



Submission to the Consultation on the Second Action Plan: National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022 – 2032

About LGBTIQ+ Health Australia

LGBTIQ+ Health Australia (LHA) is the national peak organisation promoting the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ people and communities. With a diverse membership spanning LGBTIQ+ community-controlled health organisations, community groups, state and territory peak bodies, service providers, researchers, and individuals, LHA is uniquely positioned to deliver national leadership in policy, advocacy, research, and capability building.

A note on language

Throughout this process, we use the term LGBTIQA+ to refer collectively to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual and aromantic people and other people of diverse genders, sexes and sexual orientations. We have used this language in-line with the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022 – 2032, of which the Second Action Plan is a part of. We recognise that no single acronym can capture all genders, sexual orientations and bodily diversity and we value everyone's unique experience and language.

Summary of recommendations

1. Recognise LGBTIQA+ controlled organisations as core infrastructure within Australia's DFSV sector.
2. Treat cultural safety and capability as a systems issue.
3. Collect data that accurately reflects LGBTIQA+ communities.
4. Recognise transphobia, homophobia, biphobia and endosexism as structural drivers of DFSV.
5. Expand specialist, community-led responses to sexual violence in LGBTIQA+ communities.
6. Strengthen accountability and promote diverse, inclusive models of manhood across men's programs and spaces.
7. Address online hate, radicalisation and technology-facilitated violence affecting LGBTIQA+ communities
8. Build the foundations for LGBTIQA+ community-led early intervention and behaviour change programs for people who use violence.
9. Protect and uphold the diversity, agency and wellbeing of children and young people.
10. Strengthen justice system responses for LGBTIQA+ communities.



Background

This submission has been informed by recent consultation with LGBTIQ+ community organisations and specialist domestic, family and sexual violence (DFS) practitioners from across Australia.

On 4 June 2026, LHA convened a national forum attended by 19 representatives from 17 LGBTIQ+ member organisations, along with two representatives from specialist sex worker organisations. LHA has also undertaken ongoing consultation with a further 13 experts in LGBTIQ+ domestic, family and sexual violence from across Australia, including a dedicated consultation on 17 June 2026 focused on the Second Action Plan.

On 28 July and 6 August 2026, LHA supported the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commissioner to deliver two consultations on the Second Action Plan, focused on the priorities and experiences of LGBTIQ+ communities. A total of 30 community members participated across the two consultations.

These consultations brought together diverse perspectives from community-controlled organisations, specialist service providers, advocates and subject matter experts working across research, prevention, early intervention, response and recovery.

The purpose of this engagement was to identify high-impact, nationally relevant recommendations for inclusion in LHA's submission to the consultation on the Second Action Plan under the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032.

The recommendations presented in this submission reflect areas of broad consensus across participants and have been prioritised based on their potential for national impact. They are not intended to represent the full breadth of issues, experiences or recommendations raised during the consultation process, nor the full scope of reform required to address domestic, family and sexual violence affecting LGBTIQ+ communities. Rather, this submission presents the core themes and priority actions that participants identified as having the greatest potential to strengthen the Second Action Plan. LGBTIQ+ communities bring significant expertise to this work, shaped by decades of responding to violence, navigating social and political backlash, leading transformative social movements such as marriage equality, responding to public health crises including HIV/AIDS, and advocating for legal reforms such as the decriminalisation of homosexuality. These experiences have generated valuable knowledge about community resilience, and social change as well as effective responses to discrimination and violence that can strengthen Australia's broader approach to preventing and responding to DFS.

The wellbeing and safety of LGBTIQ+ communities is not in competition with the wellbeing and safety of other communities. Efforts to prevent violence, reduce discrimination and promote inclusion are interconnected and reflect a shared commitment to safety, dignity and human rights for all.

