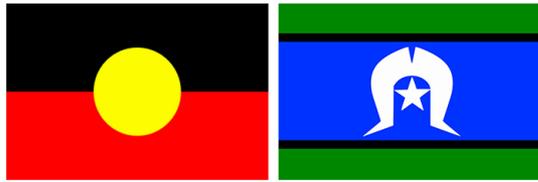




TransMascSA Binder Program

Pilot program impact report
March - September 2022





Acknowledgement of Country

SARAA and TransMascSA are a group of First Nations and non-Aboriginal LGBTIQ+ people.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we live, meet and advocate, which include the Kurna, Nukunu and Ngarrindjeri people.

Aboriginal land was stolen and sovereignty was never ceded. SARAA acknowledges that racism and oppression is still enacted in LGBTIQ+ spaces, and we take seriously our responsibility to reflect, challenge, and change this for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sister Girls, Brother boys and other LGBTIQ+ community members.

Self-care and wellbeing

This report has some pretty heavy content relating to mental health, gender dysphoria and self-harm. If this content isn't for you right now, that's ok!

If you need support or someone to talk to, contact QLife on 1800 184 527 or by webchat at www.QLife.org.au.

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About the organisations



TransMascSA is an all ages volunteer-run peer support group for transmasculine and gender diverse people assigned or presumed female at birth but who do not identify as such. Find out more about TransMasc SA at www.facebook.com/TransMascSA.



SA Rainbow Advocacy Alliance is a community run charity working to advocate, inform and educate for a LGBTIQ+ inclusive, healthy and safe South Australia. Find out more about SARAA at www.saraa.org.au.

About the Binder Program

Ensuring trans and gender diverse South Australians have affordable and safe access to chest binders.

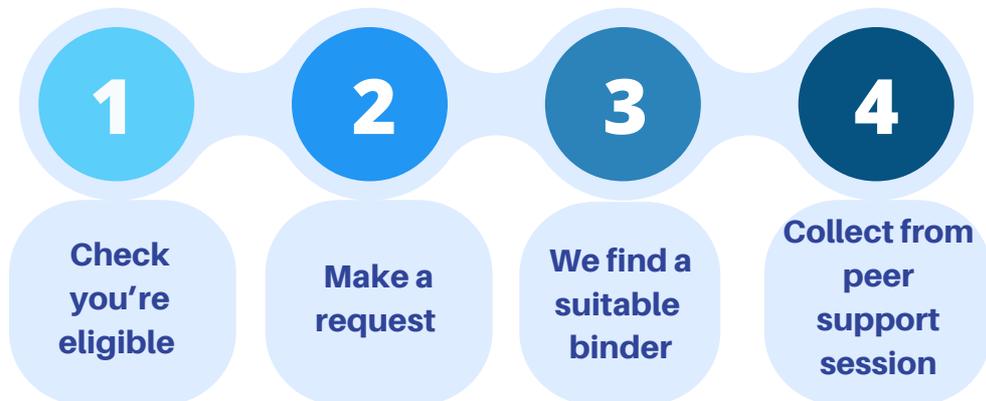
Chest binders designed to compress and flatten the chest are vital gender affirming wear for many trans and gender diverse people. They can be a huge confidence booster that promotes gender euphoria and positive mental health.

Yet chest binders are incredibly difficult to access due to significant cost and limited availability. When chest binders aren't available, trans and gender diverse people sometimes turn to unsafe binding practices that result in negative physical health outcomes.

Our Binder Program aims to improve the health and wellbeing of trans and gender diverse South Australians by providing new and used chest binders free to folks who need, but can't afford them.

This program is a pilot initiative. It has no ongoing funding beyond this trial.

How does it work?



Our Binder Program is open to trans and gender folk who:

- live in South Australia
- identify as trans or gender diverse
- are currently experiencing financial hardship.

