

Being OK... Being You

A GUIDE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO
IDENTIFY AS LGBTIQ+ AND HAVE CANCER



"You're here. You're safe. We see you."



This guide is funded by the Victorian Government through the Healthy Equal Youth program

This resource was developed through collaboration between young people and the ONTrac at Peter Mac Victorian Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) Cancer Service. The content is based on interviews with young people who have had a cancer diagnosis and identify as LGBTIQ+, or are still working out their sexuality and gender identity. The interviews demonstrated that young people who identify as LGBTIQ+ experience a lack of information and support and face the very real possibility of feeling invisible in the context of the health system. Young people have also been involved in the development of *Being OK... Being You* every step of the way, from initiating the original idea, to informing content and design and endorsing this final product. It is their hope that this resource will provide information to support other young people who identify as LGBTIQ+ and have cancer so they too feel safe, seen, heard and know that they matter.

This resource is a general guide. It is not a substitute for medical, legal or financial advice. If you need more information, your local Youth Cancer Service is a good place to start.

All care was taken to ensure that the information was accurate at the time of publication.

Acknowledgements

We most importantly wish to thank the many young people who willingly shared their personal stories to ensure the relevance of this resource. We also wish to acknowledge the valuable contribution of our project team and the Peter MacCallum Volunteer Services, whose generous matched-funding made this resource possible.

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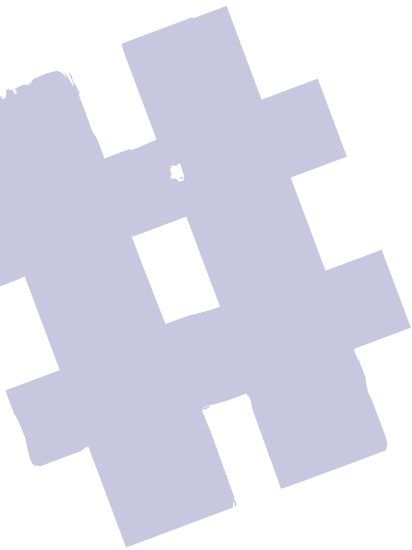
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Being OK...

Being You

"You're here. You're safe. We see you."



A guide for young people who identify as LGBTQ+ and have cancer

Hi, my name is Lucy and I'm a young cancer survivor who also identifies as a member of the LGBTQ+ community. I have been through cancer twice and have experienced treatment in a wide range of hospitals and health settings. I am also a member of the project team who created this resource.

A diagnosis of cancer can bring with it a lot of anxiety and worry about physical, emotional, social and practical changes. It can also cause anxiety about how your sexuality and/or gender identity may affect your cancer journey and interaction with the health system and healthcare professionals. This is common for young people. As someone who has been through it, I recognise that the journey for us can be different to the experience of young people who do not identify as LGBTQ+. We are here to tell you that this is OK, address questions you may have, reassure you and share information and tips to help you manage.

In this resource, you will find information about:

- The lived experiences of other young people with cancer who identify as LGBTIQ+
- Sexuality and gender identity
- Common challenges that come with a diagnosis of cancer
- Your rights as a young person and patient
- Strategies on how to manage and maximise your support networks
- Information to share with partners and healthcare professionals.

This resource was created by a project team who understand research in this area and interviewed young LGBTIQ+ cancer patients. *Being OK... Being You* has also been reviewed by organisations specialising in LGBTIQ+ young people. This ensures that this resource is accurate in terms of the information and support it aims to provide young people who have cancer and identify as LGBTIQ+.

You may be picking up this resource as a newly diagnosed young patient or someone further along the cancer journey. You may identify as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community or someone who is questioning their identity. Either way, this resource is for you. We hope this resource makes you feel:

- **Safe** being you
- **Confident** to be who you are and advocate for yourself and your needs. This includes knowing how to communicate with your medical and support teams
- **Validated** knowing that you are a valued member of society and have every right to have your individual needs seen and met
- **Empowered** to make informed decisions that are right for you on your journey.

Just know that you're safe, we hear you, we see you and you matter.

How To Use This Resource

Each section of *Being OK... Being You* covers a different topic. You may choose to read the entire resource from start to finish or just the part that is relevant to you at the time. You can also dip in and out when you have a question or need more information. *Being OK... Being You* covers:

Sexuality and Gender diversity

What do we mean by LGBTQ+?
What does it mean to be sexually and/or gender diverse?

Cancer and treatment: what to expect

Understanding common impacts of cancer and treatment in young people

Young peoples' experience: cancer and identity

Understanding common experiences of young people with cancer who are sexually and gender diverse

Your rights

Understanding your rights as a patient and human being

Strategies and Tools

Helpful hints, tips and tools to support you to advocate for yourself. What you can do for you

Appendices (Extra Stuff)

Notes pages, a glossary of terms, information for partners, information for health professionals, useful links and resources, bibliography & further reading

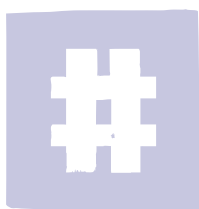
This resource has been developed based on the experiences of young people who have had cancer and identify as LGBTIQ+. It is their hope that it will provide you with the information you need to feel safe, seen and heard.

To best navigate this resource, look out for the icons that highlight:



Did you know

(interesting facts)



Tips and tricks

(helpful strategies)



More information

(useful links and resources. See descriptions and contact details in the Appendices).



You can make your own notes as you go on the notes pages at the end and there is a glossary to help you understand acronyms and common terms used.

Sexuality And Gender Diversity

"There has never been a more important time to say that in our diversity lies our strength and our creativity"

Cara Delivigne
(via Instagram)

As people we are all very different. We define and understand ourselves in many ways. Gender and sexuality are some of the ways we describe our unique, individual identity. These concepts are not straightforward. They are very broad and fluid. There are hundreds of different terms used to describe different identities.

We may have always known our sexuality and/or gender identity or we may be uncertain. Sometimes our identities also change throughout life. That's normal and it's okay. This section will help you to understand what we mean by gender and sexuality, including diverse identities. It will also provide some tips on how to think about your identity if you are unsure.

Definitions

Let's start with some common definitions and words to understand what is meant by gender and sexuality. See *Glossary* for more definitions.

Gender	
Sex	Biological sex is assigned at birth based on anatomical and physiological characteristics (e.g. your genitals). This can include being male, female or intersex (having characteristics that don't fit the typical definition of female or male sex)
Gender identity	Every person's individual experience of gender. Our sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither/non-binary or anywhere on the gender spectrum. This can be the same or different from our sex
Gender expression	How we represent our gender identity in the world including our name and the pronouns we identify with (i.e. her/she, him/he, they/them, ze/zer) and how we feel comfortable in our appearance and behaviour
Gender diversity	A term that includes all the different ways gender can be described. It includes people still working out their identity, questioning their gender or those who identify as trans, gender non-conforming, gender variant, gender queer, non-binary and many more
General	
LGBTIQ+	This stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer or questioning. The + represents all other identities that aren't listed in the acronym
Sexuality	
Sexual identity	Describes who we are attracted to physically, romantically and/or sexually. If we are attracted to people of a different sex or gender we may identify as heterosexual or straight. If we are attracted to people of the same sex or gender we may identify as gay or lesbian. If we are attracted to people of both sexes or genders we may identify as bisexual. Or we may prefer to identify as queer, gender fluid, non-binary or in another way
Sexual diversity	A term that includes all the different ways that sexuality can be described. It includes people who are still working out or questioning their identity or people who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer, asexual and many more (see over)

