

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

# Lesbian, Bisexual & Queer Women's Health Conference

connections – creativity – care

Friday May 27th, 9:00AM – 4:30PM

The Jasper Hotel, 489 Elizabeth St,  
Melbourne.



# A Message

## A Message from Minister for Health, The Honorable Jill Hennessy

Congratulations on holding the second Lesbian Bisexual and Queer Women's Health Conference.

I am incredibly proud to be a Minister in a Government that has a clear equality agenda and I am eager to hear your ideas for advancing equality and working together to improve women's health.

How we go about practically addressing concerns in mental, sexual and reproductive health, alcohol and drug use, and broader women's health will be imperative. I look forward to learning from the diverse groups and experiences in this conference, and how that expertise turns into action.

The Andrews Labor Government acknowledges, and seeks to redress, the injustices which LGBTI Victorians have experienced. We recognise that discrimination can damage people's mental health and ability to live a healthy life.

This is why together, we have been working to improve LGBTI inclusion and responsiveness of health services, as well as to recognise the underlying barriers to access, which can result in underuse of services.

In order to deliver this agenda, our Government created Australia's first LGBTI Taskforce and appointed Victoria's first Gender and Sexuality Commissioner, Rowena Allan, to help champion the rights and needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Victorians. We also have the LGBTI Health and Human Services Working Group, supported by a Trans Expert Advisory Group and an Intersex Expert Advisory Group.

Our approach supports Victoria's Public Health and Wellbeing plan 2015-19, which uses a gender lens to address the major impacts on people's health and wellbeing. We are also developing a Gender Equality Strategy for women to address stereotypes, inequality and promote health and wellbeing.

I look forward to hearing the insight from the conference and working with you in the future and I wish you many rewarding conversations and success in raising issues on the national platform.

Hon Jill Hennessy  
Minister for Health  
Minister for Ambulance Services

# Welcome

## Welcome from VAC CEO, Simon Ruth



When VAC launched the inaugural Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer Women's Health Conference last year we had no idea how popular it would be. By the time the conference came around we had had to move the venue twice to cater for the 200+ delegates.

This is the only conference of its kind in Australia, and the interest in last year's event proved what most of you have known for a long time: it is desperately needed. More attention needs to be paid to LBQ women's health issues, and we need to find ways to create opportunities to have conversations about Women's health specifically, outside of the broader LGBTIQ discourse.

We are proud to be partnering with ACON for the second year of the conference. ACON and VAC's history goes back 30 years and together we hope to bring LBQ women's health into focus.

This is an opportunity for all of us to learn, to share information and to make connections, and we want to sincerely thank all of our speakers and presenters for their time and commitment. With the support of this amazing community we hope the LBQ Women's Health Conference will be an annual fixture for a long time to come.

Regards,  
Simon Ruth.

## Welcome from ACON CEO, Nicolas Parkhill



It is my pleasure and privilege to wish a warm welcome to all attendees at this year's Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer Women's Health Conference.

This conference is an extraordinarily important meeting of minds and hearts and ACON is extremely honoured and proud to be partnering with VAC to host this event in 2016.

There are precious few opportunities to shine a light on the particular health issues affecting the health and wellbeing of LBQ women in Australia. The case is building for better designed and implemented health interventions for women in our communities and this Conference offers a platform to raise awareness of some of the most innovative work from around the country. We also know that collaboration is critical – and collaboration is facilitated by opportunities for people with similar interests to get together and conspire to achieve our shared goals.

The pivotal nature and purpose of this conference is highlighted by the high calibre of speakers from around the country (and indeed, internationally) who are willing to share their expertise and passion for women's health.

With extensive experience in LGBTI issues, Victoria's first Gender and Sexuality Commissioner Rowena Allen's participation in the conference is greatly appreciated. She is a powerful advocate for LBQ women and a valued addition to this year's proceedings.

Bec Johnson, the co-founder of IndigiLez Leadership and Support Group will also speak to the Conference about indigenous women's health, which is an area, along with other LGBTI indigenous issues, that can often be neglected when discussing the wellbeing of the greater community.

Professor Julie Fish's work as an early pioneer has seen her become a well-recognised academic leader in LGBTI health, in particular lesbian health.

Along with broader mental and physical health issues, this conference will seek to address various other important areas related to LBQ women's health including indigenous issues, alcohol and other drug use, culture, disability, age, faith, sexuality and experiences of LBQ women in Australia.

I thank you all for coming and making this conference a truly community centred and LBQ women-focused event. ACON is thrilled to be working alongside you to address these important issues.

Kindest regards,  
Nicolas Parkhill

**The conference organisers and partners would like to acknowledge  
National Reconciliation Week  
27 May – 3 June.**



**The theme for NRW 2016 is  
Our History, Our Story, Our Future.**

Our History, Our Story, Our Future is derived from the State of Reconciliation in Australia report, which asks all Australians to reflect on our national identity, and the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and rights in our nation's story.

VAC's Reconciliation Action Plan can be downloaded from [www.vac.org.au/rap](http://www.vac.org.au/rap)

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land in which this event is taking place, the land of the Wurundjeri people and pay respect to their Elders past and present, their families and any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people who are present today.

*Artwork by Peter Waples-Crowe*

# Conference Schedule

8:30	Registration. Tea and coffee.
09:00	<p><b>OFFICIAL OPENING AND CONFERENCE WELCOME</b>          Welcome to Country.          The Hon Jill Hennessy, Victorian Minister for Health.          Simon Ruth, VAC CEO and Nicolas Parkhill, ACON CEO.          Chair: MC Yana Alana  <i>Function Hall</i></p>
09:45	<p><b>KEYNOTE 1: PROFESSOR JULIE FISH (UK),          DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY, UNITED KINGDOM</b>          Chair: MC Yana Alana  <i>Function Hall</i></p>
10:15	<p><b>KEYNOTE 2: ROWENA ALLEN, COMMISSIONER GENDER AND SEXUALITY</b>          Chair: MC Yana Alana  <i>Function Hall</i></p>
10:30	<p><b>KEYNOTE 3: REBECCA JOHNSON, INDIGILEZ</b>          Chair: MC Yana Alana  <i>Function Hall</i></p>
11:00 – 11:40	<p><b>MORNING TEA</b>  <i>Downstairs and upstairs foyers</i></p>
11:40 – 12:40	<p><b>WORKSHOP SESSION 1</b>          Refer to Workshop Program</p>
12:45 – 1:30	<p><b>LUNCH</b>  <i>Downstairs and upstairs foyers.</i></p>
1:45 – 2:45	<p><b>WORKSHOP SESSION 2</b>          Refer to Workshop Program</p>
2:50 – 3:50	<p><b>WORKSHOP SESSION 3</b>          Refer to Workshop Program</p>
4:00 – 4:30	<p><b>FINAL REFLECTIONS AND CONFERENCE CLOSING</b>          Rapporteur comments: Karen Price, ACON and Jami Jones, Rainbow Network          Chair: MC Yana Alana  <i>Function Hall</i></p>
4:30 – onwards	<p><b>NETWORKING EVENT AND EXHIBITION</b>  <i>Upstairs lobby</i></p>

# Key Speakers

## Rowena Allen



Rowena Allen is an effective, experienced and longstanding advocate for LGBTI Victorians and has held leadership positions in the community and government sectors. Rowena has been a member of three Victorian Government LGBTI ministerial advisory groups and chaired the ministerial advisory committee on LGBTI Health and Wellbeing between 2007 and 2009. As founding CEO of UnitingCare Cutting Edge, Rowena established Victoria's first rural support group for young LGBTI people, giving her a particular understanding of the issues faced in rural and regional areas. Rowena is a former Chair of the Adult, Community and Further Education Board, the Victorian Skills Commission, the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVIC), and former member of the Hume Regional Development Australia Committee. Rowena has been recognised for her community service: in 2003 she received a Centenary Medal and in 2009 she was inducted into the Victorian Government Honour Roll for Women.

