

Training Health Providers to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQA+ young people

Overview

This Needs Assessment (2021-2022) recruited staff members from 2 ACCOs (Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations) in Wadjuk Noongar Country for a 3-hour focus group, along with 9 interviews with experts in Aboriginal/LGBTQA+ health across Australia in inclusive practice, discussing training needs in relation to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQA+ youth.

Expert Participants:



18+ years



Worked /lived in regional/remote and metropolitan areas



From WA, VIC, NSW, QLD & NT

ACCO Participants:



18+ years



Worked for an ACCO



Initially aimed for 2 ACCOs per state & territory (1 metro, 1 regional)
2 from Wadjuk Noongar country participated

Participants were asked...

What is your/your organisation's definition of 'inclusive practice'?

What does inclusion of LGBTQA+ young people look like in your community?

What are the current practices of ACCO staff/people you work with when working with LGBTQA+ youth and their families?

What additional training needs do ACCO staff have when working LGBTQA+ youth and their families?

What are the core competencies needed to work effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQA+ youth and their families?

At what level of the organisation should training be targeted?

Vol. 1

The context and state of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQA+ understanding in ACCOs

Vol. 2

The competency framework and training requirements for an inclusive LGBTQA+ training program

About the Artist skyangelwings

The artwork for this project is by the talented Skye Milton (they/them). They are a strong believer of equality and does their best to show this in their art.

What does LGBTQA+ stand for?

Lesbian (L), Gay (G), Bisexual (B), Transgender (T), Queer/Questioning (Q), Asexual (A) and other diverse sexualities and genders (+)



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How are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQA+ young people being included in our communities?

Participants highlighted:



Mixed personal experiences

Experiences of outright discrimination and violence

Ambiguity toward acceptance or outright denial of LGBTQA+ identities

Perceived acceptance in some communities

Geographical differences

Differences between acceptance vs celebration of LGBTQA+ identities across areas

Perception of greater inclusivity in metropolitan areas than regional/remote locations

Generational differences

Younger generations embracing inclusive practice

Awareness of LGBTQA+ identities improving over time

Older generations, including some Elders, seen as resisting inclusivity

Incorporating sexuality and gender diversity into culture

Decolonising cultural notions of LGBTQA+ identities









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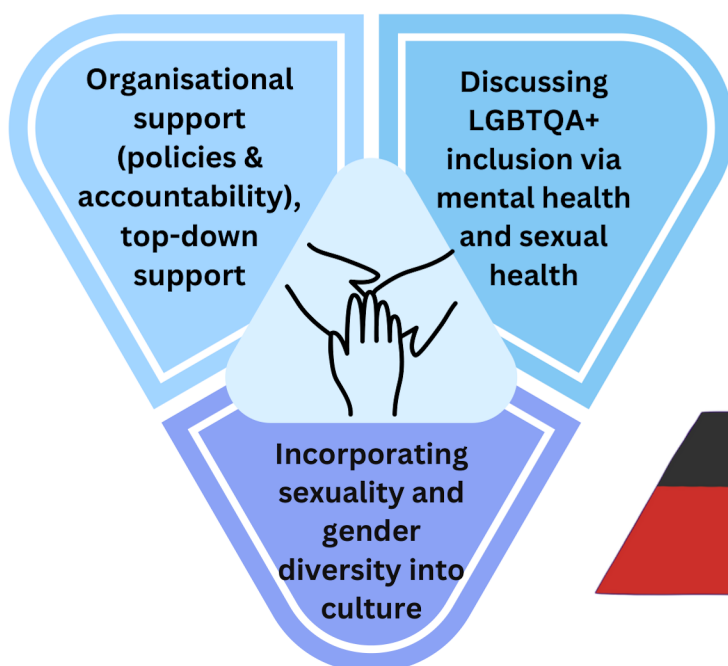


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Inclusivity within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities:

Barriers	Facilitators
 Limited knowledge of LGBTQA+ identities	 Relationships with LGBTQA+ family and friends
 Beliefs that people cannot be Blak and LGBTQA+	 Empathy through shared experiences of discrimination
 Discussing LGBTQA+ with cultural context	
 Religious influences (such as Christianity)	

Facilitators of Inclusivity in ACCOS:



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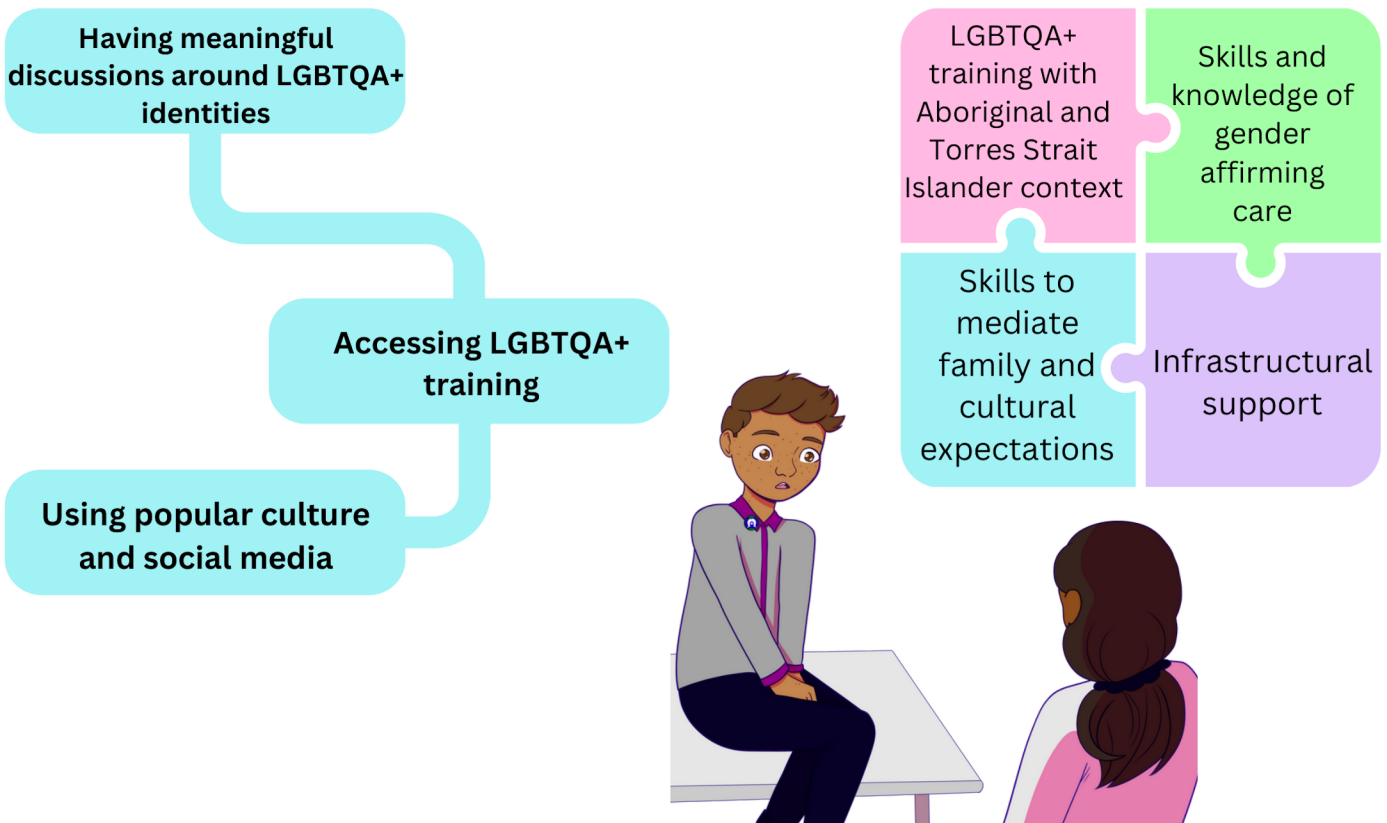
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How are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQA+ communities and ACCOs defining inclusive practice?



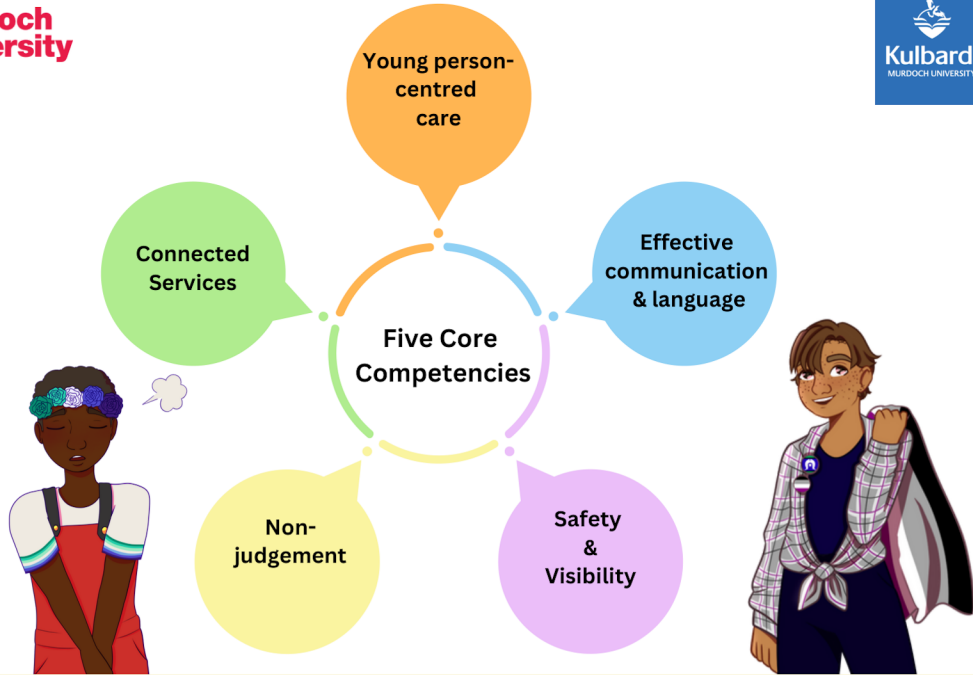
What ACCOs are currently doing to be inclusive of LGBTQA+ young people:

What gaps were identified in ACCOs?



Core competencies for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQA+ young people

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Young person-centred care

Ensure personalised, empowering care that is led by young person

- Focus on young person's reason for attending a service & avoid assumptions
- Providing Aboriginal health prevention and promotion information
- Relationship building with youth & families

Effective communication & language

Different communication behaviours, skills and knowledge dependent on staff role (clinical/practitioner staff vs non-clinical). Behaviours required by all staff in interactions with young people:

- actively listening
- being authentic and approachable
- being warm, welcoming & caring
- being interested in the patient
- being curious vs defensive
- using clear and easy to understand language
- using gender neutral language
- using open and welcoming body-language.

Safety & Visibility

Using **cultural safety** as a starting point for ensuring services are visibly, accountably safe for young people by:

- promoting allyship with signs and symbols
- having resources available
- LGBTQA+ Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff
- mandatory inclusivity training to standardise knowledge levels
- policy-level inclusion embedded throughout the organisation

Connected Services

Keeping connected to learning and building service relationships was key to ensuring **safe, relevant** care. To do so, it was highlighted ACCOs focus on:

- staff building their own professional support networks
- teams connecting to each other, external services and building referral lists
- organisations keeping up with professional development in the area

















Non-judgement

In addition to frontline workers, it was emphasised that remaining non-judgemental was vital for all staff at an ACCO (especially those focused on wellbeing) to:

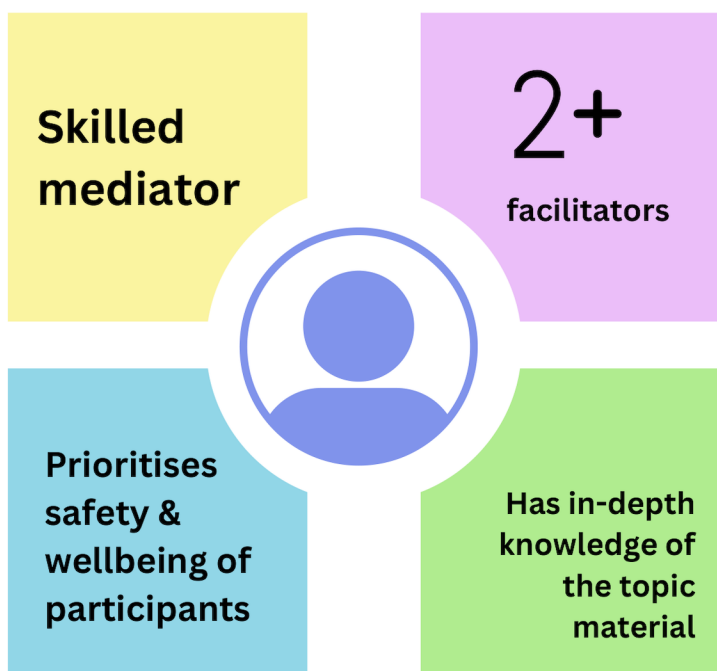
- be critically self-reflective
- practice empathy

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What should an LGBTQA+ inclusivity training package for ACCOs look like?

Training Approaches	Training Content	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Trauma informed  Connects trainees with peer & support networks  Stories, case studies, role play & reflection activities  Considerate of Country training delivered on  Training assessed for efficacy  2-day training max 	<h3>Introductory Knowledge</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  LGBTQA+ acronym  Embedded within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and LGBTQA+ history  Knowledge of referral pathways and helpful resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Unique health issues that LGBTQA+ young people face  Involving local cultural authorities (not necessarily Elder-endorsed)  Education on role of legislation and organisational policy, and data management systems in inclusive practice
	<h3>Skills Development</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Inclusive language skills  How to have difficult conversations between caregivers and young people  Communication skills  Critical self-reflection skills 	

Facilitator Characteristics



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