Trans

F2M/M2F

Some Gender Identity Terms

Queer



Gender queer

Gender non-conforming

Gender-variant

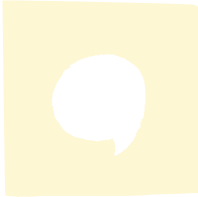
Bi-gender



Third gender



Questioning



Brotherboy/
Sistergirl

Trans-man/
Trans-woman

Androgenous

Non-binary



Cis gender



A-gender



Some Sexual Identity Terms

Gay



Lesbian

Queer

Bisexual
or Bi



Bicurious



Homosexual

Straight

Non-
conforming



Asexual

MSM/
WSW

Pansexual

Questioning



Heterosexual



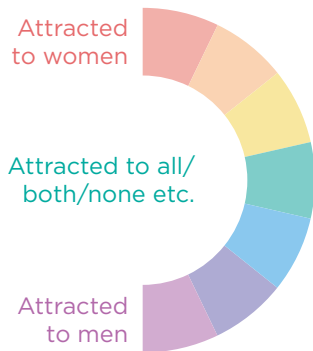


Understanding our identity

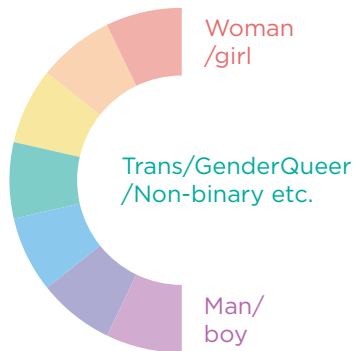
Some people know their gender and sexual identities from a very young age. However, when puberty starts we experience a lot of physical changes to our bodies. It is at this time that our interest in romantic relationships with other people often evolves. This can mean we start to think more about our gender and sexual identities. We may start to notice that we identify the same as our family members or friends or in a different way. If we identify

differently, this can be particularly confusing as we try to make sense of how we feel and where we fit in. If you are unsure about your identity, it can help to think of gender and sexual identity as sitting on a spectrum or sphere. Your identity may sit clearly at one particular point, may change over time, or you may not fully know how you identify yet. Everyone is different and that is OK. It's our differences that make life so diverse, wonderful and interesting!

Sexual Identity



Gender Identity



Whether you are working out your own identity or identify differently from the other people around you, it can help to talk to other people who identify as LGBTIQ+ and who may have been through similar experiences (see [Appendix D: Useful Links and Resources](#)).

What it means to identify as sexually and/or gender diverse

There are LGBTIQ+ people in all walks of life including our parents, teachers, doctors, politicians, neighbours, religious leaders, colleagues, family and friends. While we have come a long way in Australia in terms of acceptance and understanding of our sexual and gender differences, there is still a way to go to ensure equality for everyone. Identifying as different from 'the norm' can be complicated and come with many challenges, especially when we are in the process of discovering our identity or coming out. Some of the challenges faced by young people working out their identity or identifying as LGBTIQ+ include:

- Being aware of being different. Whether you feel different from your family members, friends, people on TV or any of the other people you encounter in life, this can feel isolating and lonely at times
- Gender dysphoria. This is when you know that your gender identity does not meet your assigned sex or gender. This can also be confusing and scary and you may not know what to do or how you fit into a binary and gendered world
- Uncertainty or confusion. You may not have a label to describe how you feel or how you identify. You may not know who to talk to, what to do or how to be OK being you
- Worry. You may be worried about talking to others and telling them how you feel, about the fact you feel different or not knowing how you fit in
- Fear. You may be fearful of what others will think or how they will react, or being judged or discriminated against because of who you are
- Bullying or violence. This can occur in school, the workplace, healthcare and society in general, and it is never OK
- Discrimination. You may experience discrimination from people or within certain systems or institutions that don't understand or value difference

- Mental ill-health. People who identify as LGBTIQ+ can experience higher rates of mental health problems including depression and anxiety. It's important to note that this is not due to being LGBTIQ+. Rather, it can be because of challenges, including those listed here, that can create additional pressure or distress.
- While there are plenty of good things about being sexually and/or gender diverse, the fact that these challenges are experienced by many people who identify as LGBTIQ+ show us why it is so important to keep talking about it and advocating for acceptance, equality and equity. The good news is that you are not alone and you matter. There is also help available to support you. This resource is a good place to start so you know when and where to ask for help.



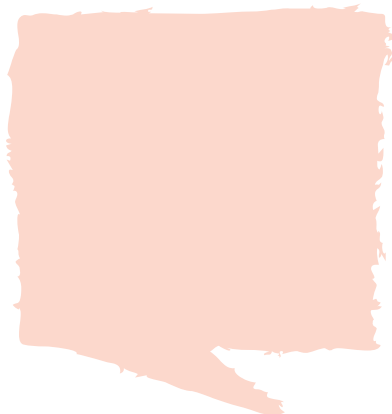
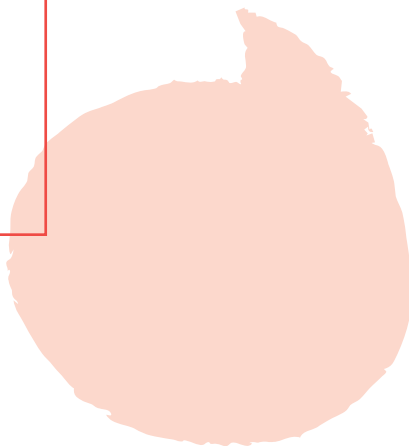
Did you know...

- Approximately 11% of Australians identify as gender and/or sexually diverse
- Approximately 12% of Australian millennials born between 1980-2000 identify as trans or gender non-conforming
- Approximately 1.7% of children born in Australia every year are intersex
- Many people who identify as LGBTIQ+ hide their identity when accessing healthcare services. Young people aged 16-24 years are most likely to hide their identity. We don't want you to have to!
- The number of same sex couples in Australia has more than tripled over the past 20 years
- Same sex marriage was *finally* legalised in Australia on 9 December 2017
- The International Day against Homophobia/Biphobia/Intersexism and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) is celebrated each year in MAY. See: www.IDAHOBIT.org.au.



More information:

- Qlife
- queerspace
- Minus 18
- Y Gender
- Switchboard Victoria
- Rainbow Health Victoria (formerly GLHV)
- Your GP
- See *Useful Links and Resources* for contact details and many more support organisations.

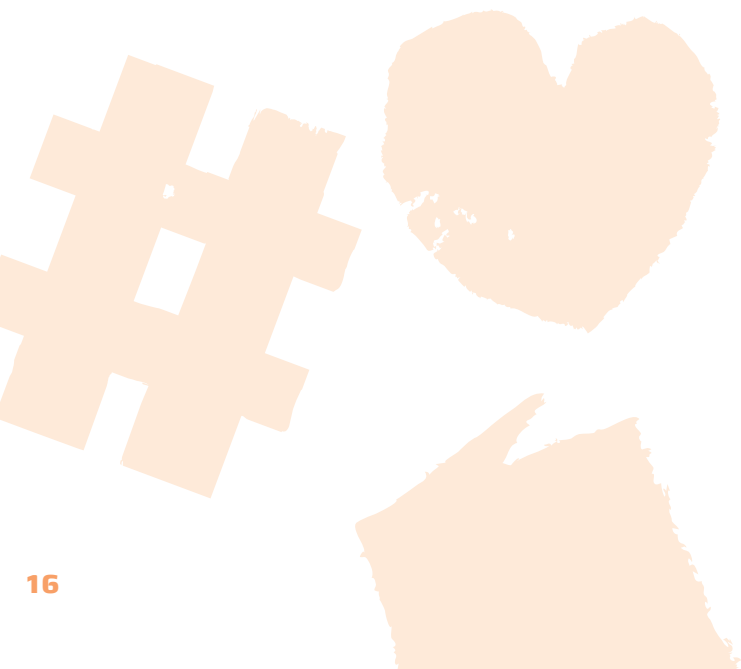


Cancer And Treatment: What To Expect

"Cancer side-swiped everything. It took over and pushed all the other things to the background"

Being diagnosed with cancer at any stage of life is huge. But it can come with particular challenges and changes when you are a young person. This section covers some common impacts experienced by many young people who have had cancer. You may experience none, some or many of these - everyone is different. This information will let you know:

- What is normal
- What to do about impacts and changes, and how to get help
- How to reduce unwanted impacts so you can live your best life.