LGBTIQ+ communities also hold significant strengths and examples of safe and thriving relationships, families and community connections. A response to DFS that focuses only on risk and deficit overlooks these strengths. Equally important is learning from what enables safety and respect within LGBTIQ+ relationships and communities and building this knowledge into prevention and support efforts.



Recommendations

1. Recognise LGBTIQ+ -controlled organisations as core infrastructure within Australia's DFSV sector.

LGBTIQ+ programs and services are treated as supplementary or niche services separate from core efforts to end violence against women and children. The development of the LGBTIQ+ sector has been constrained by a reliance on short-term, localised projects, resulting in significant variation between jurisdictions, limited national coordination and the loss of workforce capability and organisational knowledge. Pilot programs are intended for limited use and only in circumstances where a genuinely new approach is being tested with a reasonable prospect of ongoing funding if successful, or where a probationary period is required for a new program.

Outside of New South Wales and Victoria (Sydney and Melbourne), access to LGBTIQ+ -inclusive DFSV support remains highly inconsistent. The Commonwealth's 500 Workers Initiative demonstrates both the value and the limits of current investment. The inclusion of 15 dedicated LGBTIQ+ positions within this initiative created a national LGBTIQ+ sector as well as a presence in jurisdictions that would otherwise have had no dedicated service. However, this remains a fraction of what is needed. LGBTIQ+ DFSV services and programs must be sustainably funded, with resources that meet demand and long-term contracts that enable programs to mature, organisations to retain skilled staff, and to build trust and awareness with clients and communities. Brokerage funding also needs to be embedded within frontline service delivery, recognising the limited availability of safe, inclusive crisis accommodationⁱ and the broader shortage of LGBTIQ+ -inclusive services.

Inclusive commissioning models are needed to recognise the expertise of specialist LGBTIQ+ organisations and avoid specialist organisations having to compete with larger mainstream providers. Where LGBTIQ+ communities are the focus of an initiative, funding must be provided directly to LGBTIQ+ -led organisations, rather than to mainstream services to subcontract or partner with LGBTIQ+ services. Where the primary purpose of an initiative is to improve inclusion within a mainstream service, it may be appropriate for mainstream services to receive funding, provided they partner meaningfully with LGBTIQ+ -led organisations and adequately resource that partnership. Effective partnerships take time to establish, build trust and develop shared ways of working. Adequate establishment periods are essential to clarify roles and develop effective collaboration for the best long-term outcomes.

While it is important to maintain LGBTIQ+ communities as a collective for visibility and advocacy strength, there are distinct experiences and needs within these communities. LGBTIQ+ people are not a single, homogenous group, while many share experiences of stigma around sexuality and gender, individuals face distinct needs that require their own understanding rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. This requires dedicated national programs, including trans-led programs, programs for people with innate variations in sex characteristics ("intersex"), LGBTIQ+ youth programs and programs for older LGBTIQ+ people. Community-led responses are best placed to engage people and build trust in ways that are accessible, relevant and responsive to their circumstances, and intervene earlyⁱⁱ.



2. Treat cultural safety and capability as a systems issue.

Inclusion is often treated as an individual capability issue rather than a systems issueⁱⁱⁱ. Instead, cultural safety and culturally responsive practice must be embedded across the service system.

It is critical that the service system move beyond individual cultural competency approaches and redesign policies, funding models, programs and service entry points so that safety and inclusion are embedded, consistent and measurable.

A national cultural safety by design framework for government-funded DFSV initiatives, with an initial focus on priority funding streams modelled on those developed by and for Aboriginal communities^{iv} and safety-by-design approaches in banking and technology^v, would ensure policies, programs, services and funding models identify and mitigate possible exclusion and safety risks before implementation, for LGBTIQ+ communities and other priority cohorts, including First Nations people, migrant and refugee communities, and people with disability. This type of framework would include clear standards, properly resourced lived-experience and community-led governance, measurable inclusion indicators and ongoing monitoring to ensure safety and accessibility are embedded across service entry points.

