

**REPORT ON:  
*INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY***

**1<sup>st</sup> National LGBTIQ Domestic &  
Family Violence Conference**

**Kings Cross, Sydney – 16th September  
2011**



## **Statement on behalf of the conference working group.**

The first national LGBTIQ domestic and family violence conference was held at the Rex Centre in Kings Cross, Sydney on September 16<sup>th</sup> 2011. The conference was organised by a working party of the New South Wales (NSW) LGBTIQ domestic violence interagency and attended by approximately 160 people from NSW, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong.

The objectives of the conference were to provide a space for practitioners, researchers, academics and workers from legal, community, health and welfare organisations to share their experiences and practice in working with LGBTIQ people and family members affected by domestic and family violence.

The conference offered a forum for a wide range of diverse and sometimes conflicting perspectives to be shared in a safe, respectful environment. The field of LGBTIQ domestic and family violence is a relatively new one. Due to a lack of dedicated funding and relatively little specific research both in Australia and internationally there are some differences in opinion about emerging research and appropriate theoretical models and frameworks for the contextualisation of domestic violence in LGBTIQ relationships. Such discussion and debate is to be encouraged as it provides an opportunity for myths and misconceptions to be explored respectfully and to shape the body of critical work and best practice in this emerging field.

The LGBTIQ domestic violence interagency recognises unequivocally that the majority of domestic violence is perpetrated by heterosexual males against their female partners or ex-partners. There is a growing body of national and international qualitative and quantitative evidence that LGBTIQ people experience violence or abuse in intimate relationships at a similar rate. Studies have found that approximately one in three LGBTIQ people have experienced abuse from a current or former partner<sup>i</sup>.

This first national conference brought together a group of specialists in the field from more than 80 organisations and agencies. It aimed to be inclusive of urban, suburban, rural and regional perspectives. It is hoped that in the future, funding will be secured so that conferences can have a wider, more inclusive focus and that participants from marginalised groups and communities, as well as other states and communities in Australasia and the Asia Pacific region may participate.

On behalf of the conference working party we sincerely thank all the presenters and participants and the organisations and individuals who gave their time and resources to make the conference not just possible but a resounding success. Thanks to all who came on the day and shared their perspectives, practice and expertise. We very much look forward to the next conference.

Moo Baulch, Convenor of the 2011 LGBTIQ Domestic & Family Violence Conference working group  
[mbaulch@acon.org.au](mailto:mbaulch@acon.org.au)

## History of NSW LGBTIQ DV Interagency and the conference.

The Interagency has been actively collaborating on projects for ten years, beginning in **2001** when over 40 representatives of government and non government agencies, all concerned about inadequate services for gay men in particular, met for the first time in Darlinghurst, Sydney. One of the first outcomes of this group was the development of a comprehensive compilation of relevant readings and a website ([www.anothercloset.com.au](http://www.anothercloset.com.au)) both addressing an identified gap in knowledge and understanding about a relatively new phenomenon described as 'same-sex domestic violence' or 'SSDV'.

A 'roundtable' forum conducted in **2003** invited service providers and government departments beyond the Interagency membership to discuss SSDV, to raise awareness and prepare workers for the launch of Australia's first SSDV community campaign which aimed to increase reporting of domestic violence to a range of services.

The community awareness campaign and website evolved and grew, leading to a snapshot research survey in **2006** (Fair's Fair) which confirmed anecdotal evidence that there were significant levels of violence and abuse in same-sex relationships, as well as very low levels of help-seeking behaviours, including reporting.

A series of roundtable forums, focusing on research, practice and clinical issues were conducted by the Interagency and two larger symposiums were held (**2007** and **2009**), each attracting 100+ participants from all over the country and overseas. All of this work, including the most recent conference, has been achieved through collaborative practice with almost no reliance on government funding. Modest conference fees have generated sufficient income to pay for the events, with a considerable level of in-kind investment from Interagency partner agencies.

