
Palliative care for the LGBTI community

Summary

- There are end of life and palliative care services that provide safe, inclusive care for people who identify as LGBTI.
 - These organisations will display the 'rainbow tick'.
 - Advance care planning means you can record what is important to you for end of life care and others can know what your preferences are.
 - Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria (GLHV) helps LGBTI people with information on improving health and wellbeing.
 - There is help available if you have experienced discrimination as an LGBTI person.
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If you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or gender diverse, or intersex (LGBTI) you have the right to equality, fairness and decency for your end of life and palliative care needs. The Victorian Government values and celebrates diversity and is committed to removing discrimination from laws, services and society.

You can use end of life and palliative care services to help you and your partner as you approach the end of your life. You can receive care in hospital or in your home. Appropriate end of life care helps affirm your individual identity, your life story, and includes respect for both you and your partner.

Rainbow tick organisations

The rainbow tick (pictured below) was developed by Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria (GLHV) in 2013 and **shows which services have been accredited** to provide inclusive practices to make you feel safe and welcome. Rainbow tick organisations will treat you fairly and respectfully as an LGBTI person.

A service provider with the rainbow tick seeks to improve the health and wellbeing of LGBTI people by providing services regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.



For more information on this topic visit [GLHV](#).

Advance care planning for LGBTI people

Advance care planning allows you to document preferences about the care you want to receive if you become unable to make decisions for yourself, and can include appointing a person to make these decisions for you.

Think about who you want to take on these responsibilities and then approach them to have the conversation. You will be trusting this person with your life, so they should be someone you know very well and who you can speak to about sensitive issues. They should understand what is important to you, and be able to act on your wishes – even when faced with opposition from doctors or family members.

After having the conversation with your chosen person, you can formally appoint them to be your **medical treatment decision maker**. It will be their responsibility to do their best to make the same medical treatment decisions you would make if you were able.

You can also document your medical treatment preferences in an **advance care directive**. Advance care directives are legally recognised documents, giving you greater confidence that your medical treatment decisions

will be respected. This will also help your medical treatment decision maker act on your behalf, should you be become too unwell to make decisions yourself.

Clear and current advance care planning documents are important if you are an LGBTI person. They can assist in protecting your legal rights and end of life care preferences, particularly if your family or friends are not aware of or do not respect or acknowledge your sexual orientation, true gender identity, intersex status or relationships.

There is further information on this topic for LGBTI people on the health.vic page '[Advance care planning and palliative care](#)'.

LGBTI discrimination

As an LGBTI person you have the right to end of life and palliative care services free from discrimination and harassment. If you have been discriminated against, the problem is not with you but with the attitudes and behaviour of people and society around you.

If you have experienced discrimination you can seek help from:

- **Switchboard** Tel. (03) 9663 2939 or 1800 184 527
- **Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission** Tel. (03) 9032 3583, or 1300 292 153
- **Victorian Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby** Tel. 0417 484 438
- **Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria** Tel. (03) 9479 8760

For more information on this topic visit Better Health Channel's fact sheet on [gay and lesbian discrimination](#).

Where to get help

- **Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria (GLHV)** Tel. (03) 9479 8760 – GLHV is an LGBTI health and wellbeing policy and resource unit committed to improving the health and wellbeing of LGBTI Victorians and the quality of care they receive
- **Val's Café** Tel (03) 9479 8740 – a project that seeks to improve the health and wellbeing of older lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people
- **Palliative Care Victoria** Tel. (03) 9662 9644

This page has been produced in consultation with and approved by:

Palliative Care, Health Service Policy and Commissioning, Department of Health & Human Services

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