Physical changes

Cancer and treatment can have many physical impacts. It can change how your body works and feels, how you look and your self-confidence. It's important to know that these changes are normal but also that there are strategies that can be offered to help you manage them (see **Strategies And Tools**). Some common effects of treatment include:

- Changes to the way your body works and functions. This may include pain, swelling or scarring, tingling or numbness
- Changes to your ability to move or get around, weight loss or gain, hair loss, hearing loss, changed sexual function, sleep and overall appearance
- Fatigue (feeling really physically or mentally tired a lot of the time) or needing more rest and sleep than usual
- Poor concentration, poor memory or a lack of motivation to engage in your usual routine or activities
- Changes to the way you feel about your body, sense of self, or self-confidence.

Cognitive (brain, thinking and learning) changes

Cognitive changes relate to the way we learn and think. These are sometimes referred to as 'chemo-brain' (yes - this is real!). Common cognitive impacts include problems with:

- Staying focused, concentrating or remembering things
- Following instructions or learning new information
- Planning, organisation and time management
- Problem solving
- Completing activities within a given timeframe
- Writing or finding the right words to use
- Keeping up in conversations
- Interacting with friends or other people.

Emotional changes

Experiencing any stressful event in life usually leads to feeling a whole range of emotions. While this is normal, if you feel overwhelmed by these emotions or if they last for a long time or they stop you from doing things you usually enjoy, it is important to tell someone you trust and ask for help. Some common emotional impacts include:

- Depression or low mood
- Anxiety
- Excessive worry in general or about the future, including about cancer returning
- Persistent sadness, crying or a sense of loss
- Anger, irritability, impatience, lashing out at others
- Feelings of persistent guilt
- Feeling emotionally tired or worn out
- A lack of motivation or feeling lost
- Withdrawing from friends/other people or wanting to be by yourself all the time
- Not doing normal activities (e.g. school, work or other things you used to enjoy)
- Changes to sleep, eating or weight
- Loss of confidence or a changed sense of self.

Social changes

Social changes may include changes to relationships or activities like school, study, work, hobbies, sports or music. People may drift away, not understand what you are going through, or treat you differently. You may also lose touch with things you used to enjoy. Some common signs of social changes include:

- Changed relationships with family members, partners or friends
- Losing friendships or relationships
- Withdrawing from other people or feeling isolated
- Losing interest in things that you usually enjoy (e.g. sport)
- Mood changes including depression, low mood, anxiety, persistent worry or sadness, irritability, anger or frustration
- Not knowing what to do next with life.

It is important to remember that whether you are experiencing a few or many of these changes, lots of other young people with cancer experience these too. There are also things that you can do that can help you to manage and reduce the impact of these on your life. The most important thing is to talk to your healthcare team or someone you trust about any changes you experience or worry you have and to ask for help (see [Strategies And Tools](#)).



Did you know...

- Approximately 1,100 young people aged 15-25 are diagnosed with cancer each year in Australia
- Over 90% of young people diagnosed are treated in adult hospitals, where they are usually the youngest person in the room by far
- The 3 most common cancers in young people are melanoma, Hodgkin Lymphoma, and testicular cancer
- Treatment can include any combination of chemotherapy, radiation therapy, surgery, immunotherapy and/or other therapy
- The ONTrac at Peter Mac Victorian Adolescent & Young Adult Cancer Service was established in 2004 to support young people with cancer (and their families, partners, and friends).



More Information: Useful Links and Resources

- Your healthcare team
- Your local Youth Cancer Service
- Your GP
- CanTeen Australia
- Cancer Advisor
- Sony You Can Connect Online Platform
- Redkite
- See *Useful Links and Resources* for contact details and many more support organisations.

Young Peoples' Experience: Cancer And Identity

"It's a double whammy. Sexual and gender minority plus cancer minority"

Cancer can cause serious changes to your life. But when you are figuring out your identity, or if you identify as LGBTIQ+, it can be even more complex. This section describes some common challenges faced by young people who have had cancer and identify as sexually and/or gender diverse.

"I can't fathom what it would be like to go through my cancer journey while trying to figure out my identity"

Many young people talk about the challenges of managing cancer and treatment, especially invasive physical procedures, when adjusting to a changing body.

"You're diagnosed and suddenly there are all these people doing tests and examinations. I wasn't even comfortable with my body. I didn't identify with it at all, especially my breasts. It was really hard to manage"

They also talk about the challenges of having to discuss sexuality or gender identity, especially when they may be unsure or are talking about it for the first time.

"I was asked about how I identify, but given I don't yet know what that is for me it was really hard to answer. I didn't know what to say and I don't think the doctor understood that"

"Being young makes it extra awkward. Having to disclose your sexuality to a complete stranger, particularly if they're like an older doctor or something is really hard"



A lot of young people also report not feeling safe enough to disclose their sexuality or gender identity to healthcare professionals, especially when people make assumptions about identity, or don't think to ask.

"I would have put it on the backburner if I didn't have a partner. I'd be here. I'd be me. But I wouldn't be Gay Me. It would have been a different experience"

"I was in a relationship, so I was automatically outed. If I was single I probably would have avoided it. Given a standard non-response"

Having to come out over and over again can also be a big challenge.

"You have to continually come out to professionals over and over again and you consistently monitor how the other person responds to you when you do"

"It was kind of annoying, having to say 'this is my partner' a million times over"

You may worry about how other people will react, being judged or experiencing discrimination.

"I worried about what was happening behind the scenes. What do the doctors or nurses say about my sexuality when I'm not around?"

"I don't know what I would have done if I experienced outward homophobia in a place where I was meant to be safe"

You may also have concerns about the privacy of your personal information.

"In a room of family members and staff, for my doctor to blurt out confidential information that I had shared with him about my gender identity was heartbreaking"

"On the one hand I would prefer to be asked about my sexual identity because it might have changed my experience... on the other hand it might have brought prejudice, especially if the person trusted with that confidential information was prejudiced themselves"



Fertility can be particularly tricky when you identify as sexually or gender diverse.

"Some of my team didn't know how to deal or appropriately care for me as a trans-person when it came to fertility"

"I chose not to have fertility preservation. My doctor didn't know if it was because I was gay or didn't want children or what. But they just wouldn't ask"

Sometimes young people don't feel like they have a lot of support outside of the hospital, or already experience conflict with family members because of their identity.

"With my family, the diagnosis brought everything to a head. It brought out their true colours and their homophobia. So then it became a bit of a tug of war with my partner and family, like 'who gets to look after him'; you know?"



And the needs of partners can also go unrecognised.