Eligible applicants can then collect their binder from a TransMascSA peer support session where they can:

- try on a binder
- check the binder fits properly
- chat to us about safe binding practices
- stay for our peer support session.

Binders can be posted to those who can't make it to an in person session, for example folks living in regional or remote areas.

Executive Summary

Demand for the Binder Program in the 6 months between March to September 2022:



The first 6 months of activity demonstrates a clear need for the Binder Program in South Australia.

In total 58 garments were distributed to eligible trans and gender South Australians over 6 months.

Young trans and gender diverse South Australians were the primary beneficiaries of the program, with 92% of applicants aged under 26 and 41% being between the ages of 15 to 17.

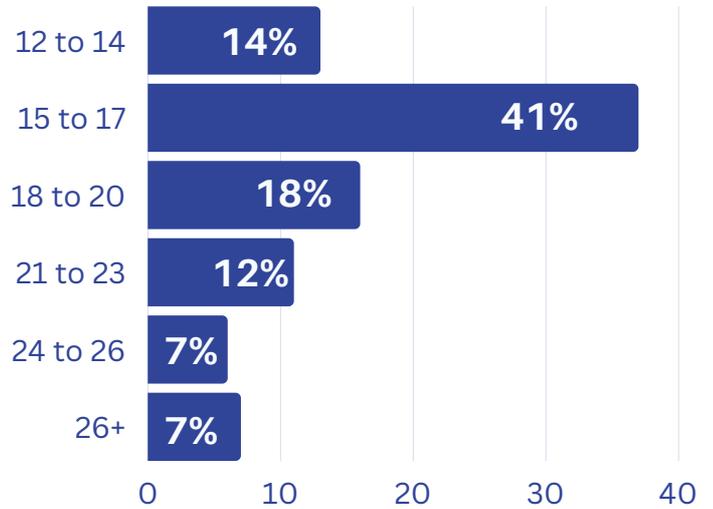
Rates of mental ill-health in applicants is high, with 52% of applicants reporting having a mental illness. Likewise, improving mental health is a primary motivator for applicants accessing the program, with 60 applicants providing qualitative responses indicating they expect to see:

- improved mental health
- decreased gender dysphoria
- increased confidence and self-worth
- increased rates of affirmation from others.

Our Diverse Community

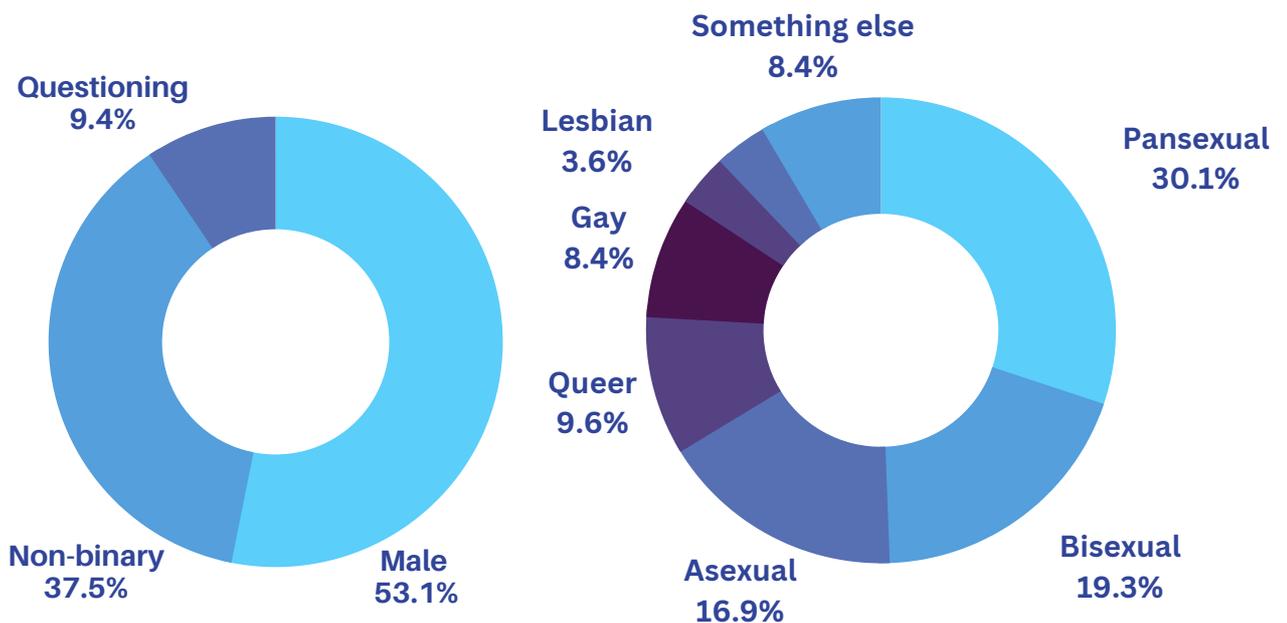
Applicants were predominantly young people