Workforce education and capability development remain essential, and they are most effective when delivered as part of broader systems reform rather than as standalone interventions. Training can strengthen knowledge and confidence, and lasting improvements in inclusion require organisational policies and procedures, leadership, funding arrangements and service design to sustain culturally safe practice.

3. Collect data that accurately reflects LGBTIQ+ communities.

LGBTIQ+ people and communities are not consistently or accurately identified in many national datasets and frontline service systems, resulting in significant gaps in our understanding of the prevalence, nature and impacts of DFSV^{vi}. Without robust and consistent data, governments and services cannot accurately identify need, monitor trends, evaluate the effectiveness of policies and programs, or ensure resources are directed to where they are needed most. Improving the collection of LGBTIQ+ data is fundamental to delivering evidence-based policies, equitable service provision, and accountability under the National Plan.

For the first time, the 2026 Australian Census will collect national data on sexual orientation and gender, giving Australia an evidence base on where LGBTQA+¹ people live, work, and access services, and the size of the population previously invisible in official statistics. Not only will this serve as a template for data collection, but the data provided should inform service design and location. Population data on where LGBTQA+ people live, their ages, family structure, income, employment and visa status (and other important information) can guide where specialist DFSV services are funded and how mainstream services are resourced to be genuinely inclusive.

¹ It should be noted that the 2026 Census does not include a question to identify people with innate variations of sex characteristics.



applicants to account for sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics, and sexual orientation, using consistent standards from the ABS 2020 Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables, this should be made universal in all publicly funded data sets, across frontline services, including primary healthcare, emergency services, and specialist and mainstream community programs. Implementation must be accompanied by clear privacy safeguards, and the option for people to choose not to disclose this information.

Large national datasets such as the Personal Safety Survey (PSS), need to be using the ABS 2020 standard. The National Community Attitudes Survey (NCAS) could be measuring homophobia, biphobia, endosexism, and transphobia as attitudes that underpin violence against our communities. Measuring these forms of prejudice is important because they reflect beliefs and biases that can normalise, justify, or excuse violence and discrimination against LGBTIQ+ people. Including these measures would provide a more comprehensive understanding of violence-supportive attitudes and help identify opportunities for both prevention and intervention.

Recognising that the National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP) relies on police and coronial reports, relevant agencies must urgently improve the consistent and accurate recording of LGBTIQ+ demographics, where known and appropriate, so national homicide data better reflects LGBTIQ+ communities.

Improving justice outcomes also requires better evidence. Australian courts currently collect little or no routine data relating to sexual orientation, gender or variations of sex characteristics, making it impossible to identify disparities in access, experiences or outcomes for LGBTIQ+ communities and monitor internal biases. As publicly funded institutions with significant responsibility for community safety, the Australian court system should also adopt nationally consistent collection of demographic data aligned with the ABS 2020 Standard where appropriate. This would improve transparency, support evaluation of reforms and enable governments to monitor equity across the justice system.

Data collection is only valuable if its findings are made publicly available. Transparent, regular reporting, including data disaggregated for LGBTIQ+ communities, is critical to enabling accountability, tracking progress against targets, and ensuring the sector and community can scrutinise whether initiatives are achieving their intended outcomes.

4. Recognise transphobia, homophobia, biphobia and endosexism as structural drivers of DFSV.

The Second Action Plan must recognise that discrimination against LGBTIQ+ communities is a driver of DFSV^{vii}. Harmful public discourse, exclusionary laws and policies, and institutional discrimination contribute to social norms that can legitimise violence, reduce help-seeking, and increase perpetrators' sense of entitlement or impunity. This includes public narratives and



