Older LGBTI People

This resource aims to help older LGBTI people make informed decisions about your healthcare in relation to digital health tools in Australia. Here is what you need to know:

My Health Record

My Health Record is an online summary of your key health information. You can think of it like a digital filing cabinet that you can access anywhere you have an internet connection.

My Health Record contains:

- Information uploaded by healthcare providers, like specialist letters, prescription records, scans and pathology reports
- Information you have entered yourself, like personal health notes and advance care planning documents

Some things you might want to keep in mind about My Health Record include:

- You have control of your My Health Record – you can choose what information is included in your record and who can see it
- You can share information with trusted health providers by using My Health Record's privacy and access controls
- You can hide any information you don't want widely shared

my health app

The **my health app** lets you view key health information that you, your healthcare providers or representatives have uploaded to My Health Record and other handy features as well.

my health app:

- Gives you a way to access your My Health Record on your mobile phone or tablet
- Makes it easier to see your health information
- Helps you manage your healthcare on the go
- Stores your electronic prescriptions
- Stores emergency contact details
- And you can even find and book health services

Some things you might want to keep in mind about my health app include:

- You can access your health information without a computer
- You can show important health information to providers quickly on your phone

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- You can keep track of discharge summaries and advance care planning documents
- You can share information with support people when needed

Electronic Prescriptions

These are a convenient alternative to paper prescriptions that:

- Get sent directly to your phone or email
- Can be sent straight to your pharmacy
- Help you keep track of your medications
- Make it easier to get repeat prescriptions
- Can be used anywhere in Australia

Some things you might want to keep in mind about using e-prescriptions include:

- You can send electronic prescriptions to LGBTI–friendly pharmacies
- You can easily manage medications without worrying about losing your paper prescriptions

Telehealth

Telehealth lets you have healthcare appointments by phone or video instead of in person.

Telehealth can help you to:

- Talk to your GP, specialists, and other healthcare providers at home
- Get prescriptions without visiting the clinic
- Access providers that you prefer, but are far away
- Get healthcare even when you can't travel

Some things you might want to keep in mind about telehealth include:

- Would you have more, or less privacy to discuss sensitive health matters using telehealth?
- Telehealth can help you access to LGBTI–affirming providers who might not be local
- Telehealth can help if mobility is difficult
- Telehealth might make it easier to have a support person with you
- You can speak over the phone if you're not comfortable with video

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Your rights and choices come first

You have the right to choose which digital health tools you use – or don't use.

Digital services are meant to give you more choices and options rather than replace existing services. This means:

- You can still access healthcare services in person or by phone or video
- You can ask healthcare providers to explain things in ways that work for you

Common concerns about digital health

"I'm not good with technology and don't have anyone to help me."

This can be a common concern for LGBTI older people, especially if you are not connected to your family of origin or don't have chosen family to support you. This can make it harder to get help with technology.

Here are some options:

- Ask LGBTI community organisations or visitor programs for digital literacy support – many run specific programs for older community members

- Local libraries often offer free basic computer and internet training
- Your GP clinic may have staff who can show you how to use digital services
- Consider reaching out to LGBTI-friendly aged care services that offer technology support

From research, we know older LGBTI people might experience:

- Difficulty affording technology and internet plans
- Problems filling in online forms
- Trouble identifying legitimate health websites versus scams
- Challenges understanding complex phone and internet plans
- Difficulty connecting to public Wi-Fi
- Limited awareness of accessibility tools that could help

To manage costs you might:

- Ask about pension or healthcare card discounts for internet services
- Check if your local library/community centre offers free internet access or computer access (but ask them about the safety of the Wi-Fi network for health information)
- Look for low-cost or recycled and refurbished device programs
- Consider sharing internet costs if appropriate, and its someone you trust

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"I'm worried about privacy and security."

Your concerns about privacy are valid. Many LGBTI people have experienced discrimination in healthcare settings.

Here's what you should know:

- You control who can see your digital health information
- You can remove or hide sensitive information from your My Health Record
- You can set access codes to restrict who sees your information
- You have the right to opt out of digital services if you're not comfortable
- Healthcare providers must keep your information confidential, whether digital or paper-based
- To find out more about how your personal information is managed, you can look at the My Health Record privacy policy

Here are some suggestions to stay safe online:

- Be cautious about sharing personal or financial details online
- Learn how to identify legitimate health websites
- Understand how to spot common online scams
- Know which official government websites to trust
- Be careful when using public Wi-Fi for health information

How digital health tools can help with aged care

My Health Record

My Health Record can be particularly helpful when dealing with multiple healthcare providers or entering an aged care home, as it can:

- Keep track of your medications in one place
- Store your test results
- Record your allergies and conditions
- Include your advanced care planning documents
- You can nominate a person you trust to help manage your record
- Help new healthcare providers understand your health history

My Health Record has privacy and access controls meaning:

- You can delete documents you don't want included
- You have more control over who sees your information

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- You can choose what information is shared
- You can opt out of automatic sharing of pathology and diagnostic imaging reports by selecting the 'do not send to My Health Record' on the request form or by simply telling the radiology or pathology provider when having your test

Advance Care Planning

Digital tools can help ensure your wishes are respected:

- You can store your advanced care planning documents in My Health Record
- Your chosen decision-makers can access it when needed
- This makes it easily accessible to hospitals and aged care facilities
- You can update it when needed
- Healthcare providers can access it quickly in emergencies

Electronic Prescriptions

These can be helpful if mobility becomes challenging:

- Get prescriptions sent directly to your phone or email
- Forward prescriptions to your preferred pharmacy

- Order repeats without visiting the GP
- Keep track of all your medications in one place
- Access your prescriptions from anywhere in Australia

Telehealth

Some tips for using telehealth:

- You can usually choose between phone or video appointments
- Phone appointments are perfectly acceptable if you're not comfortable with video
- Ask for a test run before your first video appointment
- Have a backup plan (like a phone number) if technology fails
- Choose a private, quiet space for appointments

Important reminders:
- You have the right to ask questions and take your time
- There should always be non-digital options available
- Your privacy and comfort are important
- You can change your mind about using digital services
- Support is available through LGBTI community organisations

Where to get help

For the most up-to-date information about digital
health tools and available support, you can:

- Visit the Australian Digital Health Agency website
- Ask your healthcare provider
- Contact your local LGBTI community organisation
- Visit your local library or community health centre
- Reach out to LGBTI-friendly aged care services

Helpful questions to ask healthcare providers and other support people

- "Can you show me how to use this on my phone/device?"
- "Who can see my information?"
- "How do I control who sees what?"
- "Is there a non-digital option available?"
- "Where can I get help if I have problems?"

When to be cautious

- Don't feel pressured to use digital tools before you're ready
- Never share passwords or access codes
- Be careful using public computers for health information
- Check that websites and apps are legitimate healthcare services
- Ask for help if something doesn't seem right

Was this helpful?

Scan the QR code or head to:
lgbtiqhealth.org.au/digital_health

Remember: your healthcare needs are important, and you deserve support that works for you. Whether you choose to use digital health tools or not, the focus should be on getting the care you need in a way that makes you feel safe and respected.