



Australian Government

**Department of Health
and Aged Care**

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI+) Action Plan 2020-2024



SECRETARY FOREWORD

I am pleased to present to you our first Department of Health *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI+) Action Plan 2020-2024*.

The Department is committed to fostering a safe and inclusive culture for all employees. An environment where all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or gender diverse and/or intersex employees are welcome, respected, valued and supported. We know that when people are empowered to bring their whole selves to work, they are happier, more productive and more engaged.

This is the first LGBTI+ Action Plan for the Department of Health. It outlines our commitment to an inclusive workplace, and becoming an employer of choice for LGBTI+ people and their allies. Our goal is to create an environment that empowers all staff to participate effectively and be valued for their contributions, regardless of sex, sexual orientation or gender identity.

In our work we strive to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians, including LGBTI+ people. This work includes:

- supporting the Australian Government's commitments to World AIDS Day,
- funding a number of programs to support the mental health needs of the LGBTI+ community, and
- ensuring older people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity are able to access aged care services that are responsive and respectful of their care needs.

The Action Plan builds on the considerable progress we have already made. In 2018, for the second year, Health achieved bronze status in the Australian Workplace Equality Index, the national benchmarking instrument for LGBTI+ inclusion. We have a very active and engaged Pride Network and a long standing commitment to inclusion and diversity across the Department and at all levels. This Action Plan continues our momentum for progress.

Inclusion in the workplace is our collective responsibility—meaning every single one of us is responsible. It is your duty, as well as mine, to make Health safe, inclusive and accessible for all, by respecting and appreciating diversity. This Action Plan sets out the path for us to do that.

The Action Plan is not a comprehensive description of all the support available to staff, but a commitment to take the next steps together.

Each action you take, however simple, can result in meaningful change.



Caroline Edwards
Acting Secretary

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIDE CHAMPIONS

As the Health Pride Champions we are proud to endorse the Department of Health's *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI+) Action Plan 2020-2024*.

The LGBTI+ Action Plan represents the latest step in a long journey toward inclusion. Fittingly, it is launched just over five years after the inauguration of the Health Pride Network. In sharing the launch of this LGBTI+ Action Plan with you today, we recognise the courage of the trailblazing staff who established the Health Pride Network more than five years ago, and we acknowledge that the road to inclusion has been difficult for many.

As Champions, we thank the large number of colleagues who have built the momentum culminating in this launch.

The diversity of Health employees is one of our greatest assets as a workforce. In the 2019 APS agency survey, almost 5 per cent of Health staff who responded identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex. In good news, compared with 2018, 10% more LGBTI+ staff thought the Department promotes and supports an inclusive workplace in 2019. But this is a significant part of our workforce, and we must do more.

The Action Plan is not just for people who identify with the LGBTI+ acronym. It is relevant to all Health employees. It should stand as a beacon for diversity, inclusion and equity for all staff. Importantly, the Action Plan emphasises the need for LGBTI+ allies to show their visible support for LGBTI+ people - and we encourage you to be allies in your places of work.

We are confident the Action Plan will spark discussion and we hope it will inspire renewed determination across the Department to achieve inclusion for all employees.

We look forward to working with you all to implement the Action Plan over the next three years, to build a workplace where diversity is celebrated and all people feel comfortable to bring their whole selves to work.



Simon Cotterell



Sharon Appleyard



Bill Turner

Health Pride Champion

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Action Plan

January 2020 to December 2024

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI+) Action Plan 2020-24 sets out how we will work together to build and strengthen our departmental culture, and is an active step towards Health becoming an employer of choice for all people, including LGBTI+ people and their allies.

The plan has been developed to align with the Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI). This is Australia's national benchmarking instrument for LGBTI+ workplace inclusion.

The plan is endorsed by our Health Executive team, who is committed to supporting its implementation.

Implementation

The ongoing implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Plan will be the responsibility of the Culture & Inclusion team in collaboration with the Health Pride Network and our Pride Champions. The Culture & Inclusion team will regularly report progress to the Departmental Executive.

As a Health employee, each person is responsible for contributing to inclusive and respectful behaviour in the workplace.

Take action

Participating in a fair, equitable, supportive and inclusive work environment enables our employees to be high performing and bring their whole selves to work. We all have a role in ensuring that Health is a safe and welcoming place for our LGBTI+ colleagues to work. Everybody can take action by:

- Joining the Health Pride Network (all staff are welcome to join)
- Completing training (for example Walking in Rainbow Shoes eLearning and Ally Awareness)
- Acknowledging dates of significance
- Becoming a mentor
- Displaying and promoting inclusive behaviour

More information

Email Leadership.Culture@health.gov.au.

Health is a proud member of Australia's first and only national not-for-profit employer support program for all aspects of LGBTI workplace inclusion.



Commitments

Inclusivity

- Action 1. Review our HR policies to ensure they align with Australian best practice for inclusion.
- Action 2. Ensure that the conditions of service that impact LGBTI+ employees are taken into consideration in any Enterprise Agreement (EA) bargaining and are represented at the National Staff Participation Forum.
- Action 3. Value and celebrate LGBTI+ days of significance.
- Action 4. Implement internal communication strategy to promote LGBTI+ awareness and inclusion.
- Action 5. Ensure Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider and Harassment Contact Officer network provides support that is LGBTI+ inclusive.
- Action 6. Develop guidance to support gender transition and gender affirmation in the workplace.

Relationships

- Action 7. Support the growth and continuation of our Health Pride Network for all Departmental staff across Australia.
- Action 8. Support Health Pride Champions as visible advocates for LGBTI+ employees.
- Action 9. Utilise external subject matter expertise to assist with LGBTI+ workplace inclusion and build relationships with external LGBTI+ networks and organisations.

Capability

- Action 10. Provide and promote LGBTI+ inclusion and awareness training to all staff including embedding in induction training.
- Action 11. Promote development and mentoring opportunities to our LGBTI+ workforce.
- Action 12. Actively promote the role of LGBTI+ Allies and their importance.
- Action 13. Provide readily available online resources to employees regarding LGBTI+ workplace inclusion.

Opportunities

- Action 14. Actively promote Health as an LGBTI+ inclusive workplace in external and internal attraction and recruitment activities.
- Action 15. Establish reporting options for employees to voluntarily and confidentially self-identify their LGBTI+ diversity details in SAP ESS and allow the department to analyse and report on de-identified data to improve LGBTI+ initiatives, aligning with the requirements of the Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender.
- Action 16. Reward and recognise those that make a difference to LGBTI+ Inclusion.