At the **2011** conference:

- City of Sydney provided the venue and donated the conference bags.
- Various Interagency members supplied the contents of the bags including 150 electronic copies of the Another Closet booklet and other DV resources distributed on USB keys.
- Safe Relationships Project (SRP) paid for promotion of the conference in the Sydney Star Observer.
- The Interagency purchased vouchers as thank you gifts for the youth panel and native Australian seeds gifts for the other speakers.
- Catering costs were covered by registrations.
- The PA system was paid for by the Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project.
- ACON gave in-kind support including layout, printing, online conference registrations and website development and maintenance.
- NSW Police, the SRP and ACON provided laptops and projectors for the presentations.
- The Gender Centre provided lollies.
- Volunteers from various organisations gave assistance prior to and on the day.
- Speakers and stallholders paid for their own transport, accommodation and registrations.

## Why “Inclusion and Diversity”?

In 2011 the Interagency made a conscious decision to build upon the successes of previous forums and chose the theme of “Inclusion and Diversity” to reflect the changes in the Interagency’s workplan for 2011. Prior to this, the focus had been specifically on same-sex domestic violence; that is violence experienced in the context of an intimate relationship between two people who identify as being in a same-sex relationship (usually lesbian, gay or bisexual). Many LGBTIQ people do not identify as being in same-sex relationships and although the work of the interagency has always sought to include all people of diverse sex, sexuality and genders, the decision to explicitly reflect the diverse nature of relationships, gender and sexuality identification is an important step towards inclusion.

### Summary of the conference

- **More than 160 attendees.**
- **Over 80 support and advocacy services and agencies from Queensland, New South Wales, Western Australia, Victoria, New Zealand and Hong Kong.**
- **Discussion and creation of a new online network facilitated by the LGBTI Health Alliance.**
- **Sessions on Best Practice, Inclusion and Diversity, Transgender, Intersex and Indigenous Perspectives, Working with Men, Research, Legal, Policing.**
- **Somewhere Over The Rainbow – LGBTIQ youth and healthy relationships panel facilitated by Monique Schafter.**

The conference program, abstracts, short biographies for the speakers and presentations are available for download on Another Closet:

<http://www.anothercloset.com.au/conference-2011/>

### Evaluation

Participants were provided with an evaluation form in each conference bag and were encouraged to fill these out at the end of the day. All attendees were emailed an online anonymous SurveyMonkey version on the Monday following the conference and in total 48 responses were analysed.

Of the evaluations received 31 said the conference was excellent, 13 said it was good, 3 satisfactory and 1 poor. There was great variation in the responses received and all responses have been compiled into one document attached in Appendix 2.

### Key recommendations for future conferences/working parties.

Comments and feedback were discussed in detail by the working party following the conference as well as a special meeting of the MCs and facilitators. The feedback was in the majority extremely positive and included helpful and constructive criticism which is addressed in the recommendations for future conferences. The working party recommends:

## **1. Better engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people & organisations and inclusion of other culturally and linguistically diverse communities.**

Despite extensive promotion through email networks, online and by specifically targeting personal contacts and key figures in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander domestic violence and advocacy organisations in NSW and at a national level, attendance at the conference was relatively low. The conference organising party recommends that a specific working group be formed to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are welcomed, engaged and drive participation in the planning and participation at future conferences. Similarly, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and organisations should be included in the organising and promotion of the conference and engagement of a broad range of cultural diversity should be prioritised.

## **2. Funding**

Several of the evaluations called for funding for future conferences (see appendix 2, q.7). Funding for the conference and for organisations working in the field of LGBTIQ domestic and family violence is essential if a conference of this type is to occur in future. There are currently only two dedicated funded projects in Australia that the working party is aware of (Same Sex Domestic Violence Project, ACON and Safe Relationships Project, ICLC and the funding for both of these projects runs out at the end of 2011). Future funding has been sought but as of October 2011, there has been no success. The working party recommends that core funding for a regular (annual or biannual) LGBTIQ domestic and family violence conference and dedicated projects in each state and territory are prioritised as a matter of urgency under the federal government's National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Children as well as state government funding. Secure ongoing funding could ensure that some scholarships and bursaries for travel and accommodation expenses could increase participation from rural and regional participants, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, people with disabilities and anyone else who may experience extra barriers to access.

