



# NSW LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy 2022-2027

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Implementation Plan  
First phase



# Let's get to work

**This Implementation Plan has been developed to guide the NSW Health system as it commences its work to deliver the NSW LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy 2022-2027. The period for this first phase of implementation is from the Strategy's release through to December 2023.**

The aim of the Implementation Plan is to make clear the rationale supporting each of the Strategy's 13 actions to be implemented, who is leading their achievement and should be collaborated with, and milestones expected to be reached in the first phase.

A monitoring, evaluation and learning framework will be designed with Strategy leads and partners to complement this Implementation Plan. It will articulate meaningful and workable baseline measures where possible and opportunities to establish key performance measures across the system. This will enable progress to be tracked against strategic priorities.

There are a wide range of NSW Health stakeholders that have an important role to play in enabling and driving the achievement of the Strategy; each bringing unique perspectives, knowledge and skills. Most importantly, working in partnership with LGBTIQ+ organisations as well as peer workforce engagement are key to the achievement of every action in the Strategy. The expertise of NSW Health LGBTIQ+ staff will also be valued and engaged to champion improvements in healthcare and workplace culture.

Delivery of this plan will be overseen by the NSW Ministry of Health in conjunction with a Strategy Implementation Committee. Together the Ministry and Committee will provide leadership and guidance for the implementation of actions, monitor progress and identify opportunities to increase the reach and impact of the Strategy. The Ministry and Committee will also work together to communicate with the NSW Health system about how progress is tracking against the Strategy.

All NSW Health organisations should familiarise themselves with the Implementation Plan and use the strategic priorities and actions to frame activities to be rolled out locally or through statewide services. NSW Health services' plans and relevant grant funding agreements with non-government and community organisations should include commitments to achieve actions under this Strategy.

The Implementation Plan, as a working document, will be updated throughout the next five years as progress is made. The NSW Ministry of Health looks forward to the positive transformation of the health system that this plan will enable. And the good news stories to be shared throughout the course of the Strategy, about improvements to the health and lives of LGBTIQ+ people across the State.

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## Strategic Priority 1: Deliver high quality, safe, inclusive and responsive healthcare



Action	Lead(s) and partners	Rationale	Milestones before December 2023
<p><b>1.1</b> <b>Education and training</b> Increase LGBTIQ+ awareness and capability in the NSW Health workforce and funded non-government organisations, including the prevention of stigma and discrimination in health services</p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Education and Training Institute (HETI)</li> <li>• NSW Ministry of Health</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBTIQ+ organisations</li> <li>• NSW Health LGBTIQ+ staff and allies*</li> <li>• Local health districts, specialty health networks, pillars, statewide or specialist health services, affiliated health organisations (all NSW Health organisations)</li> <li>• Non-government and community organisations</li> <li>• External training providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBTIQ+ people** who receive equitable and accessible care that matters to them are more likely to engage with health services early and have their needs met.</li> <li>• Education and training on intersectionality, and the prevention of stigma and discrimination supports a shared understanding of LGBTIQ+ safety and respect in health services.</li> <li>• Audit tools and processes can provide LGBTIQ+ people and NSW Health organisations confidence that health services are high quality, safe, inclusive and responsive, and highlight areas for improvement.</li> </ul>	<p>1.1.1 Development of a workforce education and training strategy that covers, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LGBTIQ+ health</li> <li>- intersectionality</li> <li>- prevention of stigma and discrimination</li> <li>- LGBTIQ+ co-design and peer involvement</li> <li>- patient, family, carer, volunteer and caregiver experiences</li> <li>- health literacy principles</li> <li>- avenues for LGBTIQ+ inclusion accreditation</li> </ul> <p>1.1.2 Annual reporting on uptake and impact of education and training, and how this is elevating patient and staff care experiences.</p>
<p><b>1.2</b> <b>Access to expertise</b> Distribute resources and supports across NSW Health to strengthen staff expertise on LGBTIQ+ health and working with LGBTIQ+ people to elevate care experiences</p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All NSW Health organisations</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBTIQ+ organisations</li> <li>• NSW Health LGBTIQ+ staff and allies</li> <li>• NSW Ministry of Health</li> <li>• Non-government and community organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Health staff have identified the need for access to expertise to build greater capability in providing appropriate care to LGBTIQ+ people.</li> <li>• The NSW Health workforce should be equipped with the knowledge and skills to enhance its engagement with LGBTIQ+ people, and peer involvement to improve care experiences.</li> <li>• There is a wealth of insight and expertise amongst LGBTIQ+ staff and allies across NSW Health. This should be engaged and staff enabled to champion activities locally that support achievement of the Strategy.</li> </ul>	<p>1.2.1 NSW Health organisations identify and communicate to their workforce about available resources and local expertise.</p> <p>1.2.2 A network / community of practice of LGBTIQ+ staff and allies is formed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provide expertise and guidance within NSW Health on diversity, inclusion and workplace culture</li> <li>- increase LGBTIQ+ co-design and peer involvement across the organisation.</li> </ul>

\* An ally is a person who may not necessarily be LGBTIQ+ but recognises themselves as an active supporter and friend of the LGBTIQ+ community. The term may also be used by LGBTIQ+ people when supporting other people of diverse sexualities and genders or intersex people. Allies challenge stigma and discriminatory behaviour; provide help and support to LGBTIQ+ people; value and celebrate diversity; and advocate for human rights.