debates relating to gender affirmation, participation in sport, trans people in prisons, access to gendered spaces, and the broad rights and recognition of trans and gender diverse people. The growing visibility and influence of far-right movements in Australian and international public and political discourse has further intensified these dynamics, mainstreaming anti-LGBTIQA+ rhetoric and providing organised platforms through which hostility towards LGBTIQA+ people, in particular trans and gender diverse people, is amplified and normalised^{viii}. People born with innate variations of sex characteristics (“intersex”) also experience structural discrimination through endosexism (stigma and discrimination against people with innate variations of sex characteristics), including the pathologisation of healthy intersex bodies and non-consensual medical interventions aimed at 'normalising' sex characteristics^{ix}. These practices undermine bodily autonomy, negate consent and contribute to systems and beliefs that cause violence against intersex people. Intersex advocates have consistently called for an end to these human rights violations and for greater recognition of bodily autonomy, self-determination and the diversity of sex characteristics. Policy responses must also recognise that intersex people have diverse sexual orientations and gender identities and avoid assumptions that conflate innate variations of sex characteristics with being LGBTQ+.

The 2027 LGBTIQA+ primary prevention framework has the potential to transform Australia's understanding of primary prevention. Embedding this framework in broader primary prevention initiatives will ensure that national and jurisdictional primary prevention initiatives explicitly address homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and endosexism alongside gender inequality, recognising that violence is shaped by intersecting systems of power, discrimination and exclusion. Any organisations working to prevent violence against women, including in health, education, media, sport and workplaces, must engage with and include LGBTIQA+ communities because this work is not separate but inextricable.

5. Expand specialist, community-led responses to sexual violence in LGBTIQA+ communities

There is currently no national dedicated funding for LGBTIQA+ organisations to prevent or respond to sexual violence. This is a significant gap. LGBTIQA+ communities experience unique forms of sexual violence, including hate-related violence instigated through dating apps, higher rates of workplace sexual harassment, higher rates of sexual violence against LGBTIQA+ children and young people, and sexual violence motivated by homophobia, transphobia or attempts to punish or change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. Stigma surrounding sex, gender and sexuality can also create additional barriers to disclosure and help-seeking.

LGBTIQA+-led community organisations are uniquely positioned to build trust and deliver responses that reflect the diverse experiences of LGBTIQA+ communities. This is particularly important for victim-survivors of sexual violence, who frequently report stigma, dismissal and a lack of culturally safe support when engaging with mainstream services.^x



delivered by specialist sex worker organisations, recognising their expertise, community trust and the distinct experiences of sex workers.

Recognising sexual violence as a distinct form of violence requires dedicated policy, funding and specialist responses, separate from domestic and family violence^{xi}. While these forms of violence can overlap, sexual violence also occurs in a range of settings outside intimate and family relationships and requires different prevention, response and recovery approaches.

6. Strengthen accountability and promote diverse, inclusive models of manhood across men's programs and spaces.

Over the past two decades, significant work has been undertaken across the domestic, family and sexual violence sector to improve inclusive practice and cultural safety. As newer men's programs and 'healthy masculinities' initiatives continue to expand, there is clearly a need to embed these same principles within men's programs to ensure they are inclusive of the diversity of men and masculinities, including LGBTIQ+ communities^{xii}.

Initiatives focused on healthy masculinities, men's health, men's mental health and male peer relationships need to promote diverse, inclusive and emotionally healthy understandings of what it means to be "a man". Prevention initiatives risk unintentionally reinforcing rigid or patriarchal ideals of masculinity by presenting a single model of manhood^{xiii}. Instead, effective programs recognise that there are many positive ways of being a man and encourage qualities traditionally seen as feminine or 'gay'.

Healthy masculinities initiatives need to be inclusive of gay, bisexual and trans men, whose experiences and perspectives can broaden understandings of masculinity and challenge restrictive gender norms, promoting a plurality of positive masculinities, recognising that there is no single healthy way to be a man.