92%
of applicants were
aged under 26



I haven't really had a chance to explore my gender properly yet because of my mum.

Applicants had a diverse range of gender identities and sexual orientations



Our Diverse Community



52%
of applicants reported
having a mental illness

Not binding makes
me feel incredibly
dysphoric. My mental
health, body image
and self esteem is at
its lowest.

- 22 year old trans man



22%
of applicants reported having a
disability or long-term health
condition



8%
of applicants lived in a
regional or remote area



4%
of applicants were Aboriginal
or Torres Strait Islander



4%
of applicants were people
of colour.

Reasons for wanting a binder



55%

of applicants wanted a binder but hadn't been able to get one for more than 1 year.

I've known who I was from a very young age but I've never been accepted or allowed to express myself physically or socially.

Getting a binder would mean the absolute world.

- 16 year old trans man with a disability and mental illness



34

applicants said they were worried about their family's reaction.



Having a binder would make my life so much better but Mum can't afford one at the moment as they've just separated from my Dad and money is limited.

- 14 year old trans man

57

applicants said they couldn't afford a binder.



Some of my family say things like "you don't look very masculine" and "having breasts makes you look feminine".

I hate those comments a lot - hopefully having a binder could stop them.

- Gender fluid 13 year old

What having a binder means to applicants

Number of responses by theme to the questions: "Why do you want to wear a binder? What would having a binder mean to you?"



Confidence & self worth

To give me confidence in my appearance and help bridge that constant disconnect between how I feel & how I look.

- 51 year old non-binary person

It would mean the world to me to have a binder so I could look in the mirror and actually see the same person I know I am. I could finally love myself a little more.

- 17 year old trans man with a mental illness

Having a binder would mean finally being comfortable in my body - not looking in the mirror and feeling disgusted. I'd be able to go out in public without having anxiety about my chest.

- 18 year old trans Aboriginal man

Relieve dysphoria

I have so many constant meltdowns because of my top dysphoria. All I need is a binder until I can get top surgery

- 17 year old trans man

Affirmation from others

Perhaps people will use my pronouns correctly.

- 18 year old non-binary person of colour



Safer binding practices

I currently bind using a waist trainer I got off of Ali Express. I know it's not safe but I feel way more comfortable and happy when I do.

- 17 year old trans man with a mental illness



I have bits that are very hard to hide, even with a hoodie. As a trans guy it's pretty mentally heavy to have those bits as the sole reason I'm misgendered.

- 17 year old trans man

Next steps

The first 6 months of the Binder Program has demonstrated positive outcomes for trans and gender diverse South Australians.

Trans and gender diverse young people are particularly supported by this program, many with lived experience of mental illness. Benefits expected by participants include:

- improved mental health
- decreased gender dysphoria
- increased confidence and self-worth
- increased rates of affirmation from others.

Seeking future funding to extend this initial pilot is crucial to supporting the wellbeing of trans and gender diverse South Australians.

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