

Part IV: Advocating for LGBTQA+ young people

LGBTQA+ young people live within the wider context of society. For many, this includes barriers to service access, as well as legal, social, organisational, and cultural discrimination.

To support LGBTQA+ young people holistically, advocacy to break down these barriers is an inherent component of good practice. Service providers should make their efforts visible to young people at an organisational level. Lack of authentic commitment to advocating for LGBTQA+ young people and partnering with LGBTQA+ community-led organisations and advocacy bodies may be interpreted as a lack of care or concern for LGBTQA+ rights and lives. The following items are steps that service providers should take to advocate for LGBTQA+ young people.

The service provider should advocate for LGBTQA+ inclusivity within their service. This includes taking the following actions (if they have not already been done):

- Request that training in LGBTQA+ inclusivity is made available to all employees, volunteers, and/or students at the service.
- Encourage others within their service to use gender neutral language.
- Encourage others within their service to use language that does not assume heterosexuality (e.g., saying 'partner' instead of 'boyfriend').
- Encourage others within their service to identify their pronouns as part of their email communication.
- Encourage others within their service to visually identify their pronouns (e.g., through a pin, nametag, lanyard, or other form of visible identification).
- Encourage others within their service to use gender neutral language if someone's pronouns are not known.
- Advocate for gender neutral bathrooms.
- Encourage others within their service to not assume that anyone is cisgender or heterosexual.

Service providers should politely correct colleagues who have used the wrong name or wrong pronouns for an individual.

Service providers should address colleagues who make negative comments about the young person's LGBTQA+ identity (e.g., use insensitive, discriminatory, or pathologising language) by doing the following:

- Confronting the colleague individually about the potential harm of their comments.
- Providing the colleague with education and resources about LGBTQA+ identities and wellbeing.
- Make a formal complaint about the colleague if unacceptable behaviour continues despite informal guidance.

Services should not accept funding or sponsorship from funders who are actively anti-LGBTQA+.

Services should invite and allow their staff to participate in advocacy outside of clinical or community service care (e.g., be vocal about public policies to protect LGBTQA+ young people, attend protests/rallies on LGBTQA+ rights) if they feel comfortable to do so.