Working in partnership with diverse communities of men can strengthen efforts by demonstrating that healthy masculinity is not defined by conformity to other men or to traditional gender and sexuality expectations, but by the capacity to build respectful relationships, regulate emotions, care for others, contribute positively to families and communities and embrace aspects of oneself traditionally shunned by rigid gender norms. Embedding these principles across initiatives that engage men and boys will support violence prevention while improving the health, wellbeing and social connectedness of all men.

7. Address online hate, radicalisation and technology-facilitated violence affecting LGBTIQ+ communities

LGBTIQ+ communities experience distinct forms of technology-facilitated violence, including online hate, coordinated harassment, image-based abuse, non-consensual 'outing', physical violence initiated through dating apps, AI-generated explicit images and threats to disclose personal information^{xiv}. These forms of abuse can have significant offline consequences, including family rejection, homelessness, workplace discrimination, social isolation and



biphobia, transphobia, racism and other forms of hate, normalising harmful attitudes, facilitating radicalisation and increasing the risk of both online and offline violence^{xv}.

Since 2023, LGBTIQ+ community-controlled organisations have identified a marked increase in app facilitated abuse which is characterised by the targeting and luring of gay and bisexual men to meet through dating apps and subsequently robbing, assaulting, or subjecting them to homophobic abuse. Incidents have been recorded across multiple jurisdictions, including New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, the ACT, Western Australia and South Australia, pointing to a national pattern rather than localised incidents in one jurisdiction. Victims are often reluctant

to engage with police due to mistrust, fear of discrimination and fear of outing (among other factors) meaning significant underreporting is likely. Because of decentralised reporting systems across jurisdictions and underreporting, the prevalence, severity and nature of this type of violence is not quantifiable.^{xvi}

Australia's response to technology-facilitated violence needs to reflect the distinct experiences of LGBTIQ+ communities. This includes strengthening partnerships with the eSafety Commissioner, improving reporting pathways for targeted online abuse, building digital safety capability across LGBTIQ+ organisations, and ensuring responses to emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, are informed by community expertise and lived experience.

Technology-facilitated abuse is evolving faster than legislative, policing, justice and service responses^{xvii}. Online and tech-facilitated abuse and harassment are frequently minimised or treated as less serious than in-person violence, despite the significant and often enduring harm they cause. Legal responses need to keep pace with advances in technology-facilitated abuse, ensuring these offences are investigated and addressed with the same seriousness as other forms of violence.

Australia's response to technology-facilitated violence also needs to include evidence-informed disengagement and de-radicalisation programs that address online misogyny, anti-LGBTIQ+ hate, racism and other extremist ideologies that contribute to violence. These programs should complement broader primary prevention efforts and continue to evolve as evidence on technology-facilitated violence develops.

8. Build the foundations for LGBTIQ+ community-led early intervention and behaviour change programs for people who use violence.

Community-led behaviour change programs for LGBTIQ+ people who use violence have demonstrated promising outcomes in Victoria, New South Wales^{xviii} and Queensland. However, these initiatives remain limited in scale and continuity due to short-term funding, a very small specialist workforce and insufficient capacity to establish consistent referral pathways. Building a sustainable LGBTIQ+ behaviour change sector requires workforce development and secure commissioning arrangements needed to deliver and grow specialist programs.



overwhelmingly the perpetrators of violence against LGBTIQ+ people are cisgender and heterosexual men from outside these communities.^{xix} Current mainstream interventions and men's behaviour change programs do not address heterosexual and cisgender men's violence against LGBTIQ+ people^{xx}. Addressing this gap requires stronger evidence, information and capability across the mainstream men's behaviour change sector, alongside improved workforce capability in the health, mental health and other community sectors to recognise warning signs, intervene safely and connect people with evidence-informed support.

Early intervention pathways that operate alongside policing and the justice system are also needed. While criminal justice responses remain important, many people, particularly those from LGBTIQ+, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, culturally diverse and other marginalised communities, may be reluctant to seek help where trust in law enforcement is low. Expanding community-based, therapeutic and restorative pathways increases opportunities for earlier intervention and behaviour change.