## Professor Julie Fish (UK)



Professor Julie Fish is Director of the Centre for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Research at De Montfort University, Leicester, UK. She has conducted research in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans health inequalities for twenty years. Her research interests lie in the impact of research on policy, practice and ultimately improving people's lives. She was a member of a number of Department of Health advisory groups on sexual orientation and gender identity. Together with Stonewall, she conducted Prescription for Change - the largest study of LBQ women's health in Europe. She was commissioned by the National Cervical Screening Programme in 2008 to produce recommendations for LBQ women and these are still current today. Her collection, edited with Kate Karban, was published in March 2015 by the Policy Press, Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans health inequalities: International perspectives in Social Work.

## Rebecca Johnson



Rebecca Johnson is Gooreng Gooreng woman from the coastal town of Bundaberg In Queensland, another strong element of her cultural make up is her South Sea islander heritage. Rebecca is one of the co founders of IndigiLez Womens Leadership & Support group, this passion of work is alongside Tanya Quakawoot. For the past 15 years Rebecca has been committed to developing safe spaces, equality and healthy life style choices in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lesbian communities. With a broad career history including 10 years in the Queensland Police Service, 7 years with Rio Tinto in indigenous leadership and strategic policy,

Bec is now employed by Queensland Education developing partnership agreements in the Metropolitan Brisbane region. Rebecca is well known for her passion and determination to create more culturally appropriate services and opportunities for the GLBTIQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. In addition to Rebecca's career she is a consultant that provides specific advice and direction on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lesbian content. Bec has developed and managed specific projects including the Rainbow Dreaming Retreats for QLD, and she has received acknowledgments, such as the QLD state lantern award and the Queensland Pride award for her work in GLBTIQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Rebecca understands the issues that impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lesbians, Bec talks up the real issues such as the isolation of being a minority group inside of a minority. Bec is leader, provides a balanced approach and is very clear in ensuring understanding that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lesbians share a unique journey of different stages in life experiences.

# Workshop Program

	11:40 – 12:40	1:45 – 2:45	2:50 – 3:50
<b>ROOM 6</b> <b>Conversations</b> (45 mins)	Actioning transgender and gender diverse inclusive policies in Women's Health Services ZBGC, VAC. Starlady and Rei Alphonso.	Resilience building and LBQT women. University of Melbourne, Drummond St Services. Dr Ruth McNair and Kate Foord.	What happens when disability meets sexual and gender diversity? Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria, La Trobe University. Philomena Horsley.
<b>ROOM 9</b> <b>Momentum</b> (45 and 15 mins)	Products For Play - The Role Of The Adult Store In Queer Sex, Health & Community. (45 minutes) Maxx Black. Sonya Sirny.	Blood and Cabaret: Innovation, Art and Representation in Sexual Health Promotion. ACON. Vic McGregor and Gala Vanting.	ACON: Here For Women. ACON Women. Michelle Ring and Edda Lampis.  Alcohol Reduction Support for LBQ Women Delivered Via SMS Messages. Deakin University. Rachel Bush.  What Else Can You Do With Your Fingers? LBQ Women and Smoking. ACON. Samar Haidar.
<b>ROOM 8</b> <b>Snapshots</b> (15 mins)	Resilience and Older LBQ Women: A Snapshot. VAC. Lizzie Craig.  Matrix's Volunteer Visitor Program. Matrix Guild. Anneke Deutsch.  Navigating the Unintelligible: Queer Young Women's Experiences Negotiating Safe Sex and Sexual Health in Tasmania. University of Tasmania. Ruby Grant.	Examining diverse ways LBQ women negotiate sexuality, gender and 'carer' identities. Carers Victoria. Meredith Butler & Jill Cameron.  On the Line: Women's usage of a LGBTI phone & web service. QLife, Switchboard. Stella Topaz (National Project Manager, QLife) & Leanne Renfree (General Manager, Switchboard Victoria).  Drink Limits. VAC. Rei Alphonso.	Are you LGBTIQ and have a cervix? Queer experiences of cervical screening. Cancer Council Victoria. Sandy Anderson.  Home insemination or clinic based insemination (IUI) - how to decide what's best for you. City Fertility Centre. Alison Cox and Dr Anne Poliness.  LGBTIQ-Inclusive Sexual Health Care in General Practice: The Challenges and Opportunities in Regional and Rural Settings Session. Jennifer Richardson.
<b>ROOM 1 &amp; 2</b> <b>Intersections</b> (15 mins)	Intimate Partner Violence: Complex presentations in L-B-T-Q-P relationships. Kate Foord. Drummond St Services.  Everyday violence – parents, partners and public spaces. Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria. Philomena Horsley.  Domestic Violence: The Conversation We Should Be Having. ACON. Kai Noonan.	Intersections to Disability & Sexual Expression through a social justice framework Jax Jacki Brown.  Biphobia and bi invisibility – it's time to address this issue. Bi Alliance Victoria. Rebecca Dominguez & Mellem Rose.  LBQW research at ACON ACON. Johann Kolstee.	Challenging the mainstream: re-orientating services and creating new ones to meet the needs of LBQ women. CBR LGBTIQ Community Coalition. Suzanne Eastwood.  What do sex workers want? From policy, from laws, from you? Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association. Ryan and Queenie.  Lets Talk About The Difference. Bonny Briggs.
<b>ROOM 3 &amp; 4</b> <b>Projections</b> (45 mins)	Love is... Queensland AIDS Council. Ricki Menzies.	Beyond Cultural Competency: supporting LGBT women from immigrant and refugee backgrounds. Multicultural Centre for Women's Health. Monique Hameed.	A trans-centered Professional Practice: Generating meaning with trans* and gender diverse people Deep-en Counselling. Marie August.

# Conversations

(45 MINS)

## SESSION 01 11:40 – 12:40

CHAIR: MICHELLE RING

### Actioning transgender and gender diverse inclusive policies in Women's Health Services

ZBGC, VAC. Starlady and Rei Alphonso.

Come and create momentum in inspiring Women's health services to develop policies and programs that are inclusive of transgender and gender diverse women (TGDW). This session will build a space that affirms and incorporates the experiences of all transfeminine and non-binary women into the development of inclusive Women's health policies and procedures.

Our vision is to create a network of people that brings together community health organisations, individual practitioners and community advocates. We invite you to come and share your knowledge of the sector, and problems-solve the barriers and obstacles TGDW face. We encourage participants who want to be involved in this workshop to prepare by thinking about the following questions:

- Do we have existing examples of transgender and gender diverse inclusive policies and/or practises within Women's health services in Victoria?
- What work has already been done?
- What are the potential barriers and obstacles to transgender and gender diverse inclusive practice?
- What does risk look like in relation to this topic?
- How are we engaging in codesign with the TGDW community in relation to inclusive policies and procedures?
- What actions can we take to inspire Women's health services to develop inclusive policies and procedures?
- Where to from here? Forming a network...

## SESSION 02 1:45- 2:45

CHAIR: BRENT MACKIE

### Resilience building and LBQT women.

University of Melbourne, Drummond St Services. Dr Ruth McNair and Kate Foord.

This workshop will explore the concept of resilience amongst LBQT women. This focus encourages a strengths-based understanding of LBQT mental health in the face of negative experiences. Resilience is a key determinant of positive mental health and recovery, yet the specific strategies that support LBQT women's resilience are not well understood. Some of the strategies include social connectedness, both to LGB and mainstream communities; family relationship building; self-care, self-advocacy and disclosure; and LGB-inclusive professional help. Participants will be encouraged to offer other strategies.

We will then workshop issues that undermine resilience building, such as family rejection, and identity policing and exclusion within peer support networks. This was a key finding of the Rainbow Women's Help seeking study conducted in 2015 and will be unpacked in more detail. We will present some of the results of analysis of the Drummond Street Services data set. There are differences for L, B, Q and T women in processes of family formation and in the ways that family relationships are structured, and in the everyday life experience and therefore the risk and protective factors differ for the parents/carers in those families. Mental health is also made worse by hearing insulting or ignorant comments as the marriage equality 'debate' goes on.

Finally, we will critique the new Victorian 10-year mental health plan and similar policies in Australia, and whether they adequately address resilience. Recommendations will be developed that can be offered to policy makers and the mental health system to more effectively engage with resilience.

## SESSION 03 2:50 – 3:50

CHAIR: JESS SMART

### What happens when disability meets sexual and gender diversity?

Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria, La Trobe University. Philomena Horsley.

The intersections of disability, sexuality and gender in relation to people's health and wellbeing are complex. To date there has been little attention paid to the issues facing LBTQ women living with disability.

Disability support organisations rarely acknowledge sexual and gender diversity, and people living with disability can feel excluded through the attitudes of their LGBTI community. Using new analysis of the Private Lives2 survey of 3,835 LGBTI Australians (2012), I present what we currently know about the health and wellbeing of the 1 in 5 LBTQ women who are living with disability. This leads to a discussion about what initiatives are occurring or required to introduce the intersections of disability, gender and sexual diversity to the disability and health sectors.

# Momentum

(45 AND 15 MINS)

## SESSION 01 11:40 – 12:40

CHAIR: JESSIE WONG

### Products For Play - The Role Of The Adult Store In Queer Sex, Health & Community. (45 minutes)

Maxx Black. Sonya Sirny

- The role Max Black plays in the lives of Sydney's Queer Women
- A deeper look at sexual health essentials – healthy lubes, condoms, dams and gloves
- An inside look at the most asked about products for play and pleasure for Queer Women
- Interaction – Sonya will present physical examples of the most talked about items and answer questions.

#### Learning Outcomes

- How products enhance and inform sex between women
- The major product categories that queer women are accessing
- Toys, sexual health and hygiene

## SESSION 02 1:45- 2:45

CHAIR: ZOE BIRKINSHAW

### Blood and Cabaret: Innovation, Art and Representation in Sexual Health Promotion.

ACON. Vic McGregor and Gala Vanting

WSW and queer communities represent a diverse range of identities and sexual practices requiring a multi-faceted approach to health promotion. As they are generally considered a 'low risk' population in the wider discourse of global sexual health, there is a dearth of targeted resources for these individuals and communities.

The Claude project was founded in 2012 as part of ACON's (AIDS Council of NSW) Lesbian and Same Sex Attracted Women's Sexual Health Project. It engages community leaders, artists, educators, and peers to deliver targeted media campaigns addressing some of the more practice-specific risks that are often omitted from WSW health promotion resources. In partnership with researchers and community members, the [iloveclaude.com](http://iloveclaude.com) website and harm reduction resources operate within the SCIPP model, which emphasises sex positivity, creativity, and interactivity.

This presentation will explore potential strategies for approaching and these topics in their respective communities, using two film resources collaboratively produced by Claude and local queer-identified artists. The presentation aims to encourage dialogue about the most effective strategies for reaching people whose sexual practices, regardless of their gender identification or sexual orientation, can carry health risks. The presenters are particularly interested in feedback from within the sector about the accessibility of the work and the transparency of its messages.

## SESSION 03 2:50 – 3:50

CHAIR: LEXI MYERS

### ACON: Here For Women.

ACON Women. Michelle Ring and Edda Lampis.

A lack of LBQ visibility and targeted services for this group presents significant challenges in engaging LBQ women in programs and services; this is particularly true in rural and regional areas. During this session we will provide an overview of the services ACON makes available to women and how we deliver them in a state-wide context. We will demonstrate with examples of our campaigns how we collaborate within our organisation to meet the challenges and make our services, programs and our presence as an organisation genuinely state-wide.

### Alcohol Reduction Support for LBQ Women Delivered Via SMS Messages.

Deakin University. Rachel Bush.

International research over the past 20 years has consistently found LBQ women are up to three times more likely to drink alcohol at risky levels and twice as likely to be binge drinking than heterosexual women. Much of this research to date, including Australian research, has focused on comparing LBQ women and heterosexual women on prevalence of drinking. However, limited research has explored interventions for LBQ women to facilitate alcohol reduction, nor are LBQ women specifically targeted in health promotion campaigns or by mainstream alcohol services.

A large proportion of people drinking at harmful levels never access treatment, and the evidence for women responding to brief alcohol interventions is lacking. This is compounded for LBQ women, who are reluctant to seek help for alcohol related problems from mainstream clinical services, are less satisfied with their care than heterosexual women, and have difficulty finding sensitive and appropriate services. This session will present an overview of the risks of hazardous alcohol use among LBQ women and the need for targeted interventions to support alcohol reduction before reporting on new innovative research that will examine the efficacy of an SMS intervention for LBQ women to support alcohol reduction and increase help seeking.

### What Else Can You Do With Your Fingers? LBQ Women and Smoking.

ACON. Samar Haidar.

Over the last 25 years, smoking rates among the general population in Australia have halved. However, the health and cost burden of smoking continues to weigh heavily on minority populations, including LBQ women who smoke at roughly twice the rate as the general population. There is little research available to explain why mainstream tobacco reduction messaging has failed to engage this population group. Similarly, little is known about the attitudes and motivations towards smoking among LBQ women. Through an 'Evidence to Practice' grant from the NSW Cancer Institute, ACON sought to address the research gaps on smoking among LBQ women and develop and implement an online social marketing tobacco intervention.

Informed by evidence garnered from this research, ACON developed a social marketing campaign, What else can you do with your fingers?, to raise awareness of LBQ women's high smoking prevalence and to change the cultural norms around smoking in this community. This presentation will discuss ACON's innovative approach to engaging LBQ women around smoking and present findings from our initial evaluation of this unique tobacco intervention.

# Snapshots

(15 MINS)

## SESSION 01

11:40 – 12:40

CHAIR: GRACE LEE

### Resilience and Older LBQ Women: A Snapshot. VAC. Lizzie Craig.

The Positive Living Centre (PLC) is part of VAC and is a vibrant and safe environment for all people living with HIV. The PLC aims to enhance the health and well-being of people living with HIV, through the provision of social, emotional, recreational, and skills-based services and activities. My work at the centre also allows me to interact with many women in the community including small numbers of LBQ women living with HIV and many who work in the sector identifying as older LBQ women (Lesbian, Bisexual, Queer).

This presentation draws upon the narratives of four of these older LBQ women, including one older LBQ woman living with HIV. These narratives powerfully showcase issues and common themes and demonstrate the strength and resilience of ageing LBQ Women through their lived experience as portrayed in four snapshots of their lives.

### Matrix's Volunteer Visitor Program.

Matrix Guild. Anneke Deutsch.

This session will describe the experience of establishing the Matrix Volunteer Visitor Program. There are many joyous stories of connection, kindness and empathy between lesbians of different ages.

### Navigating the Unintelligible: Queer Young Women's Experiences Negotiating Safe Sex and Sexual Health in Tasmania.

University of Tasmania. Ruby Grant.

This session will provide a 'snap shot' of some preliminary findings of a doctoral research project examining queer young women's experiences of gender, sexuality and sexual health in Tasmania. Specifically, this presentation will focus on how queer young women use language to construct meaning around 'safe sex' and how these understandings may shape sexual health outcomes. Initial findings suggest that an absence of language and established safe sexual 'scripts' among lesbian, bisexual and queer young women may contribute to poor sexual health outcomes. Participants' accounts indicate inconsistencies between biomedical and lay understandings of 'safe sex,' resulting in differing notions of what constitutes a 'good' sexual citizen. These findings suggest that further efforts are needed to raise awareness around queer young women's sexual health and to establish definitions of safe sex that are inclusive of queer, trans and non-binary young people's experiences. In light of these findings, this presentation will also briefly consider how sexual healthcare providers can ensure inclusive and culturally competent care for lesbian, bisexual and queer young women in regional Australia. This research is significant in its contribution to addressing an important gap in Australian sexual health research and health promotion that often neglects to account for queer women's understandings of 'safe sex.'

## SESSION 02

1:45- 2:45

CHAIR: BRENDA APPLETON

### Examining diverse ways LBQ women negotiate sexuality, gender and 'carer' identities.

Carers Victoria. Meredith Butler and Jill Cameron.

We know that lesbian, bisexual and queer women have many unique and diverse identities and experiences. We also know that many LBQ women are in relationships that include aspects of caring. LBQ women may care for a partner, friend or family member with a disability, chronic or age-related illness, and other health or mental health support needs. Caring may be shared within a community or group of friends and/or may be reciprocal within partner relationships.