## **3. Length of conference**

A significant number of evaluations called for future conferences to be at least two days so that presentations could achieve more depth and allow more room for discussion and networking. The working party tried to ensure that a diverse range of papers, presenting organisations and perspectives were offered despite limited resources. Future conferences should allow more time for discussion during and following presentations if the conference were to be more than one day.

## **4. Dedicated session on lesbians and same-sex attracted women.**

The working group was limited by time and resource constraints and also by the papers that were submitted following the call for abstracts (the deadline for which was extended to ensure adequate promotion at the NSW Women's Refuge Movement conference). Despite this, the number of abstracts specifically exploring lesbian DV was relatively low. For these reasons and

the fact that lesbian DV was included in many of the presentations there was no dedicated lesbian stream. The working party recognise that some of the issues relating to lesbians and domestic and family violence are significantly different to those experienced by gay men, bisexual, transgender and intersex people. We recommend that future conferences include space for these issues to be explored.

## **5. Recording of sessions**

The working group recommends that funding for any future conference should include adequate budgetary and human resources to ensure that all sessions are recorded in video or audio. It was a matter that the working group considered prior to the 2011 conference and explored but due to budget and human resource constraints was not possible. Technical difficulties that were experienced could also be prevented by having a technical person on hand and decent equipment.

## **6. Differences in terminology, language**

There are some difficulties around agreement of the use of common language describing domestic violence in the context of an intimate relationship. DV is a term that some LGBTIQ people may not associate with abusive behaviour occurring in the context of their intimate relationships. Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people prefer to talk about family violence. There is extensive evidence to suggest that LGBTIQ people are also likely to experience other types of violence within the family context including sibling abuse, abuse of one parent by another due to a child's coming out, abuse of LGBTIQ children by parents and abuse of LGBTIQ parents at the hands of their children. The working group use the terms "domestic and family violence" to capture all these types of abuse that may occur in the context of LGBTIQ people and families but recognise that this may not capture. Other states and countries use different terminology; this was acknowledged at the conference and in the national body discussion hosted by the LGBTI Health Alliance the previous evening at ACON. The working party recommends that this be a priority for future national network discussion.

**7. Wide distribution of the conference report, presentations and support for the national/trans Tasman network to ensure that the energy is not lost.**

**8. Funding and organisational support to ensure that peak intersex advocacy organisations, such as OII Australia can meet the specific needs of people of diverse sexes in relation to experiences of domestic and family violence. Researchers and support organisations to consider how they might ensure meaningful inclusion of intersex people and their families.**

**9. Ongoing government funding and sustainable institutional support for LGBTIQ domestic and family violence world best practice initiatives such as the Transgender Anti-Violence Project and the Safe Relationships Project which create and maintain safer communities and address needs not currently being addressed by mainstream organisations.**

## Conclusions and outcomes

The MCs closed the day with a summary of some of the highlights and an acknowledgment that the day was about healing; on a personal level for those of us affected by domestic and family violence, and on an organisational level, the awareness that many are working in the area and that we have had the opportunity to learn together and to share our experiences to better achieve outcomes in the area of DV for our community.

Despite a short and busy day, a number of important discussions took place at the conference and some excellent connections between services, models and individuals were made.

The national network discussion resulted in the creation of an online network which is accessible through the National LGBTI Health Alliance website, <http://www.lgbthealth.org.au/>

Thanks to all the people who participated to make the day a resounding success including all the volunteers who gave their time prior to the conference and on the day. Particular thanks to Michael Orchard and Tracey Willow for MC-ing on the day.

However, the future of the ground work that was laid at the first national conference is almost wholly dependent on funding at local and national level. As Elizabeth Broderick acknowledged in her keynote address, “ensuring greater inclusion of people who identify as LGBTIQ and celebrating... diversity are realistic goals that we can achieve – provided there is a strong commitment from government, civil society and LGBTIQ advocates, backed by adequate and ongoing funding and resources.”

