Department of Health

LGBTIQA+ ACTION PLAN 2024-2027







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Foreword



On behalf of the Department of Health I am pleased to present this LGBTIQA+ Action Plan. 2024 marks the 25th anniversary of the Department of Health LGBTIQA+ reference group.

This is one of the longest standing groups of its kind in Australia, an achievement we are proud of. This long-term collaboration with LGBTIQA+ communities shows the ongoing commitment to support inclusion and diversity within our health services. We also value the partnerships we have formed with key organisations who support LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians.

One of the initial activities the Department did in 1999 was to contract a consultant to undertake a needs analysis which set the direction for the following years. Listening to the voices of LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians has remained important, with the more recent development of the Community Voices videos an example. These are part of the Department's LGBTIQA+ Inclusive Healthcare resources launched in December 2021 which were developed with the community. We are delighted we have such an excellent resource to increase awareness and support inclusion.

I thank LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians who have provided their experiences and ideas around accessing services both now, and throughout the years.

The goal of the Department of Health is to CARE for the health and wellbeing of all in Tasmania. Compassion, Accountability, Respect and Excellence (CARE) are our departmentwide values, and these guide this Action Plan. Additionally, the Department is launching in 2024 a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Framework which this Action Plan aligns with.

This Action Plan extends on the work that has taken place over many years both within the Department of Health, and across the whole of government. This includes building on past workplans of the DoH LGBTIQA+ reference group and drawing on research and consultation such as the Tasmanian's Telling Us the Story report, Rethink 2020 and the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy.

This Plan is both aspirational and realistic. The Actions outlined aim to celebrate the diversity of Tasmania, recognise the varying needs of LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians, whilst also acknowledging the complexities of health and wellbeing and our systems of care.

I encourage and support everyone to continue the work to make the Department of Health caring and inclusive for all LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians who are part of, and who access our health system.

Dale Webster, Acting Secretary, Department of Health

Community foreword



There has been marked progress in legal rights and social acceptance for LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians since the dark days when homosexuality and crossdressing were against the law.

But the legacy of criminalisation remains. Discrimination in education, employment housing and health care is still an everyday part of the lives of too many LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians.

Continued stigma and discrimination lead directly to poorer health outcomes. Local and national research has revealed that LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians have a higher mental health risk than other LGBTIQA+ Australians. It also shows stigma and discrimination contribute to higher levels of physical illness and problems accessing health care than are experienced by other Tasmanians.

There are solutions. The Telling us the Story report, commissioned by the State Government and based on the largest ever survey of LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians, highlighted the importance of:

- promoting inclusive policies and practices
- increasing awareness of LGBTIQA+ experiences and needs
- delivering training for health workers
- improving mental health care
- meaningfully consulting with LGBTIQA+ organisations, and
- addressing causes of health inequality and barriers.

I welcome the Department of Health LGBTIQA+ Action Plan 2024- 2027 because it acknowledges the problems the LGBTIQA+ community faces and implements the solutions recommended by Telling us the Story.

It is also the culmination of many years of collaboration between the Department of Health and the LGBTIQA+ community.

Beginning in 1999, the Department's LGBTIQA+ Reference Group has brought together some of the most experienced and passionate people in government and in the community to find paths forward to better health outcomes.

It is appropriate the Action Plan marks the 25th anniversary of the Reference Group. The Group is one of the oldest of its kind in the nation. Now, it has a detailed plan for the future.

There remain many challenges when it comes to improving the health outcomes of LGBTIQA+ people and improving our access to health services.

These include improving access to gender affirming care, improving mental health outcomes and reducing suicide risk, addressing higher levels of drug and alcohol use and improving services in rural areas.

But the constructive collaboration we have seen so far gives me hope we can continue to work together to build a more inclusive society and healthier lives for LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians.

Mez Newman Community co-chair, Department of Health LGBTIQA+ Reference Group

Vision:

To have an inclusive healthcare system for all LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians, supporting those who access services, and those who work within the Department of Health.

Purpose:

To reduce the experience and impact of stigma, discrimination and effects of minority stress experienced by LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians, and to improve their health outcomes and access to services.





