



SARAA response to 'The Way Forward: LGBTIQ Report'

The South Australian Rainbow Advocacy Alliance (SARAA) advocates for the health and human rights of LGBTIQ people in South Australia. We seek to create positive change to policy, legislation and systems affecting the ability of LGBTIQ people to live safe, happy and fulfilled lives in the wider community. Find out more about SARAA at www.saraa.org.au
For further comment or clarification in relation to this submission, please contact the SARAA Board Chair, Holley Skene on chairsaraa@gmail.com or 0423 308 954.

Thank you for providing SARAA and the broader LGBTIQ communities of South Australia with the opportunity to provide feedback on The Way Forward: LGBTIQ Report. Please find below our response to the consultation questions provided.

What should the government focus on?

- 1) Updates to legislation and regulations including:
 - a. "Gay Panic Defence" (Provocations) must be addressed and removed. It is regrettable that South Australia has become the last State or Territory in Australia to have this outdated and discriminatory legislation still in place.
 - b. Upgrade the spent conviction scheme for historic convictions for homosexual activity to an administrative expungement scheme.
 - c. Review and update planning regulations to include considerations around gender neutral toilet access.
- 2) Continued support for the Safe Schools Antibullying Initiative is extremely important. Opponents of this program have been wilfully misleading the public on the content and aims of the initiative, and unfortunately they have been partially successful in creating a degree of moral panic in certain segments of the population. Efforts to combat this misinformation are warranted, as is the continuation of support for the program and additional research in to LGBTIQ young people's experiences of bullying at school, and effective strategies to combat the negative consequences of this bullying.
- 3) Religious exemptions to antidiscrimination legislation should be removed. There is no place for discrimination in the workplace or in the provision of services, regardless of who the organisation is that is providing that service or employment. Discrimination is known to have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities, and should not be protected by law.

- 4) Investment in a LGBTIQ+ Leadership Development fund/program to provide opportunities for those who may have experienced discrimination or barriers related to their status as an LGBTIQ+ person to develop skills in leadership and advocacy.
- 5) A new LGBTIQ social inclusion and wellbeing strategy should be developed should be set over a longer period (e.g. 5 years) with specific, measurable goals and indicators that are reported on annually through different departments. E.g. action/implementation plans for health, education and social inclusion.
- 6) Ministerial Advisory Committee on LGBTIQ Equality should be formed to advise the relevant Ministers on matters of importance and concern to LGBTIQ communities:
 - This should be done with community consultation and with LGBTIQ community
 - Diverse representation with regard to the membership of the committee will be important (e.g. gender/gender identity/sexuality/race/class/age/ability)
 - This MAC should lead a community engagement process to develop the objectives and strategies to be included in the renewed LGBTIQ Inclusion and Wellbeing Strategy
- 7) Increased focus on health is needed given the unique needs and vulnerabilities that LGBTIQ people face, particularly in relation to mental health and wellbeing, including:
 - a need for dedicated ongoing funding in LGBTIQ-specific health services
 - Suggestion: hospitals undertake Rainbow Tick accreditation to increase awareness and with a view to making health care more inclusive and less harmful. This should be incentivised or mandated in some way to ensure equity across the State.
 - Organisations funded by or sub-contracted to by SA Health for service delivery could be encouraged or required to undertake Rainbow Tick Accreditation or LGBTIQ+ inclusion training as part of their contract.
- 8) Homelessness services require LGBTIQ inclusion training – we are aware of many services experiencing increasing numbers of LGBTIQ young people accessing their services, and these service providers are experiencing challenges in providing safe and accessible homelessness services to these young people. We are also aware that LGBTIQ people avoid accessing homeless services that are run by faith based organisations, for fear of discrimination.
- 9) Representation and visibility is important, we suggest:
 - a. Designation of a Minister for Equality as has been implemented in Victoria
 - b. Creation of a role of Commissioner responsible for LGBTIQ issues, as has been done in Victoria
 - c. Funding for a “Pride Centre” or similar, as has been done in Victoria. There is no coordinated ‘sector’ for LGBTIQ services and organisations in South Australia, which has led to a very disjointed service landscape.

What would you like to tell government agencies?

- 1) Existing LGBTIQ services are under-funded or are run largely by volunteers:

- There are many LGBTIQ community support services/groups that are community initiated, designed, run, applicable, and successful (e.g. *Queer Youth drop-in services, TransMascSA, Rainbow Crows, etc*)
 - Many of these struggle to stay afloat, and receive very little financial support
 - Funding should therefore be prioritised to support these existing services, before being assigned to new projects
- 2) There is an urgent need for training and development of health professionals:
- Trans and gender diverse people’s experiences of medical facilities indicate significant harm is being done due to lack of awareness and respect of diversity
 - Programs such as HOW2 Create LGBTI Inclusive Services and Rainbow Tick Accreditation should be implemented and integrated in to existing safety and quality frameworks
 - Curriculum in health and medical degree should be added that specifically and substantially covers the basics of LGBTIQ+ inclusion.
- 3) There is a need for a review of SA Police Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officer (GLLO) program:
- Suggest that all-force training in LGBTIQ awareness and competency is an important addition
 - Better community engagement is also needed with the GLLO officers
 - The name GLLO is problematic because it excludes trans and gender diverse, bisexual and intersex people. A new name/re-brand would be great, such as Rainbow Liaison Officers, or simply LGBTIQ+ Liaison Officers
- 4) There is a gap in service provision for LGBTIQ people over 30:
- Many services cater to those under 30 and older community members – those between 30 and 65+ who are not yet eligible for aged care have fewer options for health and social care.
- 5) There remain significant gaps in relation to social inclusion and health for older LGBTIQ South Australians:
- Engage with COTA regarding the outcomes of the LGBTIQ Older People project outcomes and implement recommendations accordingly.
- 6) We have been informed of instances in which trans and gender diverse people have been mistreated in the South Australian Corrections system. We urge the government to further investigate and review policies and procedures relating to trans and gender diverse prisoners in the corrections system in South Australia, to ensure their human rights are not infringed upon.
- 7) There is a need to engage with Intersex communities and organisations along with medical practitioners and authorities to ensure that infants, children and adolescents are not subjected to unnecessary medical or surgical treatment during infancy or childhood, guaranteeing the rights of children to bodily integrity, autonomy and self-determination. This should be done with a focus on the right of children born with variations of sex characteristics to not undergo irreversible cosmetic interventions to “fix” sex characteristics, or otherwise assign sex, “enhance”, or reinforce a sex assignment, when sex characteristics do not fit medical norms for females or males.

What are we doing well?

SARAA appreciates the hard work and good will that has gone in to the previous strategy and report, including:

- Law reform achievements to date
- Commitment overall
- Rainbow Email Network
- Premier's Apology to the LGBTIQ community
- Asking for feedback/consulting with LGBTIQ communities
- DECD policy and procedures for same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students
- Funding the Safe Schools Antibullying Initiative
- Public support for Marriage Equality