



DTA Guest Lecture: The Double Closet: LGBTI People and Dementia - 26 Nov, 2020

Audience Q&A's

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
<p>What are your thoughts about LGBTI specific residential care, I am originally from the UK. There is a LGBTI facility in Brighton UK which I believe works really well for LGBTI community.</p>	<p>This is frequently expressed in the LGBTI community as an ideal for aged care - reflecting a belief that a heteronormative environment can never provide comfortable living space for us. Sadly this is also very expensive and hard to achieve in an Australian demographic, although there are a couple of initiatives now underway. Meanwhile we try to improve the cultural safety of all services, and also review alternatives to institutionalised care - I envision more community-led and owned, smaller scale home environments. Following the Royal Commission the structure of aged care and the need for better options (for everyone) is very topical.</p>
<p>How have services gone about "advertising" in the community that they are open to provide LGBTI services? We dont have specific group for LGBTI and nor am able to advise if we have people who identify as LGBTI in our existing groups. I would like to promote the possible start up of a program providing safe and equitable program within our service and community</p>	<p>To be an LGBTI inclusive organisation is a whole-of-organisation project, not just special attention focused on (identified) LGBTI clients. Many LGBTI people are non-labelling, and others unlikely to be 'out'. To promote your organisation as LGBTI-inclusive (when you are) - state this expressly on your website and other promotional sources - eg fliers, facebook etc. Use local mainstream media as well as LGBTI media to tell stories of your activities where you celebrate LGBTI community or take part in an event. Have a presence at a pride event, make connections with the LGBTI community through local groups. Use rainbow stickers or badges for staff. If you do and say nothing, it will be assumed by LGBTI people that you are not welcoming. A 'neutral service' approach wont reassure a cohort who have been discriminated against: overt affirmation is essential. The benefits are wider than that to your clients - it also affects their families and your staff and their families.</p>
<p>Many carers in residential care come from very traditional backgrounds and struggle with these ideas.. is training effective?</p>	<p>Training is definitely effective. If staff are better informed they can make better decions as to how to react, for example to a homophobic situation.</p>
<p>Does Australia have LGBTIQI care homes?</p>	<p>There are a couple being constructed</p>
<p>"Reverting" may be in terms of the gender identity. I do not think it always has to do with the personhood or personality. It is also possible that returning back to whom they used to be is what they want. How do we tell this?</p>	<p>Get as much background about the client as possible to help guide your reading of a situation. LGBTI people are used to being very good actors and 'straightening out' to blend in as a safety mechanism. This happens in any heteronormative environment. It doesnt necessarily mean that a person is changing their identity, but needing to be safe and 'not stand out' as different. When an environment affirms LGBTI identities we see people blossoming and relaxing into who they want to be.</p>
<p>Do you think it is important to have more dedicated aged care facilities</p>	<p>Mainstream services need to work harder to build trust from the LGBTI community. This is actually a legal requirement in aged care! LGBTI-specific services have an advantage of not needing to undergo organisational change to understand their clientele - but also should not let mainstream services off the hook!</p>

<p>Thank you. I really enjoyed your presentation. This is a question that comes at this issue from another side which is whether you know of much awareness raising about dementia in the LGBTQI(+NL) community and LGBTQI communities organisations</p>	<p>Thank you for this question. There is very little dementia awareness-raising targeting LGBTI communities. There are a couple of specific LGBTI/dementia brochures. GRAI has done some work (film screenings and presentations), but much more needs to be done on an ongoing basis.</p>
<p>I completely understand the needs of our LGBTI elders that we need to meet as aged care providers. But what about other non-LGBTI residents who may not have the same understanding or insight on inclusivity? What can we do to be more supportive to everyone?</p>	<p>Doing nothing to celebrate LGBTI-diversity based on a fear that other residents wont cope perpetuates discrimination, does not uphold the human rights of LGBTI people and is not legal. Also, we have found that when an organisation is committed to being LGBTI inclusive, staff and clients follow the lead of the culture.</p>
<p>If a gay don't want a female carer to care him, As a female PCA ,How should I do this</p>	<p>This is the same as any preference from any person. The 'gayness' is irrelevant. Your organisation should try its utmost to meet that preference wherever possible. Some women have had traumatic experiences with men and it is profoundly disturbing for them to receive personal care from a man. It is a priority for clients to feel safe and have their needs met. If possible, hiring LGBTI carers is also very desirable.</p>
<p>Is there information available for carers regarding caring for LGBTI</p>	<p>Yes, there is the national LGBTI inclusivity training in aged care, (or Silver Rainbow training). This is Federally funded and delivered in every state and territory. Also DTA has training courses</p>
<p>Have you any connections with Arcare Rainbow House Aged Care in Parkwood QLD?</p>	<p>My understanding is that this was initiated by a community supportive of LGBTI people, and the project was then handed to a mainstream provider, who needed to upskill to be LGBTI inclusive. This is a work in progress.</p>
<p>Do you need specific training to care for LGBTI clients?</p>	<p>I think so. It is very useful to understand LGBTI history and culture. There is a great deal of information online. This will give carers insights into potentially triggering situations. Also it is important to have a reflexive attitude to understand the power imbalance that exists in a heteronormative environment, where minority groups are 'othered'. This will give a carer empathy and sensitivity in approaching LGBTI clients. A basic LGBTI 101 is will give carers a good grasp of terminology which will give them confidence.</p>
<p>I care for seniors in their homes and am interested to know how to access local LGBTQI senior networks to reduce isolation</p>	<p>Depends on where you are. Check on line. Ask the largest LGBTI organisation in your state for guidance if you cant see anything specific.</p>
<p>In your experience, do LGBTI people living with dementia feel safer receiving support and care in their own homes, or do they still face equal difficulties with providers from the community? The majority of people living with dementia do not live in residential care.</p>	<p>Community-based care can also be problematic, although a home environment usually offers greater autonomy and access to other members of the LGBTI community. LGBTI people often continue to try concealing their identity unless and until a provider is sending clear signals that they welcome and celebrate LGBTI people.</p>
<p>As a carer how can I become rainbow accredited?</p>	<p>Your organisation could become Rainbow Tick accredited (via QIP/AGPAL) or if in Victoria via Rainbow Health Victoria, based at La Trobe University. As an individual, sign up for a Silver Rainbow training session.</p>