To provide equitable, inclusive and accessible services, and other strategies to improve health outcomes.

Objective 2:

To listen to, and work in collaboration with LGBTIQA+ organisations and community members to continually improve our health system and services.

Objective 3:

To implement learning resources and key initiatives across the Department of Health that promote inclusion, acceptance and understanding.

Key to areas within Department of Health (DoH)

ADS	Alcohol and Drug Services
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CMHW	Community Mental Health and Wellbeing
CQRA	Clinical Quality, Regulation and. Accreditation
Culture and Wellbeing	The Culture and Wellbeing team sit under People and Culture. They oversee the One Health program including the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion strategy.
GRaSP	Government Relations and Strategic Partnerships
HE	Health Executive
HICT	Health Information Communication Technology
HPC	Hospitals and Primary Care
MHADD	Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Directorate
OTS	Office of the Secretary
P&C	People and Culture (formerly Human Resources)
PHS	Public Health Services
PPPR	Policy Purchasing Performance and Review
SMHS	Statewide Mental Health Services
SIMGO	Strategy, Information Management & Governance Office
SSHS	Statewide Sexual Health Services
TGS	Tasmanian Gender Service
THS	Tasmanian Health Service
QPSS	Quality Patient Safety Service
WACS	Women's and Children's Services

Tracking progress

The DoH LGBTIQA+ reference group will monitor progress of the plan. Updates from key areas will be provided at the DoH, as well as the Whole of Government, LGBTIQA+ reference group meetings.

An annual 'Report Card' of actions for the previous year will be provided to the community.



Actions

Objective 1:

To provide equitable, inclusive and accessible services, and other strategies to improve health outcomes.



To provide equitable, inclusive and accessible services, and other strategies to improve health outcomes.

Action Area responsible **Detail**

To improve Mental Health Services and Outcomes for LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians:

MHADD Collaborate with Tasmanians in Research highlights the LGBTIQA+ communities to develop considerably poorer health actions to prevent suicide, reduce harm outcomes for LGBTIQA+ from alcohol and other drugs, and people compared with improve mental health and wellbeing. others in the community. The actions will build upon research and The Tasmanians Telling community knowledge which supports us the Story report the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy (2021) concluded: 'Mental 2023 – 2027: Compassion and Connection, healthcare was without the Tasmanian Drug Strategy 2024-2029, exception one of, if not the, and Rethink 2020: A State Plan for Mental most prominent point of Health in Tasmania 2020–2025 and their discussion'. associated implementation plans. Research shows LGBTQ Tasmanians have higher **MHADD** Provide ongoing support for Working It rates of psychological Out (WIO) to deliver education programs distress. 62.2% than such as the peer navigators and peer LGBTQ Australians support buddy programs to build 57.2% and considerably community and social connection. higher than the general population 13%. **MHADD** Establish a small grants program to Lifetime suicide attempts support initiatives which focus on for LGBTQ Tasmanians strengthening protective factors aged 14-21 is also higher for mental health in LGBTIQA+ 32.7% compared to 25.6% communities. for LGBTQ Australians, 5.3% general population.* **MHADD** Begin scoping pilot mental health, alcohol and other drugs services for * From Private Lives 3 and LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians based on the Writing Themselves In 4 2023 "An LGBTIQA+ Wellbeing Service For action related to Design" commissioned by DoH. training within mental health services, go to objective 3.

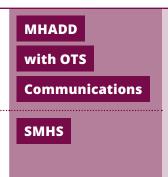
To provide equitable, inclusive and accessible services, and other strategies to improve health outcomes.

Action Area responsible Detail

To improve Mental Health Services and Outcomes for LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians (continued):

Co-design promotional campaigns addressing prejudice, stigma and discrimination experienced by Tasmanians in LGBTIQA+ communities.

Ongoing consultation with the LGBTIQA+ community to consider ways to improve service delivery and respond to needs.





To provide equitable, inclusive and accessible services, and other strategies to improve health outcomes.