"I lost track of how many times I had to correct medical staff when they asked if I was my partner's sister. As a same sex couple, we get this ALL the time"

"Where do I stand as the partner? In society we don't have a seat at the table, let alone in the health environment"

The physical environment and the hospital system can also make you feel unsafe, especially if there is no visible recognition of sexuality and gender diversity.

"Having no recognition of diversity, well it says you are alone. It does nothing to reassure you that there are others struggling with the same things"

"It's so hard. Every time you have to fill in a form that asks if you are male or female it's like a kick in the guts. What if you are neither or don't know? It's really alienating. What am I supposed to do?"

It is helpful to know that you are not alone and that other young people also experience these and similar challenges. But the important thing to know is there are things you can do to address these challenges and there is support available to help.

“It’s really important to find professionals that you trust in the hospital setting. Someone to stand by your side. So when you walk in, you know you are not alone”



More information

- National LGBTI Health Alliance
- Your local Youth Cancer Service
- Your healthcare team
- Your GP
- See *Useful Links and Resources* for contact details and many more support organisations.



Did you know...

- A cancer diagnosis during the adolescent & young adult years comes at a time in life that is characterised by complex transitions and change, including the evolving development of sexuality and gender identity
- In a systematic review conducted by the ONTrac at Peter Mac Victorian Adolescent & Young Adult Cancer Service, a search of the literature exploring the intersection of cancer, LGBTIQ+ identity, and adolescents and young adults, returned only 1 piece of original research – demonstrating a very real gap in research in this area!
- LGBTIQ+ young people report barriers to accessing healthcare services, including feeling uncomfortable disclosing their identity to healthcare providers, and feeling invisible or overlooked in traditional healthcare settings.

Your Rights

"The highest attainable standard of health is a fundamental right of every human being" - World Health Organisation

"The right to health must be enjoyed without discrimination on the grounds of race, age, ethnicity or any other status...including gender identity or sexual orientation"

World Health Organisation



Knowing your rights as a young person with cancer who identifies as sexually and/or gender diverse is really important. Knowing what you are entitled to can help to ensure that you receive the best care and know what to do if your rights are not respected.

According to the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare, everyone has the **RIGHT** to...

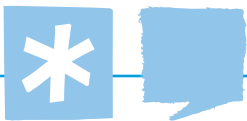
- **ACCESS:** You have the right to healthcare and access to services to meet your unique health needs. This includes access to suitably qualified multi-disciplinary healthcare professionals, and age-appropriate specialist oncology support
- **SAFETY:** You have the right to feel safe and receive safe, high quality care that is provided with professional skill and competence
- **RESPECT:** You have the right to be shown respect, dignity and consideration. Your care should respect you and your culture, beliefs, values and personal characteristics. You also have the right to be taken seriously as a young person



- **COMMUNICATION:** You have the right to be informed about services, treatment options and costs and care in a clear, open and timely way and in a way that you can understand to help you to make informed choices
- **PARTICIPATION:** You have the right to be included in decisions and choices about your care and health service planning. You have the right to be educated and empowered to participate in your healthcare
- **PRIVACY:** You have the right to privacy and confidentiality of your personal information, including your sexuality and gender identity
- **COMMENT:** You have the right to comment or provide feedback on your care, and have any concerns addressed appropriately.

As a person who identifies as sexually and/or gender diverse you also have the right to:

- **FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION:** Discrimination on the basis of a person's sexuality or gender identity is against the law in Australia. This includes direct discrimination where you are treated less favourably because of how you identify. It also includes indirect discrimination where a policy, rule or practice disadvantages you because of your identity. Remember that you have the right to comment if you experience discrimination
- **HAVE YOUR NEEDS MET:** You have the right to have your needs met. This includes having your sexuality and gender identity recognised; your partner and relationship acknowledged; and/or your needs as a trans or non-binary person met in terms of the use of public spaces and facilities
- **NOT DISCLOSE:** You have the right not to tell other people about your sexuality and/or gender identity if you don't want to (but remember, it is always a good idea to try and be open if you feel safe, so you can advocate for yourself and have all your needs met).



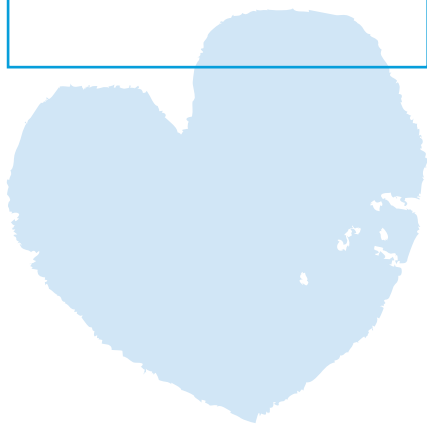
Did you know...

- You have the right to confidentiality. This means that your personal information, including information about your sexuality and gender identity, is kept private by professionals you are working with, within the context of the health service. This is the case unless you are at risk of harm to yourself or others – in this situation, professionals have a responsibility to disclose to people who can help to keep you safe
- If you have a complaint it is important to know that you have the right to comment. Hospitals have people (often called Patient Advocates) who support patients who have comments or complaints. Connect with the Patient Advocate in your hospital or talk to someone you trust in your healthcare team if you have a complaint. And remember that this is your right!
- You can change your gender on your Driver's License, Medicare, and Passport (although Medicare uses a binary system for recording gender).
- To change your gender on your Victorian birth certificate you must have had sex affirmation surgery. This can be an ongoing distress for those trans-people who cannot or choose not to have this surgical treatment.



More information

- The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare
- The Cancer Council Pro Bono Legal Service
- The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria
- The Victorian Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby
- Your local Youth Cancer Service
- Your healthcare team
- Your GP
- See *Useful Links and Resources* for contact details and many more support organisations.



Strategies And Tools

There are a lot of things you can do to help you to advocate for yourself, especially if you ever feel disempowered because of your sexuality and/or gender identity. The most important thing is to know that you matter, you are not alone and to find someone you trust to support you.



Take time and be kind to yourself

It can take time to work out your sexuality and gender identity. For some people, identity is fluid and can change over time. You might identify as a gay man in university and as a bisexual man later in life. Or, you might have known you were a lesbian or trans from a young age, even if you didn't necessarily have the words at the time. The bottom line is that your particular identity is real and valid, whatever it is at any moment in time.

Adjusting to a diagnosis of cancer and treatment can also take time and can come with many challenges and changes. It is so important to be kind to yourself. Give yourself time. Know that *you* matter and take care of you. The following may help you to look after yourself:

- Always remember that you are unique, important and that you matter
- Surround yourself with people who make you feel safe, seen, heard and loved
- Identify the positive things in life that bring you joy and help to relax you. Try to integrate these into your day and/or week
- Use strategies to manage stress, anxiety or worry. For example:
 - > Practice relaxation, meditation, mindfulness or slow breathing (e.g. count to 3 on the in-breath and 3 on the out-breath). Apps such as those available through Headspace, Buddhify and Smiling Mind are really useful tools to use to help with guided meditation and mindfulness



- > Write down how you are feeling. It can really help to get the hundreds of thoughts we have every day out of our head and onto paper. This can stop thoughts from spinning in our head, be relaxing and can also help us to reflect on and understand our thoughts and feelings
- > Focus on the present moment. The past is gone and the future has yet to happen. Focussing on what you can do here and now can have a positive impact on relaxation and reduce worry
- Know when to ask for help. Everyone struggles at some point in life. It's important to know that everything is easier to manage when we have support from other people so it is important to know when to ask for help.