<p>What are some of residential fears, ways to be handled and what can providers do?</p>	<p>Fears are not rational things, but based on learned behaviours of something 'feeling wrong'. If staff demonstrate by their attitudes that an inclusive environment is normal and expected, people do follow suit. You set the example. If there is harmful and abusive behaviour being exhibited, treat it with the same protocols that apply to all harmful behaviour. If people dont get on - keep them apart. Use diversion. Be at pains to reassure someone who has suffered abuse. Let them know you will keep them safe.</p>
<p>I am wondering if you feel the the younger people are more accepting then the older generation of LGBTI?</p>	<p>Generalising, yes. Younger people are growing up knowing more about gender and sexualaity diversity that their parents or grandparents, and the stigmas are greatly reduced. We are no longer criminalised, or considered insane, and our relationships are recognised. However, many older people are very open and accepting, and on the other hand, depending on the geography - younger people can be very prejudiced. Assumptions can be misleading, but overall, we are heading in the right direction.</p>
<p>We would love to help our resident celebrate her identity. However being the only transgender in our aged care community, do you have any suggestions of how we can do this without drawing negative attention from more conservative residents?</p>	<p>1. Surround her where possible with the most well-informed staff. 2. Introduce a friend within the facility into her room when she is fully dressed how she wishes to present. That friend accompany her out of her room. 3. The more everyone acts as normal the more this will be naturally accepted by others. You will be surprised. 4. She has a legal right to present as she wishes. Risking upsetting others is not a grounds for losing her rights. Again, you will be surprised, people will be more accepting than you think, especially if she is well supported. 5. For someone we know, we are facilitating visits by a trans person and also a makeup tutorial. 6. Resources - suggest staff watch 'Becoming Colleen'.</p>
<p>How can we engage the wider LGBTIQ+ community as we did in the 80s re HIV/AIDS? We are desperately isolated from our community, though in no way discriminated against in our local region.</p>	<p>Check with your metro centre is any LGBTI outreach activities? Consider online groups - eg zoom chat groups.</p>
<p>Has the concept of the accreditation as LGBTI friendly facility taken on? It is a major process and so many facilities may not be up for this - but do want to educate staff</p>	<p>Organisational change for inclusive practice is a big task - but it is worth taking the journey, there are so many benefits to everyone, not just LGBTI people. Do the things you can do, just take it step by step (training, policy review, community outreach, promotion). In your strategic planning, include an annual commitment to making more progress.</p>
<p>How do we deal with other people who are closeminded regarding the LGBTI? or those who are really homophobes and discriminating an LGBTI person. Is there a way we could help them understand the idea?</p>	<p>Are you asking about staff or residents? If you have homophoic or transphobic staff, they may be acting illegally so that is a risk to your organisation if a complaint is made. Training is obviously needed, also try empathy exercises, being clear about your organisational standards and expectations, and having clear policies. Ultimately, if this remains a problem, they may not be suitable for the job as you risk our reputation and accreditation. If you are asking about clients/co-residents or their families much of the above applies. There are many fun movies that can engage people in a positive way, such as Pride, and activities that you can do within the facility.</p>