## Appendices

### Appendix 1 - Summary of presentations, speakers & papers

Presentations are available for download in pdf format on the Another Closet website

<http://www.anothercloset.com.au/presentations/>

#### **Welcome to Country**

Aunty Norma Ingram opened the conference with an official welcome to Gadigal land extended to all participants.

#### **Opening Address**

##### **The Hon. Pru Goward, NSW Minister for Women and Family & Community Services.**

Pru gave the opening address and spoke about the importance of LGBTIQ inclusion in domestic violence service provision. She urged participants to be actively involved in the current parliamentary reviews relating to domestic and family violence. Pru made a commitment to keep the issues specific to LGBTIQ people affected by domestic and family violence on her agenda and congratulated the participants and conference organisers.

#### **Keynote address**

##### **Elizabeth Broderick, Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission.**

Elizabeth spoke at length about the nature of domestic and family violence and reiterated the Australian Human Rights Commission's commitment to full inclusion and equal rights for LGBTIQ people. She told the story of Catherine who had been tortured at the hands of her husband over decades and explained that the impacts of domestic violence were the motivation for her making DV a priority issue during her term as Sex Discrimination Commissioner. Later she drew parallels between the importance of inclusion of LGBTIQ people and a mature society. She talked about the gaps in accessibility and visibility of people of diverse sex, sexuality and gender and used stories from Another Closet, Coming Forward and the Scottish Transgender Alliance's 2010 study of domestic violence to illustrate why abuse affects not only the victim but wider society as well. Elizabeth called for funding, training and community education to increase awareness of DV, access to services and social inclusion for LGBTIQ people. The text of her full speech can be accessed through the AHRC website [http://www.hreoc.gov.au/about/media/speeches/sex\\_discrim/2011/20110916\\_lgbtiq.html](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/about/media/speeches/sex_discrim/2011/20110916_lgbtiq.html)

#### **Somewhere Over the Rainbow – LGBTIQ youth panel.**

Monique Schafter, journalist and ABC Hungry Beast presenter and producer facilitated a panel of six LGBTIQ young people speaking about their experiences and perspectives on healthy relationships. Many of the evaluations mentioned it as one of the highlights of the day. Comments included, "the youth panel was phenomenal", and, "so inspirational that the new generation can be so vocal, confident." Several participants also mentioned that they would like to see a dedicated session exploring the issues for young LGBTIQ people in a future forum or conference.

Following a break for morning tea and networking, a series of 3 one hour-long breakout sessions ran concurrently. Participants chose between alternative sessions in each time slot.

- Breakout 1 – “Inclusion and Diversity” or “Policing”
- Breakout 2 – “Legal”, “Research” or “Transgender & Intersex Perspectives”
- Breakout 3 – “Best Practice”, “Indigenous Perspectives” or “Working with Men”

### **Breakout session 1 - Inclusion and Diversity**

**Ricki Menzies (QAHC Training and Development Coordinator) and Belinda Cox (Senior Practitioner, BDVAS).**

**“Alphabet Soup War – QAHC, LHAG, BDVAS and ACON fighting LGBTIQ/SGD DV”.  
Working collaboratively across sectors, borders and communities.**

Ricki and Belinda talked about cross-state, cross-sector collaboration between several different organisations, explaining the process and progress of a project in Queensland to engage staff, resources and build capacity to deal with LGBTIQ domestic violence. Their presentation is available for download on the presentations page of the Another Closet website. For more information about the work of QAHC visit the QAHC website.

[http://www.qahc.org.au/family\\_violence](http://www.qahc.org.au/family_violence)

**Tom Hamilton (Executive Director of Rainbow Youth Inc.) and Vaughan Meneses (General Manager of OUTline), NZ.**

**You, Me, Us – Our people, our relationships.**

Tom and Vaughan introduced the healthy relationships campaign devised by OUTline, Rainbow Youth and Shine (a local domestic violence service). They also brought copies of the resources produced which were distributed in the conference bags. Their presentation is available for download on the presentations page of Another Closet. For more information about the work of Rainbow Youth, the Flourish healthy relationships campaign or the work of OUTline NZ visit <http://www.rainbowyouth.org.nz/> <http://www.outlinenz.com/flourish-2/>