Find your allies and seek support

Having allies or support people around you who you trust and can advocate for you and your needs can be really helpful. This may include family, a partner, friends or people from your healthcare team, staff from your local Youth Cancer Service or other support organisations. You may have one ally or a team of allies. Either way, any experience is easier when you have support and don't have to face it alone. It can be helpful to:

- Write a list of the people who support you so you remember who to contact when you could use a little help
- Identify a key contact in your healthcare team who you trust, can talk to, can support you and who you can contact with questions you may have
- Talk to your healthcare team for advice and referrals for support (i.e. referral to a social worker or psychologist, or referral to a support group or community organisation)
- Know that your ally or allies can come to appointments with you and support you in hospital too.



Communication is key

Talking to others about your sexuality and/or gender identity can be hard, especially if you are still figuring it all out or if you have never spoken about it before. When you interact with healthcare services, it is likely that at some point you will be either asked about your identity, or have an assumption made about your identity. The most important thing is to work out how you are most comfortable talking about who you are. While it might be tempting to hide your identity, being open about it when you feel safe enough to do so can put you in control of what other people know about you. It can also help make sure all your needs and priorities are met. Some things that can help are:

- Being prepared in what you want to say and how to say it. You may want to have a think about:
 - > What you want to share. You will want to keep some stuff private and that's OK. Decide what you want to say. This may mean planning it in your head or writing it down
 - > Who you want to tell. You may want to talk to everyone yourself or share what you want to with a trusted ally who can tell other people
 - > How you want to communicate. Sometimes a conversation in person may be best but an email, letter or message may be easier.
- It can also be useful to:
 - > Practise talking about your identity to someone you trust so you get used to saying it out loud
 - > Imagine situations where you will be asked about your identity or questions that people may ask. People may say silly things or ask tactless questions so it can help to be prepared
 - > Ask others who have been there before for suggestions
 - > Have an ally with you who you trust and who can support you or talk on your behalf.
- The *Genders, Bodies & Relationships Passport* may help you to provide information to others about your identity without having to talk about it (see <https://lgbtihealth.org.au/passport/>).

Knowledge is power!

Knowing your rights, how the health system works and where to find support are key. It is particularly important to:

- Understand what you are entitled to as a young person with cancer and who may identify as sexually and/or gender diverse (also see *Your Rights*). This can help to ensure that you receive the best care and your rights are respected
- Understand how the health system works and identify your supports including safe spaces and allies in the health setting
- Know where to find extra information and support (see *Useful Links and Resources*).



Did you know...

In some situations you may be asked about your sexuality and gender identity by professionals or by having to fill in a form. This may include:

- When you register as a new patient with a doctor, GP or in hospital
- At your first appointment
- Before a test or a scan
- During admission to hospital
- During treatment
- When you meet a new healthcare professional for the first time.

Some people assume that everyone identifies as either male or female or that everyone is straight. Some forms don't give options for anything other than Male/Female. While this may feel isolating and isn't right, being prepared for how you will respond can help.



Tips and tricks

It is important to remember that it is your right to have your sexual and gender identity recognised in the healthcare system. Some options for responding to questions about your identity are below. These may be useful whether someone asks you about your identity or you have to fill in a form. In these situations you can:

- Talk about your identity if you feel comfortable
- Use the *Genders, Bodies and Relationships Passport* to explain how you identify if you don't feel comfortable talking about it
- Cross out the binary gender options on forms and write how you actually identify (e.g. queer or non-binary or however it is that you identify)
- Say "There actually isn't an option on this form/here that is right for me. I am actually gay/lesbian/trans/questioning".

If people don't know what you mean or ask silly questions, you can respond in a way that is safe for you. For example, you may:

- Say, "I don't want to talk about this more with you now, just please note my identity on my medical record", or
- Say, "I would rather wait to talk about this with my ally/social worker/friend/parent/partner present"
- Pass on the *Information for Professionals* tear-out in this guide
- Ask for the details of the Patient Advocate.

It also helps to find safe spaces in the hospital and identify your support people who can help you to advocate for your needs. Some safe spaces may include:

- Your local Youth Cancer Service
- The social worker or social work department
- The Patient Advocate or Information and Support Centres.

Notes:

Appendices

Appendix A: Information for Partners

“Where do I stand as the partner? In society we don’t have a seat at the table, let alone in the health environment”

“I lost track of how many times I had to correct medical staff when they asked if I was my partner’s sister. As a same sex couple, we get this ALL the time”

Being the partner of a young person with cancer can be particularly challenging. A lot of sexually and/or gender diverse couples and partners report difficulties when interacting with the health system.



It can help to know that other people also experience challenges. But the important thing to know is that there are strategies and supports available to help you to manage and feel safe, seen and heard.



Tips and tricks

Take time and be kind to yourself

Adjusting to your partner's diagnosis of cancer can be really hard. The most important thing is to be kind to yourself, know that you matter and to take care of you too. These strategies may help:

- Surround yourself with people who support you
- Use strategies to manage stress, anxiety or worry. For example, practice relaxation, meditation, mindfulness, slow breathing or write down how you are feeling to get the thoughts out of your head
- Everyone struggles at some point and it is important to know when to ask for help.

Knowledge is power

Knowing your rights as the partner of a young person is important and empowering. Know that you have the right to:

- Be safe
- Be acknowledged
- Be involved in your partner's care as they choose
- Freedom from discrimination.

If your partner chooses, you can be nominated as the key point of contact for information within the hospital (next of kin) or as a power of attorney, allowing you to comment on the care they receive.

Communication is key

Correcting people who assume you are a friend or relative, rather than a partner, can be frustrating. If people don't know what to do or ask silly questions, being prepared for what you will say can help. You might say, "I'm actually X's partner. Please note his/her/their identity on the medical record".



More information

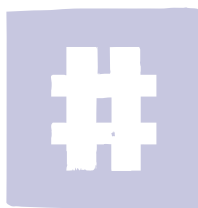
- PFLAG Australia
- Cancer Council Pro Bono Legal Service
- Qlife
- ReachOut
- Your local Youth Cancer Service
- The hospital Patient Advocate
- See: *Useful Links and Resources* for contact details and many more support organisations.

APPENDIX B: INFORMATION FOR PROFESSIONALS

This provides basic education to healthcare professionals who may work with or interact with young people with cancer who identify as LGBTIQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bi or Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer or Questioning) or more broadly as sexually and/or gender diverse. You may be a doctor, nurse, allied health professional, ward clerk or administrator. Regardless, you play an important role in the care of these valuable young people.

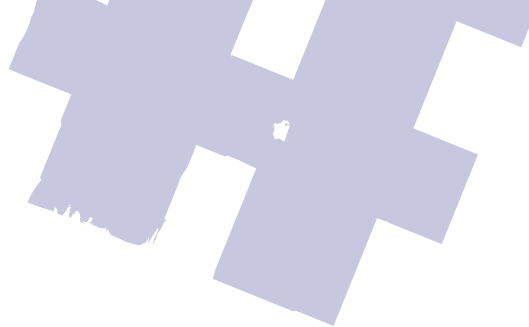
In any work with young people, it is essential that they are free from discrimination and feel safe, heard, respected and valued. This supports the engagement of young people and is essential to ensure that professionals fulfil their duty of care. Young people who identify as sexually and/or gender diverse face disproportionate discrimination, bullying, violence, isolation and mental ill health diagnoses including depression and anxiety. For these young people, your duty of care is especially important. To fulfil this, it is vital that these young people know that:

- Their identity or way of being is respected and that they are safe from harm and discrimination
- Their identity is real and valid and that this is acknowledged without requirement to conform to traditional gender or sexual stereotypes
- They have control over their own identity, presentation, body and healthcare.



