

LGBTI Specialisation Verification Framework criterion:
[B2.3] There is an established connection and regular engagement between the outlet and a local LGBTI community organisation.



GUIDE

Partnering with LGBTIQ+ Community Organisations

This guide outlines practical steps aged care providers can take to build meaningful, ongoing relationships with local LGBTIQ+ community-controlled organisations. It encourages collaboration through regular consultation, training, guest speaking opportunities, joint initiatives and participation in community events. To assist providers in formalising these partnerships, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) template is provided in Appendix A.

What is an LGBTIQ+ community-controlled organisation?

LGBTIQ+ community-controlled organisations are incorporated not-for-profit organisations whose sole business is promoting the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ communities by delivering services and programs within a state/territory or nationally. Examples include:

- Advocacy and rights organisations
- Peer support networks
- Mental health and counselling services
- HIV and sexual health organisations
- Community and cultural organisations
- Support and social services

It is important to note that many LGBTIQ+ community-controlled organisations have limited funding and will offer their expertise and services on a fee-for-service basis. Refer to the List of LGBTIQ+ organisations below to find an LGBTIQ+ community-controlled organisation in your area.

Benefits of establishing partnerships with LGBTIQ+ community-controlled organisations

Building partnerships with local LGBTIQ+ community-controlled organisations provides aged care organisations with access to valuable lived experience and specialist expertise. These collaborations strengthen the quality, safety and inclusivity of services for LGBTI older people.

Partnering with LGBTIQ+ organisations offers a range of benefits, including:

- **Access to expertise:** Consult with LGBTIQ+ community representatives and experts on best-practice approaches to inclusive care (refer to *Establishing an LGBTI Advisory Body* guide in this toolkit).
- **Increased visibility:** Support inclusion and visibility by collaborating on or sponsoring LGBTI events, initiatives, training and guest speaker sessions (refer to *Acknowledging and Celebrating LGBTI Events in Aged Care* infosheet in this toolkit).
- **Workforce development:** Create opportunities for professional development of aged care workforce through ongoing learning and engagement.
- **Building trust:** Demonstrate genuine commitment to inclusion and strengthen trust amongst LGBTI older people, their families and staff.
- **Continuous improvement:** Evaluate and enhance the impact of LGBTI-inclusive practices to ensure service quality and responsiveness.
- **Support for champions:** Empower LGBTI inclusion champions within your organisation by connecting them with community expertise and resources (refer to *LGBTI Champions in Aged Care* FAQs in this toolkit).

Building successful partnerships

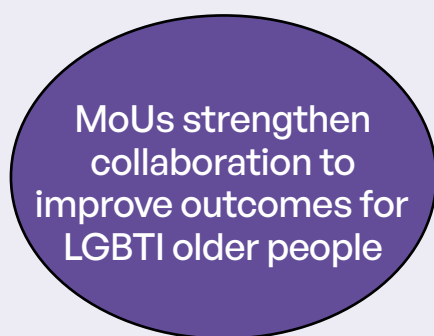
Partnerships between aged care providers and LGBTIQ+ community-controlled organisations are most successful when they create meaningful, positive change in the lives and experiences of LGBTI older people receiving aged care services. Developing an MoU can support this process by ensuring both partners share aligned goals and expectations, have clear communication channels, and understand their respective roles in collaborative initiatives. Establishing an MoU at the outset demonstrates a genuine and ongoing commitment to collaboration and shared accountability for the partnership's success.

In addition to developing an MoU, aged care providers can take the following steps to strengthen partnership success:

- **Use inclusive language:** Ensure LGBTI inclusive language is consistently used across communications. Avoid assumptions and always use a person's correct name and pronouns (refer to the Silver Rainbow factsheet [LGBTI 101](#)).
- **Engage meaningfully:** Create regular opportunities for both formal and informal engagement – such as attending and inviting participation in each other's events and initiatives.
- **Build staff capability:** Strengthen staff understanding of LGBTI lived experience and inclusive practice through targeted training (e.g. Silver Rainbow training). This demonstrates a genuine commitment to improving the wellbeing of LGBTI older people.

- Set clear expectations: Agree on project timelines, communication preferences (methods and frequency) and availability of both parties. Recognise that aged care providers and LGBTIQ+ community-controlled organisations may operate differently and establish a structure that works for all.
- Share goals and resources: Define common objectives and identify how each organisation can contribute – such as co-designing resources or services, collaborating on events or promoting LGBTIQ+ organisational activities.
- Establish feedback processes: Create respectful and transparent ways to give and receive feedback, both formally and informally. When misunderstandings occur, approach feedback as an opportunity for growth and improvement. Demonstrating openness to reflection and learning reinforces trust and shows genuine dedication to better outcomes for LGBTI older people.

VicHealth has designed a comprehensive partnerships analysis tool that can further assist age care providers in ensuring partnership success (see Resources list below).



Establishing a memorandum of understanding

An MoU is a formal, non-binding agreement that outlines the purpose, scope and terms of a partnership between two or more parties. While it is not legally enforceable, an MoU represents a mutual commitment to collaboration, shared goals and ongoing positive engagement.

The MoU template in Appendix A provides a framework for aged care providers and LGBTIQ+ community-controlled organisations to establish a partnership that supports joint initiatives aimed at improving the experiences of LGBTI older people and staff.

