

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, INTERSEX, QUEER (LGBTIQ) PEOPLE AGEING WELL PROJECT

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COTA SA



KEY OBJECTIVES

Engagement

- To engage older LGBTI people in conversations about their experiences of ageing, including people from regional centres.

Celebration

- To celebrate the lives and achievements of older LGBTI people through events such as the FEAST Festival and ZestFest

Governance

- To establish an ongoing LGBTI advisory committee with formal terms of reference, planned priorities and a 2 year work plan.



A SNAPSHOT

- 12 month project, funded by State Government
- 15 conversations/consultations held at various locations, including regional centres
- Close to 200 people participated in the conversations including people who identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex
- Advisory Group, made up of LGBTI elders, established to oversee project development
- Partnerships with LGBTI groups & individuals to host conversations
- 30 people attended the FEAST Intergenerational Event and 40 people attended the FEAST Forum on Housing & end of life decisions.
- 80 people attended the High Tea celebration in December 2017
- 40 LGBTI people attended the Action Planning Day
- Final Report released May 2018



LGBTI ELDERS LIVED EXPERIENCE

- Decriminalisation of homosexuality
- Homosexuality removed from the DSM
- First Mardi Gras
- First recorded case of HIV
- Conversion therapy
- Postal Survey



KEY THEMES

1. Overarching Issues

- GLCS no longer running, AIDS Council closed
- There is no LGBTI group linked with Government (used to have appointed Advisory Groups - one in Health and one in DCSI)
- Needs to be one central place for LGBTI people to get information and provide opportunities for social connection – a hub

Actions

- Lobby for reestablishment of LGBTI group to inform policy & legislation
- Improved communication & collaboration between LGBTI programs/services
- Establish a community hub



KEY THEMES

2. Health and Wellbeing

- Accessing health services in regional centres raises issues of confidentiality – we don't have that much choice
- The older LGBTI people who have most significant health issues are practically invisible....they would never come to something like this (or social events)
- We need advocates as we age...accessing the mainstream system is a nightmare

Actions

- Mandatory LGBTI inclusivity training for health professionals
- Peer advocacy scheme for more vulnerable LGBTI people to support their interactions with health system



KEY THEMES

3. Social Isolation

- Social/recreational groups have/are closing – how do we connect?
- How do we find out about existing opportunities for connection?
- It's so easy to lose connections quickly as we age.....and hard to make new ones
- Some older LGBTI people will prefer to go to mainstream social gatherings – will they feel welcome?
- Older people who lose their partners can become socially isolated very quickly & it's difficult for them to reconnect with community

Actions

- Establish a Community Visitors Scheme for LGBTI people
- Create opportunities for intergenerational connection/story telling e.g. an oral history project



KEY THEMES

4. Housing

- Needs to be a better range of options including LGBTI specific
- Should be some mixed housing (across all ages/sexualities/gender identities/cultures)
- Need to be more opportunities for conversations about housing so we get to talk with each other & create options
- Very few choices outside metropolitan area & raises issues of confidentiality

Actions

- Research models of housing
- Link with current housing advocacy for older people to ensure LGBTI issues are addressed



KEY THEMES

5. Aged Care

- Will we be treated with respect and dignity if we need to access aged care?
- How do we know if a service is LGBTI friendly?
- Who will help us navigate the system? – many of us have been rejected by family and/or don't have partners to assist
- The bureaucracy of aged care is a nightmare
- We shouldn't have to change/hide who we are

Actions

- Continue & extend specific info. sessions for LGBTI people on My Aged Care, including regional
- Increased training for Aged care org's on inclusivity



THE RESEARCH

- Gay and Bisexual men almost 3 times more likely to be single than heterosexual men
- 41% of LGBT live alone (compared to 28% of heterosexual people)
- Less likely to have children
- Less likely to see biological family members
- Up to 50% of Trans people have attempted suicide at least once
- Higher rates of mental health issues



WHERE TO FROM HERE: PEER APPROACHES

- LGBTI Advisory Committee in COTA SA
- Peer led events at FEAST and mainstream festivals/events
- Silver Rainbow Inclusivity Training
- LGBTI Community Visitors Scheme
- Partnership with ECH – peer led visiting scheme for socially isolated LGBTI elders