Action Area responsible **Detail**

To protect and promote the rights of Intersex people accessing health services:

CQRA Review the clinical definition of These actions have been medical interventions relating to cross referenced with the sex characteristics on people with Darlington Statement and innate variations of sex characteristics found to address most (intersex) to ensure all such recommendations within interventions undertaken in Tasmania scope for DoH. are captured in coding; and include that Provide Better Lives definition in related policies. Booklets, referral to social work services, and **CQRA** Ensure there are clear policies develop/deliver a pamphlet and protocols on providing clinical outlining supports interventions relating to sex available. characteristics for people with innate variation of sex characteristics. **HPC / CQRA** Explore ways to promote and support training and learning about best practice care for people who are intersex, including seeking advice from relevant clinical networks on existing resources and liaison with Primary Health Tasmania about professional development opportunities in primary care. **WACS** and other Offer psychosocial support during and post an intersex diagnosis relevant areas **HPC** Create pathways which allow for medical procedures / care to be made available to intersex people with the capacity to consent.

To provide equitable, inclusive and accessible services, and other strategies to improve health outcomes.

Action Area responsible **Detail**

Strengthen Gender Affirming Care services within the scope of DoH:

HPC Ensure the ongoing availability of Review waiting times with fit-for-purpose gender affirming care consideration of possible that meets Australian standards and solutions. responds to the increased demand for Check client satisfaction of such care, through expansion of local services. services, subject to funding, and/or negotiation with others providers such Consider the as Department of Health, Victoria to recommendations made provide services. by the Equality Tasmania report on gender affirming **CQRA/HPC** care in Tasmania (2023). Ensure there are clear policies and protocols to guide clinicians on (SSHS) Annual tracking of the provision of gender affirming care, number of clinicians aligning with the World Prof Assoc for reached / topics through Transgender Health (WPath) and / or clinician run education Australian Professional Association for sessions offered by Transgender Health (AusPath). Statewide Sexual Health Service. **SSHS** Seek funding to support community sector establishment and maintenance Track in-service sessions of a lived experience consumer group with the five main referring for gender affirming care. General Practice centres as well as education sessions **PHS** run through primary Expand the Department of Health LGBTIQA+ learning resources to include health network. Report on this to the reference group. generic (non-clinical) module on gender affirming care in Tasmania. **SSHS** Ensure clinical professional development training is provided and undertaken for staff delivering gender affirming care services. **SSHS** Clinical education activities facilitated by SSHS medical staff to occur in both face to face and online formats, in-reach and outreach services for clinicians directly involved in the delivery of LGBTIQA+ care.

To provide equitable, inclusive and accessible services, and other strategies to improve health outcomes.

Action	Area responsible	Detail
Strengthen relationships with community-based organisations who deliver services to LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians.	PHS and MHADD	Through the funding agreement management process support partnerships with LGBTIQA+ specific services such as Working It Out and TasCAHRD, and services who support priority populations including Women's Health Tasmania.
Support training for community-based organisations on how to provide LGBTIQA+ inclusive healthcare.	MHADD/ PHS/ PPPR	Provide access to and promote the learning resources. Track engagement and feedback.

Department of Health receive the Dorothies Award 2024



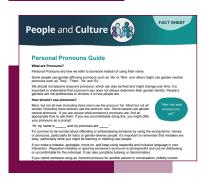
To provide equitable, inclusive and accessible services, and other strategies to improve health outcomes.

Action Area responsible **Detail**

Progress the DoH Sex, Gender and Sexual Orientation Reform Action Plan to comply with the Justice and related Legislation (Marriage and Gender Amendments) Act 2019 (JRL Act).







Adopt as a standard for DoH facilities to provide (where possible) all gender toilets/showers/change rooms.



The Reform Action Plan will address priority areas approved by the whole of government Gender, Sex and Sexual Orientation reform implementation steering committee. These areas include cultural, process and systems change, human resource management, data management, policy and legislation. This work will be overseen by established internal governance structures.

Develop resources and training to support staff understand the reform and implement changes.



Office of the **Deputy Secretary** Infrastructure

To provide equitable, inclusive and accessible services, and other strategies to improve health outcomes.