In 2015, the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society at La Trobe University and Carers Australia partnered to explore the experiences of older LGBTI carers and the carers of older LGBTI Australians. Young LGBTIQ carers were also engaged through the Young LGBTIQ Carers project in Victoria.

In both cases, participants were invited to complete an online survey and confidential interviews. A key area of inquiry was how sexual orientation, gender identity and/or intersex status impact on the experiences and needs of LBQ women who are carers and on their relationships.

This presentation reports on current knowledge about LBQ women in caring relationships and discusses the implications for policy, LBQ women's health and carer support services. Participants will be encouraged to reflect on practical ways they can provide age-appropriate, culturally safe and inclusive support for women who identify as LBQ carers.

### On the Line: Women's usage of a LGBTI phone & web service.

QLife, Switchboard. Stella Topaz (National Project Manager, QLife) & Leanne Renfree (General Manager, Switchboard Victoria).

This presentation will discuss provision of services to women through QLife, a national LGBTI phone and webchat service, as well as provide a local perspective from Switchboard, a volunteer service for LGBTIQ people and their supporters, based in Victoria, and a partner service of QLife.

Looking at data from over 6,000 contacts in a 6month period, we will focus on those contacts by women, including reasons women make contact, how women identify in terms of sexuality and gender, age, proportion who live in metropolitan versus regional / rural / remote areas, and what we might learn from the referral requests of women making contact.

To offer an insight into a volunteer organisation for LGBTIQ people and their supporters, we will discuss the history and aims of Switchboard, its current services and activities, why people volunteer, what training and support is offered to volunteers, and how Switchboard works with QLife.

QLife provides anonymous LGBTI-specialist counselling and referral from 3pm to midnight every day of the year. As QLife is anonymous, any data collected is based on

information volunteered by the person making contact. QLife operates through local partner services in four states and Switchboard, based in Victoria, is one of those.

Switchboard is a volunteer organisation providing free, confidential and anonymous telephone counselling, referral and information service for the Victorian and Tasmanian lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) communities and their supporters.

### Drink Limits.

VAC. Rei Alphonso.

Drink Limits is VAC's 8 week therapeutic support group for lesbian, bisexual and queer women who want to change their alcohol use and better manage their anxiety. The program was run May- June 2015, and is unique in Victoria. As the first LBQ AOD specific therapeutic program developed and run by VAC, it provided a key learning opportunity for the organisation. This presentation will provide an overview of the program development, recruitment and marketing, the group process, as well as insights into key learnings and future recommendations from the evaluation process.

## SESSION 03

2:50 – 3:50

CHAIR: ALYCE VELLA

### Are you LGBTIQ and have a cervix? Queer experiences of cervical screening.

Cancer Council Victoria. Sandy Anderson.

Recent research conducted by La Trobe University in partnership with PapScreen Victoria explored the cervical screening behaviour of LGBTIQ people with a cervix. Research previously conducted in Australia is minimal, with the focus on lesbian identified women and little insight to transgender, intersex and non-binary experiences of cervical screening. This research identifies barriers to cervical screening faced by queer people across the spectrum of sexual- and gender identities.

The research was conducted using an anonymous online survey and was limited to people in Victoria. 303 people participated, with a diversity of gender and sexual identities.

The participants had similar knowledge, understanding and screening rates as the general population. However, in addition to the common barriers of time and embarrassment which we see in the general population, this community also has other unique barriers.

Around one quarter of participants had not discussed sexuality or gender diversity with their health care provider, and a previous homophobic or transphobic experience also impacted negatively on screening participation.

Almost one third of respondents indicated they did not think they needed to screen, and this was attributable both to lack of knowledge and to health care providers inaccurate recommendations.

This research identifies that access to cervical screening is impacted on by many health care providers paucity of knowledge about sexual and gender diversity. With increased understanding of the issues PapScreen Victoria hopes to find ways to embed this content in existing health

### Learning Outcomes:

- Understand the barriers to screening that are unique to the LGBTIQ community
- Identify opportunities for community and health practitioner education on the importance of cervical screening
- Increase awareness amongst the LGBTIQ community of the need for cervical screening

### Home insemination or clinic based insemination (IU) - how to decide what's best for you.

City Fertility Centre.

Alison Cox and Dr Anne Poliness.

Home insemination Versus clinic treatment (Intra-uterine insemination) medical screening tests, the law and donors rights, what to ask prospective sperm donors. Choosing a donor Learning Outcomes: Participants will learn the pros and cons of home insemination, using a known donor against using a clinically recruited donor and the benefits of working with a fertility specialist and IVF clinic.

### LGBTIQ-Inclusive Sexual Health Care in General Practice: The Challenges and Opportunities in Regional and Rural Settings Session.

Jennifer Richardson.

This session will explore the provision of sexual health care in general practice for LGBTIQ people in regional and rural Victoria, and will discuss findings from a postgraduate qualitative project that has sought to understand how and why some general practices have implemented LGBTIQ-inclusive care. The presentation will briefly outline the challenges faced by GPs, nurses and practice managers in the provision of LGBTIQ-inclusive sexual health care in regional and rural environments, before focusing more closely on the motivations and approaches that have resulted in some clinics and clinicians becoming highly regarded for their service provision in this area.

# Intersections

(15 MINS)

## SESSION 01

11:40 – 12:40

CHAIR: SHANNON WRIGHT

### Intimate Partner Violence: Complex presentations in L-B-T-Q-P relationships.

Kate Foord. Drummond St Services.

Drummond street's unique data set, gathered across a range of family relationship, general counselling and mental health counselling services, enables us to examine the occurrence of intimate partner violence in LGBTQ relationships. As dss is a trusted and specialist LGBTQ mental health service provider, clients are more willing to disclose IPV and to present it as an issue to our counsellors: this is clearly against the general trend, where people are reluctant or unwilling to disclose either within the community or outside it. Our data shows that of the 400 cases we see annually in our Queerspace program, around 15% of these will have experienced IPV, either in current relationships or in the past.

We have been struck by the complexity of these presentations, and the inappropriateness of applying mainstream approaches to them. In this presentation, we will examine the inadequacies of the gender lens, or the victim vs perpetrator model, or heteronormative ideas, both in understanding IPV in LGBTQ relationships or in developing models for clinical practice that work for these communities.

Clinical practice reveals a diversity of presentations of IPV between the L, B, T, Q and P elements of the community. We will present clinical examples, accompanied by disaggregated examination of the data, so that elements of each community's experience of IPV emerges in its difference from the others, as well as its similarities. We will also show the degree of complexity of the presentations: from the complex health and well-being issues associated with gender, gender questioning, sexuality, and the effects of these on experiences of family of origin, to alcohol abuse, mental health and childhood experiences of family violence and community violence.

### Everyday violence – parents, partners and public spaces.

Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria. Philomena Horsley.

This presentation draws a picture of the everyday violence experienced by LGBTQ women in a variety of Australian settings, including homes, schools, workplaces and social settings. Until recently, family and domestic violence and sexual assault services, among others, have failed to recognise the prevalence of violence experienced by LGBTQ women. Yet research demonstrates that: lesbian and bisexual women experience much higher rates of sexual violence than heterosexual women; women in same sex relationships are at an equal risk of partner abuse as women in opposite-sex relationships; one in four young women have experienced homophobic parental abuse at home. Cumulative experiences of violence impact significantly on mental and physical health.

### Domestic Violence: The Conversation We Should Be Having.

ACON. Kai Noonan.

The Sydney Women's Sexual Health survey report (2015) found that in 2014, 40% of the 1,100 LBQ women who participated in the survey reported having ever experienced

domestic violence (DV) with the majority of those experiences being in a relationship with another woman (65.62%). Interstate and international studies, although limited, indicate a similar prevalence of DV amongst LBQ women. For transgender women we know that those statistics are much higher, possibly up to 70 or 80%.

This interactive workshop will create a platform to make the invisible visible, by beginning with an overview of the prevalence of domestic violence in LBQ women's relationships and examining the complex ways in which power, control and fear manifest in relationships between women.