An MoU typically includes:

- the purpose and scope of the partnership
- collaborative objectives agreed upon by both parties
- the roles and responsibilities of each organisation
- details outlining how communication and decision-making will occur
- the duration of the MoU, along with agreed processes for review and amendment

Resources



[List of LGBTIQ+ organisations.](#)
Refer to the LGBTIQ+ Health Australia members directory for community-controlled organisations across Australia.



[Join LGBTIQ+ Health Australia.](#)
As the peak body for LGBTIQ+ health and wellbeing in Australia, a diverse and dynamic membership is central to this work. Organisations and individuals are welcome to apply for membership at any time.



[Partnerships Analysis Tool.](#)
VicHealth has created a resource for organisations to assess, monitor and maximise the ongoing effectiveness of partnerships for a range of organisations across multiple sectors.

APPENDIX A: Memorandum of Understanding for LGBTI Partnerships in Aged Care Template

Memorandum of Understanding

Effective Date: [DD/MM/YYYY]

This is a non- legally binding memorandum of understanding (MoU) between:

[Aged Care Organisation's name]

ABN: [ABN No.]

Address: [Address of Aged Care Organisation]

and

[LGBTI Organisation's name]

ABN: [ABN No.]

Address: [Address of LGBTI Organisation]

MoU duration

The MoU will be in effect from **[insert date]** and will continue to apply until **[insert date]** unless terminated at an earlier date. Termination may be initiated by either party at any time with 30 days notice in a written agreement.

Review of the MoU and whether or not it is intended to be extended will occur **[insert timeframe and/or frequency]** between both parties involved with written agreement.

Purpose and scope

[Aged Care Organisation's name] and **[LGBTI Organisation's name]** are mutually committed to fostering and maintaining positive collaborative efforts to strengthen culturally safe practices for LGBTI older people in aged care services, with the utmost goal of improving the quality of care provided to LGBTI people in accordance with the LGBTI Specialisation Verification Framework, Aged Care Quality Standards and Statement of Rights.

[Aged Care Organisation's name] and **[LGBTI Organisation's name]** are committed to work collaboratively to deliver **[brief description of collaborative objectives]** as detailed in this MoU out of good faith as the MoU is not legally binding.

Collaboration objectives

The intention of this partnership between both parties is to:

[description of initiatives and actions both parties have agreed upon to achieve together]

Examples of collaborative objectives:

- Co-design and deliver aged care initiatives personalised for LGBTI older people which includes an inclusive and trauma-aware and healing informed approach.
- Share specialist knowledge and resources to upskill staff to work effectively and mindfully with LGBTI older people through training, consultation, advisory or working group membership or resource co-design.
- Collaborate on advocacy efforts to influence policy, procedures and improve the quality of services provided to LGBTI older people in aged care services.
- Joint hosting LGBTI events to celebrate, raise awareness and support the needs of LGBTI older people receiving aged care services.

These collaborative objectives between both parties are to be achieved in the following timeline:

[Description of timeline to achieve initiatives and actions]

Roles and responsibilities

[insert details of the roles each party, or positions in each party, which will be required to achieve the goals and objectives]

[insert details of any equipment or other resources each of the parties will be required to provide]

The parties will nominate **[insert number]** members each to form a LGBTI working group, which has the following responsibilities:

- To plan, implement and evaluate the obligations under the MoU.
- To develop procedures and guidelines.
- To meet at a frequency set out in the MoU to discuss the implementation of its responsibilities.

Meetings

To discuss any matters related to the MoU, both parties will schedule meetings every **[insert time frequency]** at **[meeting location e.g. online meeting platform or in-person facility]**. Meetings will be chaired by **[insert name/position/organisation of chair]** and meeting agenda and minutes will be prepared and circulated by [name of person/organisation] and meeting agendas will be delivered to the other party no later than **[time frame]** before a scheduled meeting.

A certain number of people will be required to meet quorum which will be **[insert amount of people with their required positions e.g. two individuals from each party]**

Confidentiality

Information discussed between the two parties in the subject of this MoU must not be disclosed to parties external to this MoU unless written consent is given beforehand as the information may be confidential. This includes announcements disclosed in promotional materials (e.g. newsletters, annual reports). An exception is when the information is by law required to be disclosed.

Dispute resolution

If a dispute or disagreement takes place between both parties regardless of relevance to the MoU, each party agrees to resolve the matter to the best of their ability and in good faith without prejudice. Either party may provide a written notice detailing the disagreement or dispute that must be acted upon within **[timeframe e.g. number of days]** of the date of the notice with the aim of reaching resolution.

Legal status of document

This MoU is a non-binding agreement, meaning that there are no legal obligations between the parties listed. Its purpose is to highlight the good faith of both parties to collaborate in their work in improving the circumstances for LGBTI people in aged care.

Variation

Any amendments to the MOU must be agreed upon in writing and signed by both parties.

Signatures

Signed for **[Aged Care Organisation's Name]**
by its authorised representative witnessed by:

Signature of witness

Signature of authorised representative

Name of witness

Name and title of authorised representative

Date:

Signed for **[LGBTI Organisation's Name]** by its
authorised representative witnessed by:

Signature of witness

Signature of authorised representative

Name of witness

Name and title of authorised representative

Date: