for people of various gender identifications including transgender, transsexual, cross-dresser, gender-queer, bigender and all those whose gender expression differs from that usually associated with their birth sex to take part in this research. Eligible participants must be 18 years or over and reside in Australia.

It is hoped that results from this research project can be used to promote positive outcomes for transgender persons and their families.

If you are eligible and can spare 10-15 minutes to complete an online survey, please click the below URL link which will take you to the questionnaire

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/transaustralia

or email Crystal Boza at 15960551@student.uws.edu.au for more information.

Call for volunteers: The Zoe Belle Gender Centre

1. Treasurer
2. Support Team Members

Zoe Belle Gender Centre (ZBGC) is a Melbourne-based organisation that supports and improves the health and well-being of Victoria’s sex and/or gender diverse (SGD) population.

Click here to get involved: http://gendercentre.com/participate/jobs/

‘Born this way’

Two retreats: Exploring & celebrating complexity in sexuality & gender; Challenging Stereotypes & looking at gender on a continuum.

Sharon Jones (Australia/ Working it Out) and Mani Mitchell (New Zealand) will present two retreats in Tasmania in October: one for LGBTI Community Members and Allies, the other for Service Providers and Interested Professionals.

Click here to find out more
Suicide Prevention Australia’s National Conference this year has LGBTI suicide prevention as one of its conference’s themes. The Alliance’s MindOUT! Project is encouraging LGBTI organisations or individuals who are working on suicide prevention with LGBTI people to attend. We will also be running a National LGBTI Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Symposium immediately prior to the conference.

This is the first time that LGBTI has been identified as a major theme so it would be good to have a strong presence at the conference.

Further information can be found on the SPA website: http://suicidepreventionaust.org/conferences/

ANZPATH: BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Australian and New Zealand Professional Association for Transgender Health presents: Second International Conference
When: 7-9 September 2012
Where: Melbourne Australia

[Click here to visit the ANZPATH conference website]
AISSGA Conference: Sydney, 
15-16 September, 2012

The AISSGA is pleased to announce that our Conference for 2012 will be held in Sydney on September 15-16, 2012. Last year’s conference in Brisbane was an enjoyable and inspiring event, so don’t miss this year’s opportunity to meet others, network, share stories and learn more about AIS and other intersex conditions. To assist you with your travel plans to the Conference, we usually start around 11 am on the Saturday and end about 3-4pm on the Sunday.

The first day is usually focused on information sharing with speakers and discussion on topics of interest, and is open to health practitioners and other professionals with an interest in AIS/intersex to attend. The second day is focused on sharing personal stories and offering support, and is open only to those with intersex conditions and their families/partners.

Click here to register your interest!

2nd Global Conference on Queer Sexualities

Monday 11th February – Wednesday 13th February 2013
Sydney, Australia

20 years since the reclamation of the word ‘queer’ by the LGBTQIA community, this conference would like to take a closer look at broad themes of queer sexualities through time and space, non-normative sexual constructions, and queer sexual identities from a diverse range of perspectives by scholars working in various academic disciplines.

Call For Presentations
Papers, reports, work-in-progress and workshops are invited on any aspect of Queer or LGBTQIA Studies.

Click here to visit the conference website and find out more!
Member Information

Call for Contributions

Members are invited to make contributions to the LGBTI Health Update in the form of news stories or articles.

Articles should be concerned with LGBTI Health and Wellbeing and broadly relevant to the Australian context.

Please send to

members@lgbtihealth.org.au

Submissions close on the 20th of each month.

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JOIN the Alliance

Individuals and Organisations are welcome and encouraged to apply for membership.

Click on the category to download the membership form:

Full Member
‘Not-for-profit; core business promotes health and wellbeing of LGBTI people.’

Organisations
‘Either Not-for-profit/For-profit and supports the aims and objectives of the Alliance.’

Individuals
‘At least 18yrs of age and supports the aims and objectives of the Alliance.’

If you would like to unsubscribe from this newsletter, please email members@lgbtihealth.org.au with ‘unsubscribe’ in the subject line.