The group will then discuss how abusive relationships effect both individuals and communities and look at ways in which we can help each other to recognise abuse in LBQ women's relationships, access support and live free from violence.

By beginning to understand the complexity and nature of abusive relationships, participants will then be guided to start a conversation identifying the flip-side of violence and together form some understanding of what healthy relationships are. What do they look like, how do we know when we are in one and where are our role models?

## SESSION 02

1:45- 2:45

CHAIR: MARIE RILEY

### Intersections to Disability & Sexual Expression through a social justice framework.

Jax Jacki Brown.

*Sexuality is not a right which must be earned or a possession which must be purchased, but a state accessible to all individuals. Even those who sometimes have to fight for that access.*

— Lucy Grealy

#### Content

- Sexual expression as a human rights issues and a site of profound disadvantage for many people with disability
- How can we challenge and change the meta narratives of disability to foster disability pride, connection to community and access to healthy relationships for queer people with disabilities?
- How a social justice framework of disability is transformative and compels allyship and action

As a queer woman who is also a wheelchair user, I will draw on the academic literature as well as my experience of sexuality to explore the intersection between queer identity and disability through a social justice framework.

### Biphobia and bi invisibility – it's time to address this issue.

Bi Alliance Victoria.

Rebecca Dominguez & Mellem Rose

Have you heard the joke about the bisexual who couldn't make up their mind? Have you heard bisexuals referred to a fence-sitters, or that bisexuality is a transition phase to coming out as gay or lesbian?

These and other negative stereotypes about bisexuality feed into biphobia which is separate and distinct from homo-

phobia. Biphobia exists within the LGBTIQ communities and within the straight community, and leads to bisexuals facing worse mental health outcomes than those who identify as gay, lesbian and straight, as well as suffering from higher rates of domestic violence, and drug and alcohol abuse.

Bi-invisibility occurs when people assume that two people in a relationship must be straight or gay, without considering whether one or both of them might be bisexual. Bi-invisibility occurs when “gay” is used as an umbrella term for the LGBTIQ communities, such as “gay marriage”, “gay community” or “gay rights”.

Listen to Rebecca and Mel take you through where biphobia happens, the research in Australia and overseas on the impacts of biphobia, their own personal experiences of biphobia, and how organisations can avoid bi-invisibility and unintentional biphobia, and become good bi allies.

### LBQW research at ACON.

ACON. Johann Kolstee.

LBQW have unique health needs, critical in our efforts as a community to advocate for LBQW health programs is a strong evidence base. ACON is Australia’s largest LGBTI health promotion organisation and is proud to work with and for LBQW in NSW. Through partnerships with key researchers it has helped to begin to build an evidence base to underpin work in LBQW health. There is much work still to be done in exploring the experiences of LBQW, understanding their evolving health needs and in engaging decision makers to understand LBQW health as a unique and important priority.

This presentation will provide an overview of the current research being undertaken with LBQW at ACON, the role of community organisations in the research process, how the research work we are engaged with as an organisation intersects with our project work and some of the challenges we have experienced in LBQW health research

## SESSION 03

2:50 – 3:50

CHAIR: KELLY WATSON

### Challenging the mainstream: re-orientating services and creating new ones to meet the needs of LGBTIQ women.

CBR LGBTIQ Community Coalition.  
Suzanne Eastwood.

Building a community coalition that has brought together mainstream services and the community to build new service models that can meet the needs of a diverse community across the lifecycle. Showcasing Val’s Army-how a mainstream service was able to provide support to a group of Lesbians who rallied around friends in desperate need. Celebrating, supporting and harnessing the strength power, goodwill and dedication of chosen families.

Tips about working with mainstream services. How to re-orientate mainstream services to successfully meet the needs of lesbians, gay women, transwomen, queer and bisexual women. Making sure the needs of women do not get lost in the alphabet soup! Addressing the challenges of making a place for women.

### What do sex workers want? From policy, from laws, from you?

Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association.  
Ryan and Queenie.

Having an understanding of the issues affecting sex workers is critical to any wider health advocacy and policy discussion. Often sex workers are spoken for by others, or our issues are misunderstood or ignored and seen as a separate issue to women’s health; particularly LBQ women’s health. This session will enable participants to learn from sex workers about the key issues affecting sex workers in Australia, with a particular focus on LBQ sex workers. The ways that sex workers have successfully resisted and organised as a community in the face of bad laws and policies that have often undermined our ability to look after our health and safety will be discussed.

### Lets Talk About The Difference.

Bonny Briggs.

The discussion we are presently having is no different from that in which the majority of Aboriginal lesbians experience, nor is it different in the experiences we share in our isolation or from the communities in which we first acknowledged our sexual orientation. On a personal level, my sexual orientation has often been secondary to that of my identity as an Aboriginal woman growing up in a racist Australian landscape. What I present to you today highlights the blight most lesbian aboriginal women experience growing up in rural and remote communities in NSW.

Young Aboriginal lesbians are more likely to be incarcerated because they are more likely to attempt suicide or die a violent death due to violence according to evidence presented by communities and also by health care professionals on the frontline such as the KRC in Kings Cross Sydney and the Wayside Chapel in Kings Cross.

These critical services offer assistance and nurturing to young Aboriginal people fleeing rural and remote communities. Many leave due to not being accepted in their own communities and family groupings. Unfortunately, many young people are vulnerable upon leaving their family homes are often present with extensive drug & alcohol addiction.

# Projections

(45 MINS)

## SESSION 01 11:40 – 12:40

CHAIR: WENDY BROKENSHERE

### Love is...

Queensland AIDS Council. Ricki Menzies.

Based on a successful workshop series offered to lesbians and designed to explore the fundamental qualities of positive, healthy relationships, this interactive session takes one element and creates a space where participants can unpack their expectations around the notion of an 'ideal' partner.

With the profusion of online dating sites, and the need to get your electronic savvy on, it helps to be clear about just what it is that you will – and won't – be prepared to navigate relationship-wise. For those in committed partnerships, this can help refresh the reason why it ended happily ever after.

## SESSION 02 1:45 – 2:45

CHAIR: JOHANN KOLSTEE

### Beyond Cultural Competency: Supporting LGBT women from immigrant and refugee backgrounds.

Multicultural Centre for Women's Health.  
Monique Hameed.

This session will provide an overview of the Our Voices, Changing Cultures project that was run over the course of 2015 at the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health. Working with young LGBTQ women from refugee and immigrant backgrounds, the project conducted performance-based workshops exploring themes such as mental health and well-being, whiteness, the idea of coming out and visibility. The workshops culminated in a performance piece held in November of last year.

Exploring the intersections of race, culture, sexuality, gender and faith, the project worked to create an empowering and open space for these women to meet and discuss these topics. As a project officer I will talk through the some of the challenges I faced and aims I had whilst working on this project including my desire to create and support sustainable communities, challenge existing structures and centre the voices of refugee and migrant women.