\*\* and their families, carers and social networks.



Action	Lead(s) and partners	Rationale	Milestones before December 2023
<p><b>1.3</b> <b>Mental health and suicide prevention</b> Increase access across LGBTIQ+ people's lifespan to mental health and suicide prevention services and supports</p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Ministry of Health</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBTIQ+ organisations</li> <li>• All NSW Health organisations</li> <li>• Non-government and community organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When mental health services are developed with LGBTIQ+ people who have lived experience of mental and emotional distress, and their families, carers and social networks, they are more likely to be inclusive, accessible and effective in meeting needs.</li> <li>• The LGBTIQ+ peer workforce can play a vital role in mental health service responses including reducing barriers to service access, navigating referrals, and improving LGBTIQ+ people's engagement in mental health care.</li> <li>• There is a significant opportunity to increase the focus on LGBTIQ+ suicide prevention initiatives in the context of work on the Towards Zero Suicides initiative.</li> </ul>	<p>1.3.1 NSW Health and funded non-government organisation mental health services receive training in LGBTIQ+ awareness and capability, co-design and working with the peer workforce.</p> <p>1.3.2 Targeted plan developed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- improve wellbeing, address stigma and reduce psychological distress in the community</li> <li>- increase access by LGBTIQ+ people, their families, carers and social networks to mental health services, especially suicide prevention initiatives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.4</b> <b>Access to services</b> Support and promote NSW Health, primary and preventative care, and community-based services that achieve improved health outcomes with LGBTIQ+ people</p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All NSW Health organisations</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBTIQ+ organisations</li> <li>• NSW Ministry of Health</li> <li>• Non-government and community organisations</li> <li>• Primary Health Networks (PHNs) and primary care providers</li> <li>• Health Care Interpreter Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBTIQ+ people across NSW need to be aware of and have access to a wide range of inclusive health services locally and virtually.</li> <li>• Healthcare needs to be delivered in welcoming, safe, clean, comfortable, culturally appropriate environments.</li> <li>• NSW Health delivered and funded services, including grants to non-government and community organisations, should reference this strategy and include clear commitments to support its achievement.</li> </ul>	<p>1.4.1 Communication strategy developed to widely promote key services available to improve LGBTIQ+ people's health.</p> <p>1.4.2 Funding agreement prepared with ACON for establishment of its LGBTQ+ Health Centre.</p> <p>1.4.3 NSW Health service plans and relevant grant funding agreements reflect commitments to achieve actions under this Strategy.</p>



Action	Lead(s) and partners	Rationale	Milestones before December 2023
<p><b>1.5 System responsiveness</b> Work with health service providers to address service gaps, the needs of priority groups, and emerging issues</p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All NSW Health organisations</li> <li>NSW Ministry of Health</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LGBTIQ+ organisations</li> <li>NSW Health LGBTIQ+ staff and allies</li> <li>Non-government and community organisations</li> <li>PHNs and primary care providers</li> <li>Professional colleges and academia</li> <li>Other NSW Government organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intersectionality and service gaps need to be examined collectively by all health providers* and options for collaborative solutions considered. Particular focus must be given to the needs of LGBTIQ+ Aboriginal people and culturally and linguistically diverse people.</li> <li>Beyond the LGBTIQ+ groups, the full diversity of sexualities, genders and intersex variations must continue to be recognised and understood in NSW Health.</li> <li>Emerging issues in the community and legislative settings that impact LGBTIQ+ health should be researched and recommendations for responding shared across NSW Health.</li> <li>Health service providers need to demonstrate that they continue to be adaptable and responsive to the changing needs and priorities of LGBTIQ+ people.</li> </ul>	<p>1.5.1 LGBTIQ+ health evidence/research grant is established to examine a key issue to improve system responsiveness.</p> <p>1.5.2 Service gaps are identified, especially for priority populations, and planning and funding options are developed.</p> <p>1.5.3 Strategy Implementation Committee reports annually on actions to address service gaps and emerging issues for LGBTIQ+ health.</p>

\* Health providers refers to all NSW Health organisations, non-government and community organisations, Primary Health Networks and primary care providers.