Tips and tricks

Don't assume, Do ask	It is important not to assume and ask EVERYONE how they identify in terms of sexuality and gender. It's simple. Ask "How do you identify?" or "What are the pronouns that you use to describe yourself?" If you get it wrong, apologise and move on. Understand the specific risks faced by young people who identify as LGBTIQ+, and regularly assess safety and wellbeing "Maybe if I was asked directly I would be more inclined to give that information"
Partner with young people	Young people are the experts in their own lives and needs. Ask young people what they need from you so you can understand and best support them
Use appropriate communication & language	Understand the language the young person uses to describe their identity and the pronouns they use
Ensure confidentiality & privacy	Explain confidentiality and its limits to young people. It is vital to respect the confidentiality and privacy of young people's personal information to ensure safety and to foster engagement
Understand social networks	The supports of young people who identify as LGBTIQ+ may be different to those of other young people. Sometimes the family home or community is not a safe place for young people who identify as sexually and/or gender diverse. Understand the young person's individual social network and engage with and support these people (may be a partner, friends or family member etc.)
Ensure a safe & visible environment	Provide a visibly safe and welcoming environment. Consider the use of the rainbow flag, your documentation, language, available resources, advertising, and the use of gendered spaces (e.g. toilets) "Having that public recognition and visibility was so important for us in those first days... More visibility can't hurt though"



Educate yourself	Know that the experience and needs of young people differ to the experience and needs of adults and younger children. Understand the specific risks faced by young people who identify as LGBTIQ+ and the challenges they face. Understand how to engage with young people and practice Youth Friendly Care to best support young people “It was made a little bit easier when the nurses and doctors were younger or geared to younger thinking” “I’m confident good medical care was given regardless of my sexuality, but there are more specialised needs in terms of social treatment”
Raise awareness	Advocate for the needs of young people who identify as LGBTIQ+, educate others to ensure that these valuable young people are safe, seen and heard and know they matter.



Appendix C:

Glossary

Please note that the language in this area is constantly evolving as we understand more and more, but we hope this glossary will serve as a good starting place and general guide!

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Agender	Having no or very little connection with the traditional definitions of gender or no personal alignment with the concepts of man or woman
Ally or allied	A person or people who support you. Can be straight and or cisgender people who support you and support and respect the LGBTIQ+ community
Androgynous	Gender expression that has elements of both masculinity and femininity
Asexual	Experiencing little or no sexual attraction to others and/or a lack of interest in sexual relationships. This exists on a continuum
AYA	Adolescent and Young Adult. In the Australian cancer context, refers to people aged 15-25 years
Bi curious	Curiosity about attraction to people of the same sex or gender
Bi gender	Fluctuating between the traditional definitions of woman and man, gendered behaviour and identities. Identifies with both genders
Bisexual or bi	Being romantically, physically and/or sexually attracted to men and women
Brotherboy	Describes some trans people in some Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities with distinct cultural identities and roles. Brotherboys were considered female at birth but identify and live their lives as males
Cancer	A group of diseases that are characterised by the multiplication and uncontrolled spread of abnormal cells
Cisgender or cis	Gender identity that matches the gender or sex a person was assigned at birth

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Cognitive	Changes to cognition including thinking and memory
Coming out	The processes of accepting and/or coming to determine one's gender and/or sexual identity, and sharing this with others
Counselling	Professional assistance and guidance to resolve personal or psychological problems
Fatigue	Extreme physical or mental tiredness which results in a reduced capacity to perform as per usual; a common side effect of many cancer treatments and one that can last a long time
Fluid	Refers to a gender and/or sexual identity that changes or shifts over time between or within all optional identities
Gay	Being romantically, physically and/or sexually attracted to members of the same sex or gender as you
Gender binary	The idea that there are only two genders and everyone is one of these genders
Gender diversity	A term that includes all the different ways gender can be described. It includes people still working out their gender, questioning their gender or those who identify as trans, gender non-conforming, gender variant, gender queer, non-binary and many more
Gender expression	How we represent our gender identity in the world including our name, our appearance and behaviour, and the pronouns we identify with (i.e. she/her, he/him, they/them, ze/zer)
Gender identity	Every person's individual experience of gender. Our sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither or anywhere on the gender spectrum. This can be the same as, or different from, our sex
Gender queer	A gender identity label used when people do not identify with the binary or man/woman. Often used as a broad term for many non-binary gender identities
Gender variant	Not identifying as either man or women. May identify with both genders, neither gender or move fluidly between them



TERM	DESCRIPTION
GP	General practitioner or doctor who provides general medical care, mental healthcare, sexual healthcare and support
Healthcare team	Team of healthcare professionals who care for you during your cancer treatment. May include your oncologist, nurses, psychologist, social worker, dietitian, education and vocation advisor
Hetero-normativity	The assumption that everyone is heterosexual. Leads to a lack of understanding, invisibility and stigmatisation of other sexual identities
Heterosexual	Being romantically, physically and/or sexually attracted to members of the opposite sex to you
Homosexual	Being romantically, physically and/or sexually attracted to members of the same sex as you
Intersex	The combination of chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal sex organs and genitals that differs from the two expected patterns of male and female and is rather some combination of the two
Lesbian	Women who are romantically, physically and/or sexually attracted to other women
LGBTIQ+	Stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer/questioning, with the plus denoting other identities not specified
MSM	Men who have sex with men. Used to distinguish sexual identity from sexual behaviour (i.e. not all MSM identify as gay or bi)
Mx	A gender neutral title (i.e. Mr, Miss, Mrs, Mx)
Non-binary or Non-conforming	Not identifying as either man or women. May identify with both genders, neither gender or move fluidly between them
Oncologist	Medical professional or doctor who specialises in cancer and treatment
Oncology	The study and treatment of cancer

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Pansexual or pan	Experiencing romantic, physical and/or sexual attraction to people of any sex or gender identity
Patient Advocate	Hospital professionals who advocate for patient's rights and needs
Power of Attorney	People legally authorised to act on behalf of someone else in specific legal, medical or financial matters
Psychologist	A mental health professional who specialises and provides support for psychological problems
Queer	A broad term used to describe individuals who identify as gender and/or sexually diverse. Sometimes used interchangeably with LGBTIQ+
Questioning	When a person is unsure of, or exploring, their gender and/or sexual identity
Right	A legal entitlement
Sex	Biological sex is assigned at birth based on anatomical and physiological characteristics. This can include being male, female or intersex (having characteristics that don't fit the typical definition of female or male sex)
Sexual diversity	A term that includes all the different ways that sexuality can be described. It includes people who are still working out or questioning their identity or people who identify as homosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, asexual and many more
Sexual identity	Describes who we are attracted to physically, romantically and/or sexually
Sistergirl	Describes some trans people in some Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities with distinct cultural identities and roles. Sistergirls were considered male at birth but identify and live their lives as females
Social worker	Healthcare professional who specialises in practical, emotional and mental health support and advocacy