## SESSION 03 2:50 – 3:50

CHAIR: LOTTIE TURNER

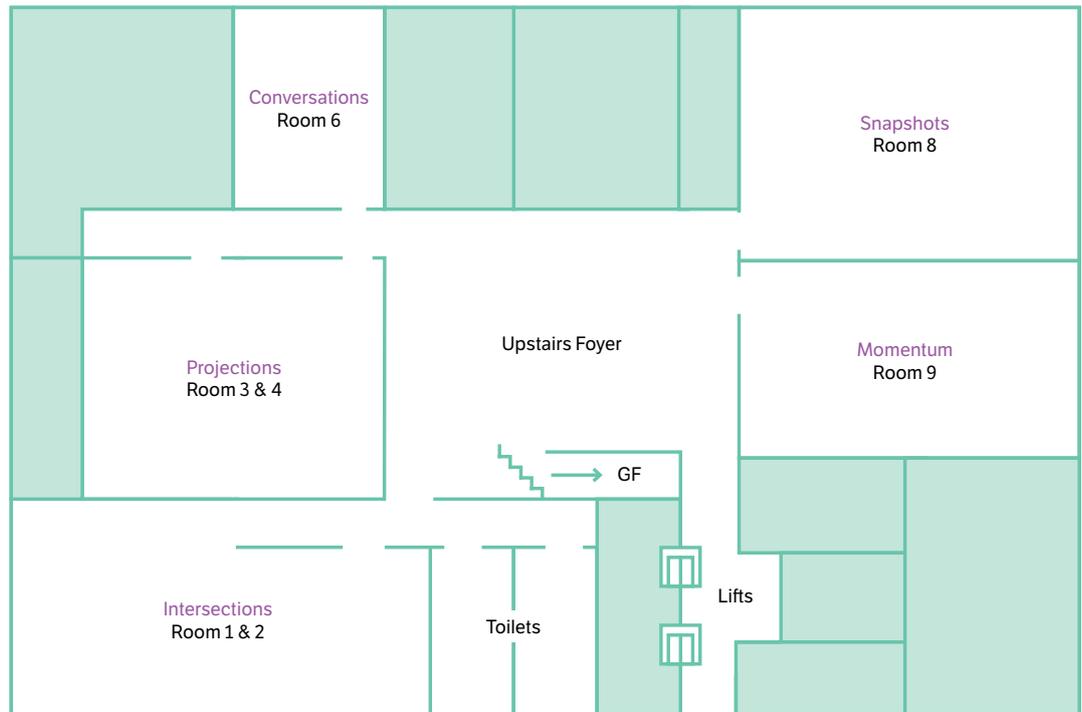
### A trans-centered Professional Practice: Generating meaning with trans\*and gender diverse people

Deep-en Counselling. Marie August.

This session invites participants to consider the discourses and practices that often repudiate trans-women's experiences and their diverse sexualities. The workshop will touch on historical narratives that have repudiated trans women's embodiments and their relationship to sexual identity. It further invites participants to consider the therapeutic relationship/alliance as a space where trans women's "knowledges" can be placed at the centre of the conversation to generate meaning that leads to increased agency for trans-women clients. Participants will be invited to explore the metaphors of "working with" and "working alongside" while being mindful of the influences of power, privilege and the grand narratives of "trans\* identity" that often inform conversations about gender diversity.

# Workshop Map

JASPER  
HOTEL  
1F



# ALCOHOL & ANXIETY GOT YOU FEELING TRAPPED?

Talk in a supported place about relationships, anxiety and alcohol use.

**Drink Limits is a free eight week group for lesbian, bisexual and queer women to meet and explore these issues.**

Drink Limits is a free, confidential and non judgemental therapeutic group program exploring the role alcohol use plays in our lives and communities.

The group will focus on when and why we drink, as well as exploring strategies to manage this use.

This small group  
will be held at

**VAC**  
**6 Claremont Street**  
**South Yarra**

Taking referrals June-July



**Drink Limits**

For more information or to register interest,  
please contact VAC on 03 9865 6700



# Presenters

## Rei Alphonso

Rei Alphonso is currently working in Care Recovery Coordination at VAC. Most recently working as an AOD clinician across the youth and adult sectors she has a strong background in advocacy, activism and community arts and development.

## Sandy Anderson

Sandy Anderson is the Nurse Consultant at PapScreen Victoria, Cancer Council Victoria and has worked in that role since 2000. In that role her experience in LGBTIQ health has contributed to the development of cervical screening messaging for queer community.

Sandy has serviced on three GLBTI Ministerial Advisory Committees under previous Labour Health Ministers. Sandy has worked in sexual health for over twenty years and also currently also practices as a nurse at the Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative Medical Clinic

## Marie August

Marie August works as a counsellor and consultant in private practice. She holds an under-graduate degree in Theology and Master's degree in counselling. Marie's most recent role before stepping out on her own was working as the Diversity and Advocacy Co-coordinator at Prahran Mission. In this role Marie worked with same sex attracted and trans\* and gender diverse adults who were experiencing mental health challenges.

Marie has worked in mental health services and addiction services in New Zealand and Australia, and within the education sector in Japan both as a teacher and in local government offices. Marie is passionate about therapeutic practices that open up the space for dialogue, negotiated meaning making and de-centre grand narratives of human personhood that subjugate alternative knowledges about what it means to be fully human.

## Bonny Briggs

A Gomilaroi woman from Moree NSW, I have spent most of my life in Sydney and am a proud advocate from the perspective of how Australia was invaded and not discovered. This can be a difficult place to advocate from, but I would not have it any other way. I'm an out proud Lesbian who uses the term to describe myself. This presentation is very important to me and the work I am currently wanting to do for young same sex attracted women in rural and remote communities in NSW.

## Jax Jacki Brown

Jax Jacki Brown is a disability and queer rights activist, writer, performer, public speaker and co-producer of Quippings: Disability Unleashed, a disability performance troupe in Melbourne.

Jax is a graduate of Southern Cross University with a BA in Cultural Studies and Communication which examined the intersections between disability and queer identities. Jax public speaking work is extensive, she has provided guest lectures on disability and its social construction for Southern Cross University, Victoria University and University of Melbourne and frequently presents at conferences. Jax runs workshops on disability, sexuality and LGBTIQ issues for university departments, disability organisations and health organisations.

## Rachel Bush

Rachel Bush is a PhD student at the School of Nursing and Midwifery, Deakin University, Burwood. Rachel has an academic background in psychology and has been working as a research assistant over the past three years. Before starting her PhD in June 2015, Rachel was working as a Research Assistant on a number of projects including the Rainbow Women's Help Seeking Study with Dr Ruth McNair, a project funded by beyondblue, and another project exploring smoking in the LGBT community. Rachel's PhD study will examine the efficacy of an SMS intervention for same-sex attracted women to support alcohol reduction and increase help seeking.

## Meredith Butler

Meredith Butler identifies as a lesbian sibling carer. Her role in the Education Services Team at Carers Victoria involves making connections with diverse communities to develop educational 'spaces' that improve carer health and wellbeing. Key projects include capacity building for workers responding to the needs of young LGBTIQ carers and the National LGBTI Older Carers Research Project. Her perspective is informed by a background in Social Sciences, health/community services, lesbian/queer women's collectives and first-hand carer experience.

## Jill Cameron

Jill Cameron is a Carer Support Worker with 16 years experience at Carers Victoria. A keen advocate of the rights and support needs of carers, she has a background in Social Work, crisis counselling and action research in the community and not-for-profit sectors. Recent projects include Val's Cafe Aged Care How2, the National LGBTI Older Carers Research Project and Carers Victoria's LGBTIQ Action Group.

## Lizzi Craig

Lizzi Craig is one of the team of people working as a Client Care and Support Officer at the VAC Positive Living Centre (PLC). Lizzi sees many clients at the centre and at their homes to offer support, assessment and ongoing referral to meet the concerns and issues they identify. Lizzi has been a District Nurse for over thirty

years and has a background in Family Sensitive Practice and Family Therapy. Lizzi is a proud lesbian, passionate about caring and resilience within the aging LBQ community and those living with HIV and has respect for the wisdom and generosity they bring in sharing their journeys through story telling.

## Anneke Deutsch

Anneke Deutsch joined Matrix to create the first affordable and accessible housing for older lesbians in Australia. She has a background in sculpture, prosthetics and sustainable building. She uses her experience working in rehab and Aged Care to encourage lesbian-inclusive practice in the Aged Care sector. She is concerned about the loneliness and isolation that old age can bring particularly to lesbian elders.

## Rebecca Dominguez

Rebecca Dominguez is one of the co-founders of Bi-Alliance Victoria, and has been the President of the organisation since 2012. Rebecca participated in the Victorian State Government Ministerial Advisory Committee on Mental Health and Wellbeing between 2013 and 2014 representing the bisexual community. She is currently representing the bisexual community on the LGBTI Taskforce as part of the working group on Health and Human Services.

## Suzanne Eastwood

The CBR LGBTIQ Community Coalition is a partnership of four agencies brought together by the common goal of ensuring health, wellbeing, access, social inclusion and equity with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) communities. The AIDS Action Council, Northside Community Services, Sexual Health & Family Planning ACT and A Gender Agenda.