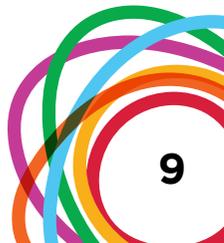
## Strategic Priority 2: Respond to the health needs of transgender and gender diverse people in NSW



Action	Lead(s) and partners	Rationale	Milestones before December 2023
<p><b>2.1 Elevating capability</b> Work with transgender and gender diverse people to promote and embed best practice in NSW Health services for delivering care to this community</p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Ministry of Health</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transgender and gender diverse people, and their representative organisations</li> <li>• All NSW Health organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varying approaches exist across the NSW Health system to meet the health needs of transgender and gender diverse people.</li> <li>• Transgender and gender diverse people and organisations should be engaged in the development of consistent best practice approaches. These approaches should build on existing expertise and resources, and be widely understood and followed across the NSW Health system.</li> <li>• Focus should be given to working with Emergency Departments, as this can be the first place of contact with the health system and should be a safe and inclusive entry point.</li> </ul>	<p>2.1.1 Key messages and stories are shared across the NSW Health system about transgender and gender diverse people's health needs and rights.</p> <p>2.1.2 Effective co-design of care with transgender and gender diverse people and organisations is promoted to health services.</p> <p>2.1.3 Best practice approaches for delivering healthcare to transgender and gender diverse people are disseminated.</p>
<p><b>2.2 Support to young people and families</b> Strengthen evidence-informed care to transgender and gender diverse young people aged 24 and under, and their families and carers</p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Health's Trans and Gender Diverse Health Service Hubs</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transgender and gender diverse people, and their representative organisations</li> <li>• NSW Ministry of Health</li> <li>• All NSW Health organisations</li> <li>• Non-government and community organisations</li> <li>• School staff and counsellors</li> <li>• PHNs and primary care providers</li> <li>• Private sector health organisations</li> <li>• Allied health professionals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A statewide model of care is needed to coordinate gender affirming services that support transgender and gender diverse children and young people aged 24 and under, their families and carers.</li> <li>• The model of care should ensure the provision of wrap around multidisciplinary care for children and young people, their families and carers.</li> </ul>	<p>2.2.1 Specialist hubs are established in Newcastle and Sydney to provide care to transgender and gender diverse children and young people, their families and carers.</p> <p>2.2.2 Statewide Framework and Standard Operating Procedures are rolled out and NSW Health services understand referral pathways.</p>



Action	Lead(s) and partners	Rationale	Milestones before December 2023
<p><b>2.3</b> <b>Gender affirming care</b> Establish an accessible, user-led pathway of care for people aged 25 and above who are affirming their gender, including mental health and other wrap around supports</p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NSW Ministry of Health</li></ul> <p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transgender and gender diverse people, and their representative organisations</li><li>• All NSW Health organisations</li><li>• Non-government and community organisations</li><li>• PHNs and primary care providers</li><li>• Private sector health organisations</li><li>• Allied health professionals</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A pathway for gender affirming care for people aged 25 and above is needed to make clear to the NSW Health system:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- the health and wellbeing needs of transgender and gender diverse people</li><li>- standards that guide the pathway</li><li>- health service providers and partnerships involved, and roles and responsibilities</li><li>- the processes and measures to support intergrated, optimal person-centred outcomes</li><li>- the means to capture transgender and gender diverse people's experiences to improve the pathway and their care.</li></ul></li><li>• Mental health supports must be effectively integrated with the pathway.</li><li>• A pathway should enable increased safety and quality of care between GP, specialist, hospital and community based services.</li></ul>	<p>2.3.1 Plan developed with transgender and gender diverse organisations, and primary, community, acute and specialist health services, to research and establish a pathway of care in NSW for people affirming their gender.</p>