Action	Area responsible	Detail
Ongoing reporting and evaluation of LGBTIQA+ actions.	OTS and PHS	
Evaluate the progress of implementation plans for the 2023-2027 Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy, the 2024-2029 Tasmanian Drug Strategy, and the 2020-2025 Rethink 2020 Strategy.	MHADD	
Monitor and respond to DoH / THS for feedback by LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians to track areas of concern / arising issues.	CQRA	DoH LGBTIQA+ reference group members to consider any issues and promote feedback
Promote the feedback /complaints process to the LGBTIQA+ community.	PHS	processes through their networks.
Request Equal Opportunity Tasmania and the Health Complaints Commission to provide updates on contact from LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians related to DoH experiences to share these with the DoH LGBTIQA+ reference group.	PHS	
Maintain the connection between LGBTIQA+ Actions and One Health / Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	Culture and Wellbeing	Regular meetings to share/ liaise/ collaborate.
Framework.	Team and PHS	See DEI Framework and Action Plan.

To provide equitable, inclusive and accessible services, and other strategies to improve health outcomes.

Action Area responsible **Detail GRaSP** / Maintain and identify new opportunities Participate in for Tasmanian representation on key interjurisdictional PHS National bodies. LGBTIQA+ health policy officer's meetings. Respond to queries / requests for information. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Identify and raise current **Guiding Principles** concerns at a national level. Input/review National LGBTIQ+ 10 year Action Plan. Invite input and representation (as appropriate) by community members to national bodies. **Culture and** Regularly communicate with staff about Communication platforms DoH LGBTIQA+ actions and information includes Intranet, REACH, Wellbeing Team / social media, newsletters via the range of Departmental platforms. PHS and email. **Culture and** Regularly review and update content on the DoH LGBTIQA+ Inclusive Healthcare Wellbeing Team / webpages and SharePoint portal. PHS

To provide equitable, inclusive and accessible services, and other strategies to improve health outcomes.

Action	Area responsible	Detail
Actively promote DoH as an inclusive respectful workplace for LGBTIQA+ people.	People and Culture	
Continue to monitor performance within	Quality and	
DoH to National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standard 2: Partnering with Consumers.	Safety teams	
	/ Standard 2	
	committee	



To listen to, and work in collaboration with LGBTIQA+ organisations and community members to continually improve our health system and services.

Area responsible **Action Detail PHS** as To maintain the DoH This is an ongoing action that LGBTIQA+ reference group includes three meetings annually. secretariat and support the community In recognition of the contribution OTS as co-chair co-chair role. of community members maintain payment of a stipend (fixed sum for costs) until any whole of government agreement on reimbursement Review membership annually. Support the Champion Network representative. See DoH LGBTIQA+ reference group Terms of Reference for more detail. To provide regular, accessible **PHS** To develop and distribute an annual communications with one-page plain language 'report card' of actions undertaken in the LGBTIQA+ community members. preceding calendar year. To provide updates on key areas of

work to reference group members.

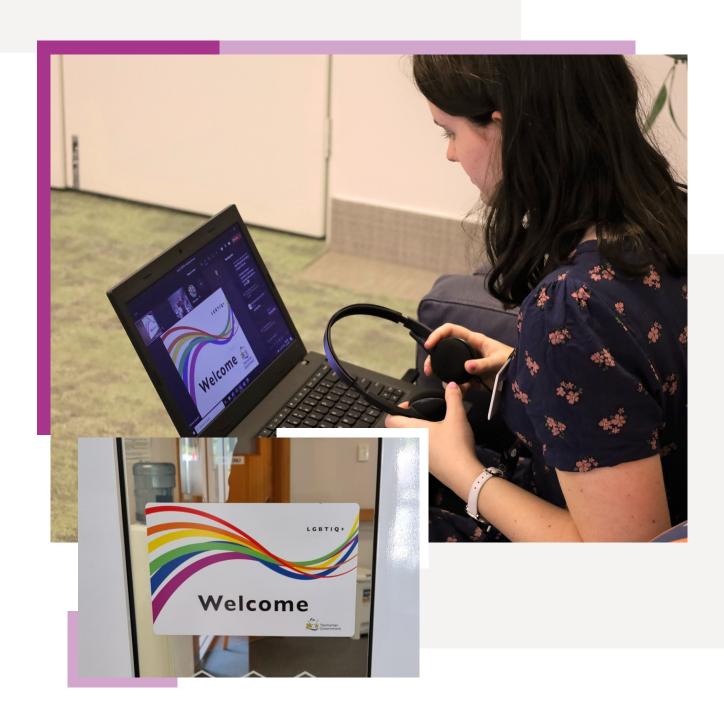
To listen to, and work in collaboration with LGBTIQA+ organisations and community members to continually improve our health system and services.