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Straight	Being romantically, physically and/or sexually attracted to people who are not the same sex as you
They/Them	Alternate pronouns that are gender neutral
Third gender	Not identifying with either men or women but as another gender. Some societies recognise more than two genders. This term moves beyond the assumption that there are only two genders
Trans	An umbrella term used to describe a range of identities where a person does not identify with the sex or gender they were assigned at birth. It can also be used to include identities that sit outside binary sex or gender identities
Transitioning	Refers to the process a trans person undertakes when moving towards being more congruent with the sex or gender with which they identify
Transman	Describes female to male trans people, to indicate that they identify as/are men but were assigned female at birth
Transwoman	Describes male to female trans people to indicate that they identify as/are women but were assigned male at birth
WSW	Women who have sex with women. Used to distinguish sexual identity from sexual behaviour (i.e. not all WSW identify as gay, lesbian or bi)
Youth cancer service	Services across Australia that specifically support young people aged 15 to 25 who have a diagnosis of cancer and their families, partners and friends
Ze/Zir	Alternate pronouns that are gender neutral

Appendix D:

Useful Links and Resources

Australian National LGBTIQ+ Services and Supports

Black Rainbow

A social network for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who identify as LGBTIQ+, sistergirl or brotherboy. <http://www.blackrainbow.org.au/>

Headspace and Qheadsace

A national mental health service for young people aged 12-25 years old. Online and centre-based. Qheadsace is an initiative that provides tailored supports and resources for young people who identify as LGBTIQ+. <https://headspace.org.au/>

Intersex Human Rights Australia (formerly OII Australia)

An independent support, education and policy development organisation, by and for people with intersex variations or traits. Focus on evidence-based, patient-directed healthcare. <https://ihra.org.au/>

Minus 18

Provides mental health support, peer mentoring and social events in support of LGBTIQ+ young people from all over Australia. <https://www.minus18.org.au/>

National LGBTI Health Alliance and MindOUT

The national peak health organisation for individuals and other organisations focused on LGBTIQ+ people and communities. MindOUT is one initiative of the Alliance that focuses on mental health and suicide prevention and offers resources and education, professional development and works collaboratively with young people. <https://lgbtihealth.org.au> | <https://lgbtihealth.org.au/mindout/>

PFLAG Australia

A non-profit voluntary organisation and support network for parents and families of LGBTIQ+ people. <http://pflagaustralia.org.au/>

Qlife

A national service that aims to keep LGBTIQ+ communities supported and connected. Offers online and telephone counselling, support, resources and referrals. 1800 184 527 | www qlife.org.au (online chat: 3pm-12am AEST)

Reachout

Online mental health service and support for young people in Australia. Provides information, resources and links to services for young people who identify as LGBTIQ+. www.reachout.com | <https://au.reachout.com/identity-and-gender>



Transcend

Provides parent/carer support, community connection, information, education, resources and advocacy for families of trans and gender diverse young people. www.transcendsupport.com.au

Zoe Belle Gender Centre (ZBGC)

An online service to support the health and wellbeing of Victorians who identify as gender and/or sexually diverse. Provides online Q & A as well as information for people across Australia. www.zbgc.com.au

Services and Support by State/Territory

VIC

Gasp

A safe and inclusive space for young LGBTIQ+ people in Geelong aged between 12-25. Weekly meetings, social events, information and advice. <https://gaspgeelong.org.au/>

Monash Health Gender Clinic

For individuals 17 years and above. Service provides individualised, client centred care for trans, gender diverse and non-binary people with the aim of improving their health and wellbeing. <http://monashhealth.org/services/services-f-n/gender-clinic/>

queerspace and queerspace youth

queerspace is an LGBTIQ+ health and wellbeing support service located within Drummond Street Services. queerspace youth is a peer-led program for LGBTIQ+ people aged 18-25 years old. <http://www.queerspace.org.au/> | <http://thedrum.ds.org.au/program/queerspaceyouth/>

Rainbow Health Victoria (formerly GLHV)

An LGBTIQ+ health and wellbeing policy and resource unit. Provides comprehensive resources and information as well as training and programs such as inclusive service delivery. <https://www.glhv.org.au/> (new website to be launched soon)

Rainbow Network

Provides online information and resources for the LGBTIQ+ community, professionals working with young people who identify as diverse, and links to supports and services. www.rainbownetwork.com.au

RCH Gender Service

The Royal Children's Hospital Gender Service aims to improve the physical and mental health outcomes of children and adolescents who are trans or gender diverse. <https://www.rch.org.au/adolescent-medicine/gender-service/>

Switchboard Victoria

An anonymous and free telephone counselling, information and referral service for LGBTIQ+ communities in Victoria and Tasmania.
1800 184 527 | www.switchboard.org.au

The Diversity Project

Servicing the Greater Shepparton region (and beyond), the Diversity Project offers case management and community development services for 10-25-year-olds who identify as LGBTIQ+. <https://www.unitingkildonan.org.au/programs-and-services/child-youth-and-family-support/diversity-project/>

The Victorian Pride Centre

Opening in 2020 – soon to be the new home of Victoria's LGBTIQ+ communities; a hub for groups and organisations to share ideas and resources. Also providing a health service and library. **Search the website now for links to local area support organisations and peer groups.** <https://pridecentre.org.au/>

The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic)

The peak body on young people's issues in Victoria. YACVic manages the HEY Grants and advises on projects for all young people, with a focus on LGBTIQ+ communities. <https://www.yacvic.org.au/>

Transgender Victoria

An organisation committed to achieving justice, equity and quality health & community services for trans and gender diverse people, partners, families and friends. <https://transgendervictoria.com/>

Victorian Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby

A community-based lobby working toward equality, social justice and human rights for members of the LGBTIQ+ communities. <http://vglrl.org.au/>

Ygender

A peer led support and advocacy organisation for trans and gender diverse young people. Provide resources, information, workshops, advocacy and events. www.ygender.org.au

ACT

A Gender Agenda

An ACT based information website and online community of support for people who are intersex, trans and gender-diverse. www.genderrights.org.au

Diversity ACT

A community-based service hub for the LGBTIQ+ community of the ACT. Social worker by appointment. Drop in space. Resources, social programs and groups including Queer Youth Together and Lesbian Social Group.

<http://diversityact.org.au/>

Twenty10 Incorporating GLCS NSW

An organisation that provides support services and social spaces for people who identify as gender and/or sexually diverse. Tailored to young people aged under 26.

(02) 8594 9555 (metro support; 10am-6pm, M-F)

1800 65 2010 (regional support 10am-6pm, M-F)

www.twenty10.org.au

NSW

ACON

A NSW based organisation specialising in HIV prevention, support and LGBTIQ+ health via state-wide counselling, care coordination, substance support, peer education and health promotion. 1800 063 060 | www.acon.org.au

Dayenu

A social and networking group for Sydney's LGBTIQ+ Jewish community. Offers counselling, fact-sheets and reading lists. <http://dayenu.org.au/>

Inner City Legal Centre

Provides free legal services to Sydney's LGBTIQ+ community, including information and referral services and specialist legal advice.

<http://www.iclc.org.au/>

NSW Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby

Provides referral and resources on LGBTIQ+ rights to the media, policy makers and the community, including safety for LGBTIQ+ young people in schools.

<https://girl.org.au/>

The Gender Centre Inc.