## Kate Foord

Kate Foord is a mental health clinician and manager of the Queerspace program at drummond street services. drummond street services (formerly the Citizens Welfare Service of Victoria) is a 128 year old not for profit organisation mainstream community and family service agency with a forty year history of providing specialised queer-affirmative counselling services for Melbourne's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer/Questioning (LGBTIQ/Sex and Gender Diverse), Gender Queer and more recently Polyamorous communities. Throughout that time, drummond street has been at the forefront of service development, building clinical expertise, and researching and evaluating the health and wellbeing of Melbourne's LGBTIQP communities.

### Ruby Grant

Ruby Grant is a PhD candidate in sociology at the University of Tasmania. Her research interests and areas of expertise include feminist sociology of the body, gender, sexuality, lesbian studies and queer theory. Her current research seeks to explore queer women's embodied experiences of gender, sexuality and sexual health in Tasmania.

### Samar Haidar

Samar Haidar joined ACON in 2012 as the project officer in the AOD Project. She coordinated the longstanding and successful ACON Rovers Project, a community outreach harm reduction initiative, in addition to delivering successful targeted harm reduction campaigns. In 2015 Samar was appointed as the Senior Project Officer for the LBQ Women's Tobacco Reduction Project. This role affords her the privilege to demonstrate her keen interest in, and commitment to addressing smoking disparities in our communities.

### Monique Hameed

Monique is the National Training Officer for the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health. In 2015, she worked as a Project Officer on their Our Voices, Changing Cultures Project that was run over the course of 2015.

She also co-coordinates the Undercurrent Community Education Project, a volunteer-run organisation that conducts workshops around consent and healthy relationships throughout high schools in the Western suburbs of Melbourne. She is passionate about queer histories, prison abolition and transformative justice.

### Philomena Horsley

Philomena manages the Family Violence project at GLHV, La Trobe University and is a lecturer in gender-based violence at the University of Melbourne. She has a long history of community work and activism in the areas of disability, women's health, gender-based violence and HIV. Her research has included projects on the sexual assault of older women, research ethics, hospital autopsies and lesbians' experience of life-threatening illness.

### Johann Kolstee

Johann Kolstee, Manager Research Engagement at ACON, works to create and maintain research partnerships for ACON in LGBTI health and HIV prevention, support and care. He is the chair of ACON's research ethics review committee, coordinates the Sydney Gay Community Periodic Survey, the Sydney Women and Sexual Health Survey and represents ACON on numerous research advisory committees. In addition to his research work, Johann is also very much involved with new service development at ACON. Prior to working at ACON, Johann has years of clinical experience working as a registered nurse in the mental health and drug and alcohol sectors both in Australia and in Canada. Currently, Johann is also completing his PhD at the University of New South Wales in the HIV Epidemiology and Prevention Program at the Kirby Institute.

### Edda Lampis

Edda Lampis is the community health promotion worker at ACON Northern Rivers whose role has a specific focus of working with LBQ women. Working in regional and rural areas means her role largely includes community development and capacity building approaches. She lives and works in Lismore, in Northern NSW.

### Ricki Menzies (B.SocS/SW)

Ricki Menzies' passion for engagement with the LGBTIQ populations began when she came out aged 40 in the small regional (and ultra conservative) town of Gympie in South East Queensland. Her extensive work background in the health and community sector has encompassed women's health, sexuality and drug and alcohol education, blood borne viruses and in her current capacity as the Queensland Aids Council's Training and Development Coordinator.

Ricki is well known for her dedication to the LGBTI cause, and has been involved in a range of volunteer activities including organising Conferences (Health in Difference 2013; Transgender, Sistergirl and Gender Diverse 2012), forming and guiding the Lesbian Health Action Group and hosting several lesbian social and support groups in Gympie and the Sunshine Coast for many years. These contributions have led to recognition as the Queensland Pride Festival Community Awards LGBT Volunteer of the Year (2010), Sunshine Coast Pride Festival Local Hero (2014) and nominee for the Lesbians in the House Lesbian Logies (2011) at the Sydney Opera House.

Well regarded for her knowledge around all things LGBTI, and unsatisfied with all these achievements listed above, she is currently completing her Masters in Sexology at Western Australia's Curtin University and maintains a loving relationship with her truck driving girlfriend, an extensive and ever expanding garden, and a couple of neurotic pets (her partner's).

### Dr Viv McGregor

Viv is the Community Engagement Coordinator of the Lesbian and Same Sex Attracted Women's Sexual Health Project at ACON (AIDS Council of NSW). She primarily works on the sexual health resource and art project, "Claude".

### Dr Ruth McNair

Ruth is an Honorary Associate Professor at the Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne and a general practitioner in an inner-urban general practice. She has clinical and research interests in lesbian and bisexual women's mental health, sexual health, same-sex parenting, health care access, health care provider cultural competence training, and cultural issues related to alcohol and smoking in the LGBT communities. She is the Co-Chairperson of the Victorian LGBTI Health and Human Services Working group and a member of the LGBTI Taskforce (2015-2018).

### Kai Noonan

Kai Noonan is the Project Coordinator of ACON's domestic and family violence project, one of ACON's many projects designed to support the health and safety of LGBTI people across NSW.

With qualifications in social sciences and psychotherapy, Kai's work has involved counselling, group therapy and adult education for people who have experienced domestic violence. Prior to working with ACON she worked in various crisis and trauma services, with men, women and children in the drug and alcohol sector, mental health and domestic and family violence.

Following a decision to temporarily leave client-based work and focus attention on education, advocacy and campaign work, Kai believes the current national attention directed toward the issue of domestic and family violence is the best time to raise awareness about the violence that also happens in LGBTIQ relationships.

### Nicolas Parkhill

Nicolas Parkhill has over 20 years' experience in the public and community health sectors. For the last eight years he has been the CEO of ACON, NSW's leading health promotion organisation specialising in HIV and LGBTI health. Prior to this role Nicolas headed up both the health promotion and operational divisions of ACON and worked in a variety of senior management and policy development roles for NSW Health and the NSW Cabinet Office, many with a specific focus on alcohol and other drugs. He also has a background in social marketing campaign management and public relations. Nicolas is a former board member of both ACON and the Australian Federation of Aids Organisations (AFAO).

### Dr Anne Poliness

Dr Poliness qualified as a doctor in 1993 and as a gynaecologist in 2002. Since then she has also completed a doctorate degree in endometriosis and a master's in reproductive medicine (fertility). She began a Doctor of Medicine degree in 2003, through The University of Melbourne, while working as a gynaecologist in the public system at the Royal Women's Hospital and Mercy Hospital for Women.

In 2001, Dr Poliness worked for 12 months in Winchester (UK) for a gynaecologist who was a preceptor for laparoscopic surgery. Returning to Melbourne in 2002, she took up a 12-month fellowship position in laparoscopic surgery at the Royal Women's Hospital for the endometriosis unit.

Dr Poliness consults at St Kilda Road and Collins Street in the city, and has a public appointment at the Royal Women's Hospital, Parkville. She has expertise in treating patients in all areas of fertility, with special interests in endometriosis and polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), also same sex family options.

### Karen Price

Karen Price has over 17 years' experience working at senior levels in the health sector. In Federal and State Government roles, as well as senior positions in the University and not for profit sectors, Karen has lead and managed significant health program areas; including HIV, mental health, ageing and aged care, drug and alcohol, and anti-doping in sport.

Karen is a strong believer in establishing partnerships that benefit communities, and in particular, between government, academic and the not-for-profit sectors. Karen is a co-investigator on several research projects in areas related to HIV and mental health. Karen is currently the Director of HIV and Sexual Health for ACON – NSW's leading, and Australia's largest, community-based HIV prevention and LGBTI\* health organisation

### Leanne Renfree

Leanne's academic background is in psychology and organisational development. She has worked in training, health policy development and management in the private, public and not for profit sectors.

Since 2009, Leanne has been General Manager of Switchboard Victoria, a peer based teleweb counselling, information and referral service for LGBTIQ communities. Switchboard is a partner in QLife. Switchboard also provides Out and About, a volunteer home visiting service for older LGBTI people.

Leanne was a presenter on LGBT community radio station JOY94.9 for many years and can now be seen regularly on Bent TV's *Stayin' Alive* program.