**Celia Hutton, Project Coordinator (SOAAR, Wimlah Women & Children’s Refuge).**

**Safer Relationships Out West - An inclusive and diverse regional approach to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) domestic and family violence response.**

Celia presented on the Greater Western Sydney Speak Out Against Abuse in Relationships initiative, sharing the history of the creation of SOAAR and offering observations on organising collaboratively in a regional context. Celia’s presentation is available for download on Another Closet. For more information about the work or to be included on the SOAAR network email list contact: [soarssdv@bigpond.com](mailto:soarssdv@bigpond.com)

## Breakout session 1 - Policing

**Chief Superintendent Donna Adney (NSW Police Force Corporate Spokesperson, Sexuality & Gender Diversity).**

### **Education – the key to inclusion.**

Chief Superintendent Adney's presentation highlighted two significant achievements for the NSW Police Force this year: the release of their third policy *Sexuality and Gender Diversity 2011-2014. Working with gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex people*, and a new reporting campaign – the *Transgender Anti-Violence Project (TAVP)* - to encourage transgender people to report all incidents of violence to the police. There is currently a great deal more guidance for police officers on a range of issues including domestic and family violence experienced by people of diverse sex, sexualities and genders. However, an ongoing concern is the reporting of violence, including domestic violence, to the police. C/Supt Adney stressed the importance of NSW Police Force educational strategies to build awareness and knowledge amongst all officers and staff and good practice, as well as the importance of active and visible leadership.

**Gabrielle Tyacke (North West Metro Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officer, Victoria Police).**

### **The Victorian GLLO program.**

Gabrielle spoke about the GLLO program in Victoria, definitions of Family Violence under Victorian law, the Victoria Police Code of Practice and policy for referrals for victims of violence and initiatives to strengthen relationships between the Police and LGBTIQ communities. Gabrielle's presentation is available for download on the presentations page of Another Closet, it has some information on referrals for Victoria.

## Breakout session 2 - Legal

**Michael Lam, (President, Queer Straight Alliance Hong Kong)**

### **Domestic and Cohabitation Relationships Violence Ordinance – Work in Progress or Final Destination for LGBTIQ Victims in Hong Kong**

Michael explained that in 2010 LGBTIQ people in Hong Kong had been included in the amended Domestic and Cohabitation Relationships Violence Ordinance (DCRVO) legislation and thus in policy at least are now offered the same legal protections as their heterosexual counterparts. He explored cultural and social obstacles experienced by LGBTIQ victims of DV, such as fear of homophobia, a lack of support services and awareness of the legislation amongst the LGBTIQ community as well as the level of training provided by the government to agencies. He concluded that without adequate complementary policies, the LGBTIQ survivors from domestic violence can never fully enjoy the theoretical benefits promised by the DCRVO. Michael's presentation is available on the Another Closet website. For more information see the Queer Straight Alliance website <http://queerstraightalliance.wordpress.com/>

**Julie Howes (LGBTI Legal Service Qld)**

**Reflections on establishing an unfunded volunteer based community service – would the same approach work for establishing LGBTIQ DV support services?**

Julie talked about her experience in founding the LGBTIQ community legal service in Queensland in 2009. She discussed strategies for identifying community need, barriers and cross-sector collaboration and proposed that these might be useful models for the establishment of LGBTIQ domestic and family violence support services with little/no funding.

**Kate Duffy, (Safe Relationships Project, Inner City Legal Centre)**

**Three years of the Safe Relationships Project**

Kate explored the work of the Safe Relationships Project (SRP) - a specialised court assistance scheme for people who identify as LGBTIQ experiencing domestic violence in NSW. She talked about the development of the SRP and reflected on the successes of the program as well as hopes for the future to ensure that LGBTIQ people experiencing domestic violence can access appropriate support. Kate's presentation is available for download on the Another Closet website. For more information visit <http://www.iclc.org.au/srp/>

## **Breakout session 2 - Research**

**Sen Raj (Senior Policy Advisor, NSW Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby)**

**Homophobia revised: internalised homophobia and the manifestation of domestic violence.**

Sen discussed his recent research exploring the shaping of LGBTIQ domestic violence by experiences of homophobia, cultural difference and marginalisation. He discussed the dominance/control model where one partner exercises emotional, psychological or physical violence over another partner and offered a new framework for understanding domestic violence in the context of internalized homophobia and heterocentrism. He explored ways in which making these forms of violence more visible might affect anxiety or fragmentation in the intimate lives of gay men.