## Strategic Priority 3: Respond to the health needs of intersex people in NSW



Action	Lead(s) and partners	Rationale	Milestones before December 2023
<p><b>3.1</b> <b>Service awareness</b> Work with intersex people to increase awareness across NSW Health of their healthcare experiences, and responsiveness to their needs and human rights</p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Ministry of Health</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intersex people and their representative organisations</li> <li>• All NSW Health organisations</li> <li>• PHNs and primary care providers</li> <li>• Other private sector health organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater awareness is needed across NSW Health of the experiences and health needs of intersex people, including the importance of the Darlington Statement.</li> <li>• The challenges intersex people may face in accessing the specialist, tailored and holistic medical care they need, and their sensitivities in health settings, are likely not being fully realised.</li> <li>• NSW Health must strengthen its engagement with intersex people and organisations, their families and carers, to understand the opportunities to improve care.</li> </ul>	<p>3.1.1 Partnership between the NSW Ministry of Health and peak organisations representing intersex people is strengthened.</p> <p>3.1.2 Greater awareness of the Darlington Statement across the NSW Health system.</p> <p>3.1.3 Key messages and stories are shared across the NSW Health system about the health needs and rights of intersex people.</p>
<p><b>3.2</b> <b>Health and Human rights</b> Work with other jurisdictions to promote and embed improved measures to meet the health and wellbeing needs of intersex people</p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSW Ministry of Health</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intersex people and their representative organisations</li> <li>• Other jurisdictions</li> <li>• All NSW Health organisations</li> <li>• Non-government and community organisations</li> <li>• PHNs and primary care providers</li> <li>• Other private sector health organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian jurisdictions are actively investigating and working on responses to the health needs of intersex people.</li> <li>• NSW Health should contribute to and build on inter-jurisdictional work so that measures implemented for intersex people are consistent across states and territories.</li> </ul>	<p>3.2.1 Partnership is formed between NSW Health and other jurisdictions to coordinate national approaches for establishing and implementing best practice measures.</p>



## Strategic Priority 4: Capture data on sexuality, gender and intersex variations at the point of care and population level



Action	Lead(s) and partners	Rationale	Milestones before December 2023
<p><b>4.1 Data collection</b> Endorse and promote consistent data collection in NSW Health on sexuality, gender and intersex variations</p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NSW Ministry of Health</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LGBTIQ+ organisations</li> <li>All NSW Health organisations</li> <li>Australian Bureau of Statistics and Australian Government Department of Health</li> <li>Non-government and community organisations</li> <li>PHNs and primary care providers</li> <li>Other private sector health organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited and inconsistent data collection on LGBTIQ+ people accessing NSW Health services means this population is largely invisible. This creates barriers for services to fully understand care experiences, identify intersectionality and respond to health needs.</li> <li>Gaps in data collection at the point of care relate to incomplete or outdated intake forms. This can translate into poor care experiences, for example, if a person is misgendered they may avoid attending health services or only present in a crisis situation.</li> <li>Without training, there is also a hesitance among health staff to ask personal questions of all people relating to sexuality, gender and intersex variations.</li> <li>Additional variables covering sexuality, gender and intersex variations in the Adult Population Health Survey would significantly increase understanding on the state of LGBTIQ+ health in NSW.</li> <li>NSW Health workforce surveys should capture data on LGBTIQ+ health staff so as to improve avenues to respond to their needs.</li> </ul>	<p>4.1.1 Project completed to understand the enablers, barriers, and resources and supports needed for updating NSW Health data systems.</p> <p>4.1.2 Opportunities for maximising existing data collected by health services is examined.</p>



Action	Lead(s) and partners	Rationale	Milestones before December 2023
<p><b>4.2</b> <b>Training and guidance</b> Co-designed with LGBTIQ+ people, develop training and guidance for NSW Health staff about gathering data</p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NSW Ministry of Health</li></ul> <p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• LGBTIQ+ organisations</li><li>• eHealth NSW</li><li>• HETI</li><li>• All NSW Health organisations</li><li>• Non-government and community organisations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consistent guidance is needed across the NSW Health system about gathering data on sexuality, gender and intersex variations in a range of settings.</li><li>• Such guidance would support NSW Health staff to ensure people are well informed about why the data is being collected and how it will be used.</li><li>• Guidance for NSW Health staff would also provide clarity on how to ask questions in a safe and culturally appropriate way.</li><li>• LGBTIQ+ organisations and health staff must work together to co-design statewide guidance and training, as well as their application in local health settings.</li><li>• Training and guidance will also support the prevention of stigma and discrimination in health settings.</li></ul>	<p>4.2.1 Information bulletin published about best practice for NSW Health organisations to collect data on sexuality, gender and intersex variations.</p> <p>4.2.2 Training opportunities are considered as part of milestones under 4.1.</p>
<p><b>4.3</b> <b>Evidence informed care</b> Use data to inform health planning and monitor improvements to LGBTIQ+ health outcomes</p>	<p><b>Lead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All NSW Health organisations</li></ul> <p><b>Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NSW Ministry of Health</li><li>• eHealth NSW</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To best meet LGBTIQ+ people's changing health needs and priorities, ongoing data collection is required. Qualitative and quantitative data can build an evidence base to improve individual care experiences, guide service improvements and monitoring of health outcomes.</li><li>• Greater data sharing between health service providers would enable opportunities to enhance person-centred and integrated care and responses to community-wide health issues.</li></ul>	<p>4.3.1 Guidance developed on how LGBTIQ+ data can be used to improve care experiences, services, monitor health outcomes and better shared between health service providers.</p>