A NSW organisation that provides information and support to trans and gender-diverse people. Includes counselling, case management, housing and group work outreach. (02) 9519 7599 | www.gendercentre.org.au

Twenty10

(See entry under ACT for details)

NT**Out NT**

An initiative of Rainbow Territory that aims to support people of the LGBTIQ+ community through information and support. <http://www.outnt.info>

QLD**Diverse Voices**

A non-profit organisation that supports the wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ communities through a telephone and web based counselling service
1800 184 527 | www.diversevoices.org.au

Open Doors Youth Service

A drop-in centre and support service for young people under 25 who identify as gender and/or sexually diverse. They offer counselling, outreach workers, peer support programs and social events. (07) 3257 7660 | www.opendoors.net.au

LGBTI Community Legal Service

Based in Fortitude Valley, specialised legal service for the LGBTIQ+ community.
(07) 3124 7160

Sunshine Coast Pride Network

Community organisation designed to help LGBTIQ+ people network, support and band together in mutual celebration. Events include a Rainbow Formal.
<http://www.sunshinecoastpride.org/>

SA

Bfriend

Support for people who identify as gender and/or sexually diverse offered by phone, email and face-to-face. They also offer a mentorship program. (08) 8202 5190 | www.unitingcommunities.org/bfriend

UNIDOS

A free, confidential program for people who are same-sex attracted or questioning their sexuality, particularly from CALD backgrounds. Offers individual support, social events, workshops and discussion groups. <https://www.rasa.org.au/unidos/>

TAS

Rainbow Tasmania

This website is the digital home of Rainbow Communities Tasmania Inc., an incorporated body of organisations dedicated to achieving and maintaining inclusion and equity for LGBTIQ+ Tasmanians. <http://rainbowtas.org/>

Switchboard Tasmania

An anonymous and free telephone counselling, information and referral service for LGBTIQ+ communities in Victoria and Tasmania. 1800 184 527 | www.switchboard.org.au

Working It Out

A support and education service that provides direct support, including free and confidential counselling and support groups for people working out their gender, sexuality and/or intersex status. (03) 6334 4103 (North)/ (03) 6432 3643 (Northwest)/(03) 6231 1200 (south) | www.workingitout.org.au

WA

Living Proud

A phone counselling service available to anyone who identifies as gender and/or sexually diverse. Referral pathways to diversity friendly doctors and health services, psychologists, counsellors and lawyers as well as other community groups. Also provide community workshops, education and training. 1800 184 527 | www.livingproud.org.au

The Freedom Centre

Provides safe social spaces, peer support, information and referral for young people who identify as LGBTIQ+. (08) 9228 0354 | www.freedom.org.au.

Other Mental Health Services and Supports

Apps for mindfulness and meditation

- Buddhify - <https://buddhify.com/>
- Smiling Mind - <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/>

Australian Psychological Society

Information about psychology support services and how to find a local psychologist in your area. 1800 333 497 | www.psychology.org.au

BeyondBlue

Provides mental health information and support for everyone
1300 22 46 36 | www.beyondblue.org.au

Kids Helpline

24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 – 25 years.
1800 55 1800 | <https://kidshelpline.com.au>

Lifeline

A national charity for all Australians experiencing a personal crisis. 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services. 13 11 14 | www.lifeline.org.au

Youth Cancer Services and Supports

ONTrac at Peter Mac Victorian Adolescent and Young Adult Cancer Service

Provides expert multidisciplinary care and support to young people with cancer including medical support, nursing, psychology, social work, education and vocation support and other specialty care.
03 8559 6880 | www.ontrac.petermac.org



Youth Cancer Services

Services in each mainland state of Australia that provides expert multidisciplinary care and support to young people with cancer including medical support, psychology, social work, education and vocation support and other specialty care.

CanTeen

Australian organisation that supports young people with cancer throughout Australia. Provide counselling and support, peer connection, information and resources. www.canteen.org.au

Cancer Advisor

An online platform, funded and moderated by Redkite, that gathers information about specific types of cancer and treatment options from leading global medical organisations. Information and peer connections.
<https://www.canceradvisor.org.au/>

Cancer Council Australia

Provides information, research, support and resources. Provides contact details for local services, support and information. They also offer financial and legal information and support services. 13 11 20 | www.cancer.org.au

Carers Australia

Provides information and support for carers. Also engages in advocacy and research. (02) 6122 9900 | www.carersaustralia.com.au

LIVESTRONG

Provides information, resources and support online for young people with cancer aged 15-39. www.livestrong.org

RedKite

A national organisation that offers free support to children and young people (aged 24 and under) with cancer. Services include information, counselling, financial assistance, education grants and bereavement support. RedKite also fund education and vocation advisors across Australia. www.redkite.org.au

Sony You Can Connect

An online community of young people who have experienced cancer from across Australia. <https://youcan.org.au/>

Practical Services and Supports

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare

Information on patient rights and national standards of Australian healthcare
<https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/>

Australian Human Rights Commission

Information on human rights in Australia. www.hreoc.gov.au

Cancer Council Pro-Bono Legal Service

Provides free financial and legal information and support services.
13 11 20 | www.cancer.org.au

Genders, Bodies and Relationships Passport

Multipurpose document that presents critical information about a person's gender/s, body, and relationships in a single location.
<https://lgbtihealth.org.au/passport/>

Hospital Based Supports

- The social worker or social work department
- The Patient Advocate
- Information and support centres

Medicare

When you turn 15 you can apply for your own Medicare Card to help you to be more independent in your health care. <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/medicare-card/enrol>

Mental Health Care Plans

These are plans that can be provided by your GP which provide subsidised access to a psychologist for 6-10 sessions per calendar year. Talk to your GP.

****If there is a local support organisation or service that is not represented here please contact the project team c/o ONTrac***

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The Victorian and Tasmanian Youth Cancer Action Board's (YCAB) Position Statement:

DELIVERING APPROPRIATE CARE TO
YOUNG LGBTIQ+ PEOPLE AFFECTED BY CANCER

As a Board we support:

- Inclusive, equitable, welcoming and responsive care of young LGBTIQ+ people with cancer, ensuring they receive support that is free from all forms of discrimination
- Recognition that the LGBTIQ+ population are not a homogeneous group and as such, require different approaches to meet the varying and unique needs of each individual and their family.

Accordingly, as a Board we advocate for:

- Cancer services for young people which actively consider and address sexual orientation and gender identity issues in service planning, policy development and delivery
- The employment of staff who are sensitive to the needs of LGBTIQ+ young people with cancer and competent in delivering appropriate care
- Evidence informed service improvements and initiatives to deliver better understanding and visibility of the experiences and care needs of LGBTIQ+ young people with cancer.



Acknowledgements

Of Reviewing Organisations

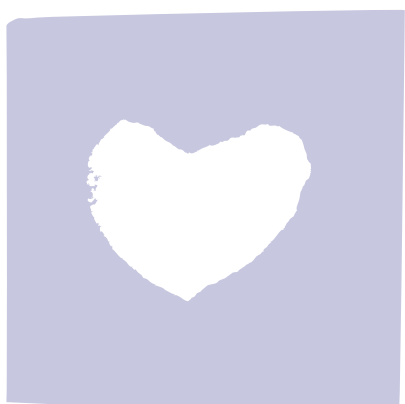
Young people with cancer are a unique group that have distinct medical, emotional, social and information needs. The ONTrac at Peter Mac Victorian Adolescent & Young Adult Cancer Service is a state-wide multidisciplinary service with professional staff specifically trained to help young people, their families, partners, and peers throughout the cancer journey.

The Victorian & Tasmanian Youth Cancer Action Board (YCAB) comprises a diverse group of young people, who have each had an experience of cancer between the ages of 15 and 25 years. YCAB provides advice and guidance on a range of youth-related cancer programs and initiatives.

queerspace provides a queer affirmative counselling and support service where individuals, families, young people and children can bring their 'whole selves'. Our team coming from one or more of the LGBTIQ+ communities ourselves, we understand the importance of affirming identities, positive community connections, relationships and wellbeing.

queerspace is part of evidence-based research and community driven practices to promote wellbeing for life for all at Drummond street services across North-Western Melbourne and Geelong.





This resource is also available online at
www.petermac.org/beingokbeingyou