



Best Practice Guidelines Accommodating Older Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People - Endorsed for Use in WACHS Aged Care Policy

1. Guiding Principles

The key principle is that GLBTI people have the same options in aged care services that are available to all Australians.

The WA Country Health Service (WACHS) seeks to provide direction and guidance to all staff through the availability of appropriate evidence-based guidelines and procedures.

The Best Practice Guidelines Accommodating GLBTI People have been developed by GRAI (GLBTI) Retirement Association informed by research at Curtin University WA Centre for Health Promotion Research. They are endorsed in the [National Ageing and Aged Care Strategy](#).

This information will assist WACHS to meet our obligations under the *Aged Care Act 1997* and *Equal Opportunities Act 1984*.

2. Guideline

WACHS endorses the [Best Practice Guidelines Accommodating older gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans and intersex people \(GLBTI\)](#)¹ for use in WACHS Residential Aged Care for staff to adopt, to create an inclusive environment that is accepting and welcoming of all GLBTI people.

The guidelines should be read in conjunction with the WA LGBTI Health Strategy 2019 – 2024 (the Strategy), the first of its kind in Western Australia (WA) and which strives to improve the health and wellbeing of LGBTI populations.

When applied, these guidelines must take account of the context and scope of practice, level of service delivery and facility capacity.

These guidelines do not indicate an exclusive course of action or serve as a definitive mode of care. Variations that take into account individual circumstances, clinical judgement, scope of professional practice and individual choice, may be appropriate dependent on the health care setting.

Whole of WA Health policy documents are the overarching policy documents that must be complied with by all WA Health staff. To complement these documents, the WACHS has endorsed specific policies, guidelines and procedures covering a range of issues related to clinical practice which are available via the [HealthPoint Policies](#) intranet site.

Free training is available through [Right to Belong](#) national training program provided by GRAI/GLBTI Rights in Ageing.

Free eLearning Course through Dementia Training Australia. - [Caring for LGBTI People with Dementia](#)

3. Definitions

Bisexual	A person who is sexually and emotionally attracted to men and women.
Gay	A person whose primary emotional and sexual attraction is towards people of the same gender.
Intersex	<p>The presence of intermediate or atypical combinations of physical features that are usually seen to distinguish female from male. This may include variations in chromosomes, hormones, reproductive organs, genitals and other bodily features. Many people dislike the term 'condition' as pathologising, preferring to see intersex differences as naturally occurring human variations. The term 'disorders of sex development' (DSD) is not generally favoured. Nor is the term 'hermaphrodite', which has sometimes been inappropriately used to describe intersex people.</p> <p>Note: Intersex is not a form of gender identity.</p>
LGBTI	An acronym that refers to a group of people with diverse sexual orientation, sex or gender identity. It includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people and other sexuality, sex and gender non-conforming people, regardless of their term of self-identification. The letters may be in different orders (e.g. GLBTI) or without the 'I'.
Lesbian	A woman whose primary emotional and sexual attraction is towards other women.
Transgender	<p>An umbrella term that encapsulates all people who do not fit the understanding of male and female gender roles.</p> <p>Transgender is an adjective to describe a diverse group of individuals who cross or transcend culturally defined categories of gender. The gender identity of transgender people differs to varying degrees from the sex they were assigned at birth. Transgender does not imply any specific form of sexual attraction – e.g. transgendered people identify variously as heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual or asexual. It includes all gender non-conforming people including transsexuals, crossdressers, drag performers, and gender queer people. The very inclusivity of this term can be problematic because some feel that it erases the distinctions</p>

	between, for example, those wishing to make permanent changes to their bodies to conform to innate gender feelings and those whose gender variance is in their style of gender presentation and expression.
Transsexual	A person who experiences a marked conflict between innate feelings of gender identity and the gender conventionally associated with their birth-assigned sex. It sometimes involves a rejection of their birth sex, including sexual anatomy and secondary sexual characteristics. This rejection is referred to as gender dysphoria. Transsexuals may undergo medically assisted gender reassignment, through cross-sexed HRT and gender affirmation surgery. For most transsexuals, HRT and/or surgery significantly reduces the feelings of anxiety associated with gender dysphoria.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

All WACHS employees and contractors are to take all practical measures to ensure the Guidelines are implemented in residential aged care and to seek advice and report any discrimination and harassment matters.

WACHS line managers, upon receipt of complaints, are to process complaints in line with the MP 0130/20 [Complaints Management Policy](#) and provide consumers and carers with [Advocare](#), [Health and Disability Services Complaints Office](#) and [Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission](#) information.

For complaints received by the [Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission](#), the relevant Tier 4 manager is to be notified with further notification to the WACHS Director Aged Care.

All Staff are required to work within policies and guidelines to make sure that WACHS is a safe, equitable and positive place to be.

5. Compliance

This guideline is a mandatory requirement under the *Aged Care Act 1997*. Failure to comply with this policy document may constitute a breach of the WA Health Code of Conduct (Code). The Code is part of the [Integrity Policy Framework](#) issued pursuant to section 26 of the [Health Services Act 2016](#) (WA) and is binding on all WACHS staff which for this purpose includes trainees, students, volunteers, researchers, contractors for service (including all visiting health professionals and agency staff) and persons delivering training or education within WACHS.

WACHS staff are reminded that compliance with all policies is mandatory.

6. Records Management

All WACHS corporate records must be stored in the approved Electronic Documents and Records Management System.

[Records Management Policy](#)

All WACHS clinical records must be managed in accordance with [Health Record Management Policy](#).

7. Evaluation

The number of reportable clinical incidents and complaints relating to care for GLBTI people provided by WACHS staff. Including complaints and investigations by [Health and Disability Services Complaints Office](#) and the [Aged Care Complaints Commissionaire](#) in Commonwealth residential aged care facilities.

8. Standards

[National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards](#) – Clinical Governance Standard and Partnering with Consumers Standard

[Aged Care Quality Standards](#) Standard 1 and 6

[National Standards for Mental Health Services](#) – Standards 1, 2, 4 and 6

[National Standards for Disability Services](#) – Standards 1, 2 and 4

9. Legislation

[Aged Care Act 1997](#)- Schedule 1 User Rights Principles 2014

[Equal Opportunities Act 1984](#) - Accommodation 35Z

[Sex Discrimination Act 1984](#)

[Carers Recognition Act 2010](#)

[Gender Reassignment Act 2000](#) (WA)

10. References and Resources

1. Retirement Association Incorp, [Best practice guidelines. Accommodating older gay. lesbian. bisexual trans and intersex \(GLBTI\) people](#). GRAI, GLBTI Rights in Ageing 2015 [Accessed 09 February 2021].
2. [Actions to support LCBTI Elder-a Guide for Aged Care Providers](#)
3. [LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#)
4. [WA LGBTI Health Strategy 2019-2024](#)
5. [National LGBTI Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Strategy](#)
6. [LGBTIQ+ Inclusive Language Guide](#)

11. Related WA Health System Policies

MP 0130/20 [Complaints Management Policy](#)

12. Policy Framework

[Clinical Governance Safety and Quality](#)

**This document can be made available in alternative formats
on request for a person with a disability**

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