9. Protect and uphold the diversity, agency and wellbeing of children and young people.

Children and young people explore and develop an understanding of their sexual orientation and gender throughout childhood and adolescence^{xxi}. Children and young people are diverse in their sexual orientations, gender and variations of sex characteristics. Policies, services and public discourse that ignore, or deny this diversity can increase isolation and mental health issues, discourage help-seeking and contribute to environments in which violence is normalised, or unrecognised^{xxii}.

Healthy relationships, sex education and consent courses in schools is a critical opportunity for violence prevention. Where it exists at all, LGBTIQ+-inclusive content is frequently treated as an optional add-on rather than a core component of the curriculum, leaving individual schools and teachers to decide whether to include it.^{xxiii} Educators report receiving little to no additional training or resourcing to deliver this content effectively, and gender and sexuality diversity is consistently identified by teachers as the topic they feel least confident and most anxious about teaching.^{xxiv} Many teachers report deliberately avoiding the topic altogether, or approaching it cautiously, out of fear of parent or community backlash, despite research showing this fear is largely disproportionate to actual parent sentiment.^{xxv}

This gap is not a neutral omission. Relationships and sex education that fails to reflect the diversity of students and their relationships sends a clear message to LGBTIQ+ young people that their experiences are not normal or worth discussing, reinforcing the isolation and stigma that drives violence and barriers to help-seeking. It also leaves all students, regardless of their own gender and sexual orientation, without the language and skills to recognise and discuss diverse relationships respectfully, a gap that has downstream consequences for prevention and bystander intervention across the whole school community.

The current approach also places an unsustainable burden on individual schools and educators to manage political risk on a case-by-case basis, rather than being supported by consistent national leadership. LGBTIQ+-inclusive relationships and sexuality education should be a mandatory, consistently resourced component of the curriculum nationally, accompanied by



dedicated professional development and teaching resources and support for educators and not an optional extra left to the discretion of individual schools.

Despite growing recognition of the unique experiences of LGBTIQ+ young people affected by family, intimate partner and sexual violence, there has been limited and inconsistent government investment in specialist programs tailored to their needs. Successful specialist programs have emerged in multiple capital cities and have demonstrated the value of LGBTIQ+ youth-specific, affirming responses, however, these initiatives remain limited in scale and geographic reach. Funding has not kept pace with demand, with LGBTIQ+ youth service providers warning that many LGBTIQ+ young people continue to remain in unsafe homes or relationships due to a lack of inclusive support services and crisis accommodation. Greater investment in specialist, evidence-informed programs is needed to expand successful models nationally, and ensure LGBTIQ+ young people can access safe, developmentally appropriate support regardless of where they live.

Recognising children and young people not only as recipients of protection but as active participants in decisions about their safety and wellbeing is important^{xxvi}. Children and young people deserve meaningful opportunities to influence the design, delivery and evaluation of policies, services and programs that affect them, including through dedicated youth advisory groups, and co-design processes. Participation must be age-appropriate, culturally safe and adequately supported, recognising the diverse experiences of children and young people.

Within the legal and justice systems, children and young people need to have access to developmentally appropriate legal information, independent legal advice and representation, and safe pathways to exercise their legal rights. This includes reviewing barriers that prevent children and young people from seeking personal protection orders, participating in legal proceedings, or accessing remedies where this is in their best interests. Legal systems must support children's participation through trauma-informed, child-friendly processes that uphold their rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the right to express their views and have those views given due weight^{xxvii}.

Systems designed to protect children must also support their agency and access to help. Mandatory reporting frameworks require regular review to ensure they do not unintentionally deter children and young people from disclosing violence. Reporting obligations are most effective when accompanied by adequate service capacity, trauma-informed responses and safe referral pathways that prioritise children's rights, wellbeing and participation in decisions affecting their safety.