Action	Area responsible	Detail
Continually consult with members of LGBTIQA+ communities on priority areas.	HPC / MHADD / SMHS / SSHS	This is both an ongoing action and opportunity for new collaboration. Areas within the DoH will continue to consult with community members for a specific purpose, such as the development of learning resources and mental health plan.
Provide presentations and updates on research around LGBTIQA+ matters to key business areas as appropriate.	PHS / relevant	Presentations to reference group. Include agenda items from members. Present information sessions on key research or findings to specific areas of the DoH as appropriate.
Maintain active DoH representation on the whole of government LGBTIQA+ reference group.	PHS	Chief Executive, PHS to represent DoH on the whole of government reference group, and to provide links between reference groups. Regular engagement between officers providing secretariat support to agency reference groups.

Department of Health representatives at the 2024 IDAHOBIT breakfast



To implement learning resources and key initiatives across the Department of Health that promote inclusion, acceptance and understanding.



To implement learning resources and key initiatives across the Department of Health that promote inclusion, acceptance and understanding.

Action	Area responsible	Detail
To continue implementing the DoH LGBTIQA+ Inclusive Healthcare learning resources for the DoH workforce and settings.	PHS	Implementation started in December 2021 when the resources were launched. 75% of DoH staff to complete the LGBTIQA+ Inclusive healthcare introductory module within the next 3 years. Track progress and review implementation strategies to identify where further promotion and support is needed. Collate and analyse the feedback from the Department's online learning platform Tasmanian Health Education Online (THEO) to track engagement. Recognising intersectionality, link to other resources such as Culture, Language and Health. Respond as appropriate /possible within resourcing to requests for in-service training / information sessions. Track sessions delivered.
Provide access for other agencies to DoH LGBTIQA+ introductory module.	PHS	Parts of the DoH module to be made available for other agencies. Track access / maintain and update materials.

To implement learning resources and key initiatives across the Department of Health that promote inclusion, acceptance and understanding.

Action Area responsible **Detail** PHS Review, update and extend Update content regularly with learning resources around examples of good practice, research LGBTIQA+ inclusion. and resources created by partners. Add links to other materials/ invite input e.g. Women's Health Tasmania podcasts, Better Lives project. Develop specific content to respond to need and issues. Distribute and track promotional materials. Increase healthcare practitioners' and staff awareness of the needs of LGBTIQA people who are culturally and linguistically diverse. **PHS** Facilitate access by external Maintain and update Health health and community sector Learning Online (HLO) and the DoH organisations to the DoH internet webpages. LGBTIQA+ Inclusive Healthcare Liaise with key education learning resources (including stakeholders such as UTAS about support materials). possible collaboration and sharing. Track engagement. **MHADD** with Support all staff within SMHS 75-85% of SMHS staff to complete complete the LGBTIQA+ LGBTIQA+ inclusive Healthcare **SMHS** Inclusive Healthcare module.

introductory module.

To implement learning resources and key initiatives across the Department of Health that promote inclusion, acceptance and understanding.

Action	Area responsible	Detail
Provide access to clinical training for relevant mental health staff on specialist topics important to LGBTIQA+ communities including gender and human affirming care.	MHADD with SMHS	
Scope additional training within mental health services to support staff understand the needs of LGBTIQA+ Tasmanians receiving care.	MHADD with	
Provide specific training in LGBTIQA+ risk /experience/ inclusivity for staff working in Alcohol and Drug Services.	ADS	WIO have a 3-year grant from the Pride Foundation Australia to deliver targeted prevention campaigns to community and build capacity for the AOD sector in Tasmania.
		They will develop a professional learning package based on consultation and research for the AOD sector, and offer professional learning sessions.
		This training will complement the DoH LGBTIQA+ introductory module.
Extend and support the DoH LGBTIQA+ Champions Network.	PHS	Promote the network and the actions taken by champions.
		Provide profiles of champions and their actions to showcase the work and encourage others to join the network.
		Organise regular training and information sessions for champions.
(LGBTIQ+) Champion		Communicate regularly and share updates/information.