### Jennifer Richardson

Jennifer is passionate about the potential for primary care to encourage meaningful patient engagement with health services, and has a particular interest in the provision of sexual health care through general practice. Jennifer is currently completing a Master of Public Health at The University of Melbourne, and is undertaking qualitative research on the provision of sexual health care through general practice for LGBTIQ people in regional and rural Victoria.

### Michelle Ring

Michelle Ring is the Coordinator of ACON's Lesbian and Same Sex Attracted Women's Sexual Health Project; Here for Women and Claude. Michelle's background spans 15 years in the fields of Education, Justice and Health. She is passionate about enhancing health and social outcomes for LGBTIQ women, and believes this is best achieved by providing opportunities for women to be self-empowered and supported to create change.

### Mellem Rose

Mellem Rose is the Vice President of Bi-Alliance Victoria, and an active member Moonee Valley Council LGBTIQ Working Group. Mellem has also appeared on Bent TV discussing bisexuality. Mellem has worked within community organisations for many years, including the Lions Club of Ascot Vale and Interchange Western.

### Simon Ruth

Simon Ruth is Chief Executive Officer at the Victorian Aids Council. Prior to arriving at VAC, Simon spent twelve years at Peninsula Health where he was Director of Complex Services. At Peninsula Health, Simon oversaw a range of programs including alcohol and drugs, youth services, aged care, subacute programs and Aboriginal health. Simon has also worked for the Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul Society and YSAS. Simon has a keen interest in improving health services for PLHIV and the GLBTI communities. Simon is a Board member of VicHealth and the Vice president of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations. He is past member of the Liquor Control Advisory Council and the Whole of Victorian Government Alcohol & Drug Strategy Expert Advisory Committee. Simon was a Board member of the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association from 2005 -2015 and was its President from 2007-2012.

### Queenie and Ryan

Queenie and Ryan are both elected executive committee members of Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association.

Queenie is a current sex worker, write and performer-whose work focuses on breaking down stigma around sex work and forwarding the need for decriminalisation.

Ryan is also a current sex worker who is straight for pay- she is proud to be a sex worker who uses drugs and part of a greater movement fighting to end the various forms of stigma, discrimination and criminalisation sex workers still face.

### Sonya Sirny

Sonya Sirny is the Manager of Australia's most awarded adult retailer Max Black in Sydney. As the business' principle buyer, trainer and operations manager Sonya has worked with community partners like ACON and CLAUDE to deliver products and programs that contribute to the sex positivity and welfare of the communities she serves. By working closely with a wide variety of health professionals, services and therapists Sonya is uniquely placed to discuss the world of sexual health and lifestyle products, the role of contemporary business in queer womens' lives, and sex education and positivity. Sonya is a passionate presenter and advocate for women's health and sexuality.

### Starlady

Starlady joined the ZBGC's team in 2016 in a transgender and gender diverse youth advocacy position. She sits in a number of positions including VAC's transgender and gender diverse working group, Transgender Victoria Committee and the Victorian Government Trans Expert Advisory Group. She recently relocated to Melbourne after seven years living in central Australia delivering youth focused hairdressing and fashion workshop in remote Indigenous communities. Whilst living in the Northern Territory she played a key role in advocating for the LGBTIQ community and the development of organisational inclusive practice. She has a strong passion for intersections between culturally & linguistically diverse (CALD) and same sex attracted, sex & gender diverse (SSASGD) communities.

### Stella Topaz

Stella joined the National LGBTI Health Alliance in November 2015 as National Project Manager for QLife: a national LGBTI-specialist telephone and web counselling service.

Stella is a registered nurse with a Graduate Diploma in Health Counselling, a Certificate in Sexual and Reproductive Health and a Masters in Health Policy. Her work roles have included direct care, policy and management, across feminist health, youth housing, sexual health, HIV and aged care, in both Adelaide and Sydney.

In addition, as a queer femme, Stella is socially and politically active in LGBTIQ communities, including organising community events, speaking on panels, contributing to publications, diving into discussions on social media, and performing.

### Gala Vanting

Gala Vanting is a commissioned artist attached to the project, a filmmaker, educator, writer and advocate, with a focus on alternative sexualities.

### Harriet Wynne

Harriet Wynne is the Health Professionals Coordinator at PapScreen Victoria. She has a background in community health and health practitioner regulation. She is interested in LGBTIQ health and how this can be better embedded in health provider's education and practice.

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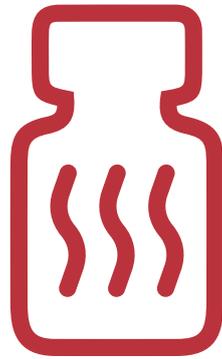
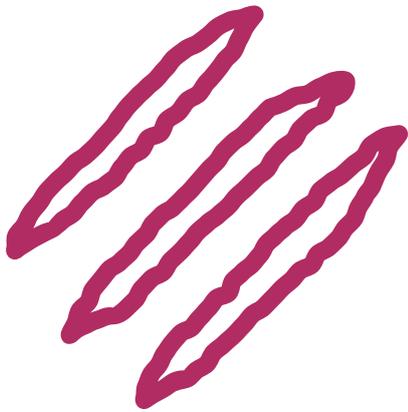
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# Notes

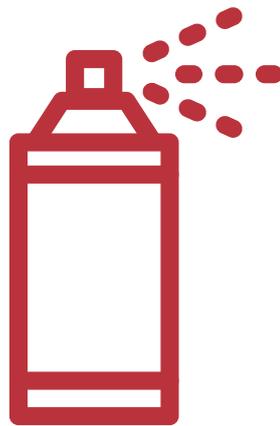
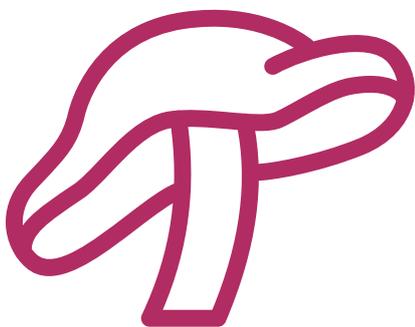
Drug information

Peer education

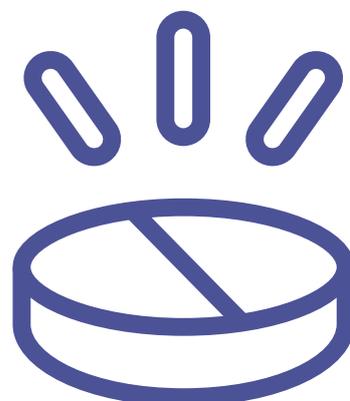
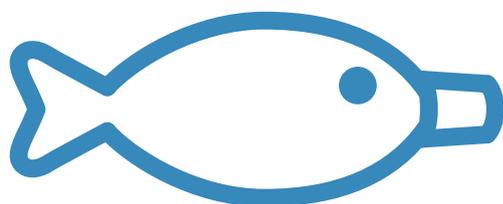
Sexual and mental health



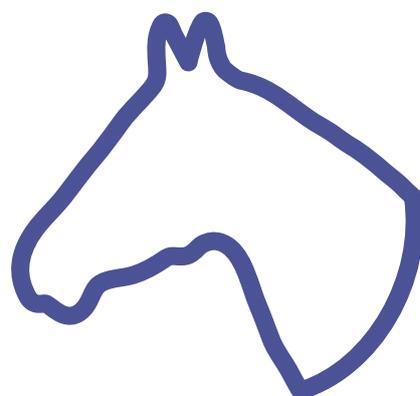
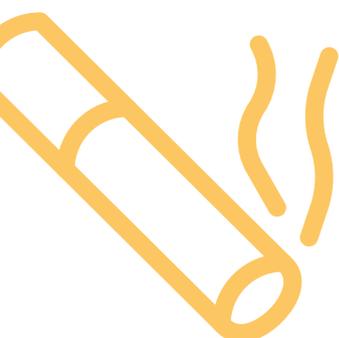
# ALL OF TH



Safer use and recovery tools    Harm reduction    Support services



# THE DRUGS





**ONCE I WAS  
SMOKE FREE,  
I FELT TRULY  
IN CONTROL**