Australia's current pathways to parenthood are outdated, fragmented and disproportionately disadvantage LGBTQ+ people and families. Family security is a protective factor against violence, and legal uncertainty about a child's parentage can undermine that security, leaving families more vulnerable and less able to access safety and support when needed. No child should be discriminated against, disadvantaged or weaponized in public discourse because of how they were conceived, rather every child deserves the emotional, legal and financial security that comes with recognition of their family. This can be achieved through fair and consistent surrogacy laws across the country and legislation that does not unreasonably restrict access to assisted reproductive technology.



LGBTIQA+ people continue to report barriers to accessing justice, including concerns about discrimination, previous negative experiences with police and courts, lack of understanding of diverse family structures and relationships, and limited access to culturally safe legal assistance^{xxviii}. These barriers can discourage help-seeking, reduce confidence in legal processes and increase the likelihood that violence remains hidden or escalates.

Police, courts and legal services play a critical role not only in responding to violence, but in identifying risk, preventing escalation, connecting people with specialist support and improving long-term safety outcomes. One mechanism for achieving this is expanding access to early legal assistance by exploring opportunities for a national LGBTIQA+ legal assistance service alongside sustainable investment in specialist state and territory LGBTIQA+ community legal services. Early legal advice enables people to better understand their rights, access protection orders, navigate family law and child protection matters, and make informed decisions before legal issues become more complex or safety risks increase.

For many people experiencing DFSV, the family courts are the first, and sometimes only, point at which violence is disclosed. The family law system has the potential to be an important site for early intervention^{xxix}. Court proceedings create opportunities to identify family violence risk, connect people with specialist services and prevent further harm. Courts are well positioned to provide risk assessment, warm referrals and coordinated support for victim-survivors throughout legal proceedings.

The court system could better respond to the safety and inclusion of LGBTIQA+ communities, through identified LGBTIQA+ roles in family law courts and a nationally consistent education program for judicial officers and court staff, co-designed and delivered with LGBTIQA+ communities. Training needs to extend beyond awareness to include practical guidance on recognising diverse family structures, understanding unique patterns of coercive control affecting LGBTIQA+ communities, appropriate language, cultural safety and referral pathways.

LGBTIQA+ communities have a long and complex history with policing, and current day experiences of discrimination, criminalisation and mistrust continue to influence engagement with police. As a result, many LGBTIQA+ people are reluctant to seek police assistance when experiencing DFSV, whether to protect themselves, their children, their community or, in some cases, the person using violence. Embedding specialist family violence practitioners within police family violence units provides an opportunity to bridge this gap, improve trust, strengthen referral pathways and help ensure victim-survivors are connected with appropriate support. The Alexis program, a partnership between Victoria Police and The Salvation Army, offers a promising model that could inform similar approaches in other jurisdictions. This recommendation points to the value of the program's design and partnership structure, rather than proposing that The Salvation Army specifically deliver an expanded or equivalent service.

Every police jurisdiction needs properly funded LGBTIQA+ liaison officer programs with dedicated time, clear responsibilities and ongoing professional development. In addition, mandatory education on LGBTIQA+ inclusion, community-specific violence and culturally safe practice must be embedded within recruit training and continuing professional development for all police officers to improve consistency and community confidence.



Implementation over the life of the Second Action Plan (2027–2032)

The Second Action Plan is an opportunity to establish practical foundations for meaningful reform. While not all recommendations can be fully implemented within five years, the following actions are realistic and achievable to deliver meaningful change.