To implement learning resources and key initiatives across the Department of Health that promote inclusion, acceptance and understanding.

Action	Area responsible	Detail
Hold an annual face to face professional development meeting for LGBTIQA+ Champions.	Culture and Wellbeing Team with PHS	
Extend and support the SMHS specific LGBTIQA+ Champion group.	SMHS	This group is a sub-set of the wider DoH LGBTIQA+ network. Provide specific training, networking and support opportunities.
Ensure initiatives to support inclusive healthcare remain appropriate.	MHADD / SMHS / PHS	Consider current and future initiatives such as activities as part of TasPride and the DoH Rainbow Choir.
Acknowledge DoH LGBTIQA+ actions and showcase achievements both internally and externally.	OTS / Culture and Wellbeing Team	Publish articles / stories / video clips via various channels (social media, SharePoint portal, REACH).
Actions so far The Department of Health wants inclusive. respectful health services for LGST(9 - Tianranians. The following actions were taken in 2022 to support this: CONDUSTATION TANNING	PHS	Create an annual 'Report Card' for distribution to community organisations / members and to DoH staff. Include examples of the impact / outcomes of actions. Invite community and staff input.
When produced and section of the control of the con	PHS	Host events to celebrate key achievements.

To implement learning resources and key initiatives across the Department of Health that promote inclusion, acceptance and understanding.

Action Area responsible **Detail**

Promote LGBTIQA+ inclusion and reflect the diversity within DoH.

PHS / Culture

and Wellbeing

Team / SMHS

Create media articles.

Host site specific events.

Circulate information / resources encouraging activities.

Have displays.

Engage with staff and consumers.

Acknowledge significant days and ensure DoH representation at key LGBTIQA+ events.



Culture and

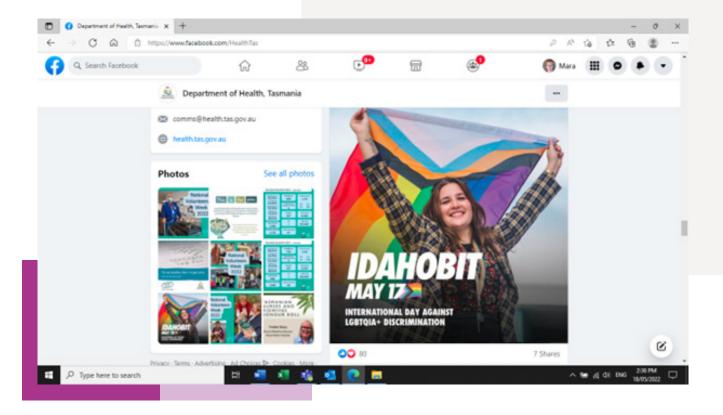
Wellbeing Team

/ OTS / PHS

Share articles via DoH communication platforms outlining significant days such as Intersex Awareness Day, Trans Day of Remembrance and IDAHOBIT Day.

Continue to organise DoH representation, including executive members, at annual TasPride Parade and IDAHOBIT breakfast.

Respond to requests and review opportunities to participate in other events.



To implement learning resources and key initiatives across the Department of Health that promote inclusion, acceptance and understanding.

Action Area responsible **Detail**

Continually review DoH documents and communications to ensure the language is inclusive / there is representation of the diversity of Tasmanians.

Wellbeing Team

Culture and





This plan draws on information from National and Tasmanian sources current at the time of writing.

These include:

- Tasmanians Telling us the Story (2022).
- The Tasmania Project: What wellbeing means for LGBTIQ Tasmanians (2021).
- Writing Themselves In 4 (2021).
- *Private Lives 3* (2020).

Go to the Department's LGBTIQA+ webpages for these and other reports, stories and research: https://www.health.tas.gov.au/ professionals/education-and-training-healthprofessionals/lgbtiq-inclusive-healthcare











www.health.tas.gov.au