Year 1 - 3

Establish the foundations

- Specify a dedicated action item and success measure for LGBTIQ+ services or communities for every domain in the Plan (prevention, early intervention, response, recovery).
- Establish a national LGBTIQ+ DFSV advisory body to guide implementation of the Second Action and provide advice and support to governments and the DFSV sector nationally.
- Commence development of a national cultural safety by design framework for DFSV funding and procurement.
- Dedicate long-term funding (4+ years) for specialist LGBTIQ+-led sexual violence services, distinct from general DFSV funding.
- Establish dedicated funding for sex worker-led sexual violence response services, commissioned directly to specialist sex worker organisations.
- Commit to implementing the ABS 2020 Standard across Commonwealth-funded data collections, in line with the NHRMC requirements.
- Work with policing and coronial bodies to improve consistent recording of LGBTIQ+ demographics in National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP) data, where known and appropriate.
- Introduce nationally consistent court data collection on sexual orientation, gender and variations of sex characteristics, aligned with the ABS 2020 Standard.
- All states and territories adopt the ABS 2020 Standard in government-funded service data collection and reporting.
- Fund the implementation of the LGBTIQ+ primary prevention framework, with a requirement that mainstream primary prevention initiatives demonstrate engagement with it as a funding condition.
- Strengthen partnerships between government, digital platforms, the eSafety Commissioner and community organisations to address online hate and radicalisation.
- Publish a practice framework and guide for men's and healthy masculinities programs, co-designed with specialist organisations, including LGBTIQ+ organisations, setting minimum inclusion standards.



- Create workforce pathways for an LGBTIQ+ behaviour change and sexual assault sector, as well as a sex-work specific sexual assault sector, laying the foundations for community-led responses.
- Fund capability-building within mainstream men's behaviour change programs to address cisgender, heterosexual men's violence against LGBTIQ+ people.
- Embed recognition of diversity in sexual orientation, gender identity/expression and variations of sex characteristics into all Second Action Plan actions concerning children and young people.
- Make LGBTIQ+-inclusion in relationships and sexuality education mandatory and nationally resourced, with dedicated training and resources for educators.
- Establish youth advisory or governance mechanisms giving LGBTIQ+ children and young people input into the design, delivery and evaluation of policies and programs affecting them.
- Review mandatory reporting frameworks and legal barriers that prevent young people from accessing personal protection orders and legal proceedings.
- Establish identified LGBTIQ+ roles within family law courts and fund a nationally consistent judicial/court staff education program, co-designed with LGBTIQ+ communities.
- Fund properly resourced LGBTIQ+ liaison officer positions in every police jurisdiction, with dedicated time and ongoing professional development.
- Embed specialist family violence practitioners within police family violence units, modelled on the Alexis program (Victoria Police / The Salvation Army), in a significant number of jurisdictions.
- Mandate LGBTIQ+ inclusion and community-specific violence content within police recruit training curricula nationally.

Year 3 - 5

Strengthen systems and workforce capability

- Publish annual reporting that tracks funding flows and program reach for LGBTIQ+-led services as a distinct, auditable line item within National Plan progress reporting.
- Expand specialist LGBTIQ+ community-led sexual violence services and behaviour change programs and sex worker-led sexual violence programs.
- Evaluate funded men's and healthy masculinities programs against the Year 1–3 framework's inclusion standards, with funding renewal conditional on results.
- Invest in evidence-informed disengagement and de-radicalisation programs that address online misogyny and anti-LGBTIQ+ hate.



- Fund an LGBTIQ+ national legal information service that operates as a first point of contact, supports state-based specialist legal services and fills existing gaps in legal information and advice.
- Create developmentally appropriate legal information, independent legal advice and representation, and safe pathways for children and young people to have access to exercise their legal rights.
- Fund court capacity to provide risk assessment, warm referrals and coordinated support for LGBTIQ+ victim-survivors throughout family law proceedings.

Closing statement

LGBTIQ+ Health Australia is grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the Second Action Plan and looks forward to ongoing engagement with the Department of Social Services and relevant government and sector agencies as the Second Action Plan is finalised and implemented. We would welcome the opportunity to provide further information, evidence or advice on any of the recommendations outlined in this submission, including facilitating direct engagement with LGBTIQ+ community organisations and subject matter experts consulted as part of this process.

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