**Dr Sharon Hayes & Dr Samantha Jeffries, (School of Justice, Queensland University of Technology)**

**Why do they keep going back? Exploring narratives on surviving lesbian intimate partner violence.**

Sharon and Samantha's presentation explored the social and interpersonal dynamic between offender and survivor in cases of lesbian intimate partner violence. They discussed the moral geography of intimate partner violence with particular attention to the lesbian experience, using narratives of survivors' and friends of survivors' experiences of intimate partner violence to analyse why women stay in violent relationships. They explored factors relating to failures of the criminal justice system in differentiating between same-sex and heterosexual abuse and in recognising women as perpetrators of violence. They also identified failures of the public health system and society in general in recognising, understanding and addressing the prevalence of psychological disability among perpetrators.

**Ben Bullock, (MIDLAS Community Legal Centre, WA).**

**The interrelationship between the civil and criminal law, morality, stigma and social regulation.**

Despite some technical difficulties Ben gave an excellent and compelling summary of the work of the MIDLAS Community Legal Centre's work in offering a free domestic violence legal service dedicated to access and inclusion for minority communities such as newly immigrated, LGBTIQ and Indigenous populations, groups that are less likely to solicit professional assistance. He explored responses considering restorative justice and community intervention methods which aim to involve all relevant key stakeholders in the process.

**Breakout session 2 - Intersex and Transgender Perspectives**

**Liz Ceissman (Case Manager, The Gender Centre) & Inara Christy (The Gender Centre)**

**Transgender people's experiences of domestic and family violence and the Transgender Anti-Violence Project.**

Liz talked about the differences that transgender people experience in terms of exposure to violence both in the context of an intimate partnership and within the family. Liz identified a new form of family violence resulting from a transgender child coming out and where one parent is supportive and the other is not. Inara told her personal story and talked about her work with the Transgender Anti-Violence Project. The Gender Centre presentation is available in the presentations page on Another Closet, or for more information and a huge range of educational materials and resources on understanding gender diversity visit <http://www.gendercentre.org.au/> and <http://tavp.org.au/>

**Karin from Organisation Intersex International (OII)**

**Intersex people's experiences of domestic and family violence.**

Sadly technology was not with us and Karin's PowerPoint presentation didn't work so she spoke movingly from personal experience explaining the sorts of violence that intersex people experience from birth and throughout life in the context of relationships and families. The OII presentation is available in the presentations section of the Another Closet website and includes a number of useful references to academic studies and blogs. The OII presentation is available on the Another Closet website. For more information, research and resources on understanding the specific needs of intersex people visit <http://oiiaustralia.com/>

**Breakout session 3 - Best practice**

**Stepan Kerkyasharian, (President of Anti-Discrimination Board, NSW).**

**The NSW Anti-Discrimination Act and its relation to discrimination in the delivery of services in the domestic violence context.**

Stepan presented the NSW ADB Act and explained how the application of the Act relates to discrimination against LGBTIQ people in the provision of domestic violence support services. He used the evidence published earlier this year in ACON's One Size Does Not Fit All to

explore some of the anecdotal difficulties that LGBTIQ people experiencing DV face when trying to find appropriate support. Stepan also spoke about other ways in which the NSW Anti Discrimination Act could be helpful to LGBTIQ people experiencing discrimination.

**Nav Navratil and June Wilson, (NSW Women's Refuge Movement).**

**Inclusion and Diversity: Breaking Down the Barriers.**

Nav explained how the NSW Women's Refuge Movement has been systematically addressing issues of DV in lesbian relationships, exploring ways to ensure inclusivity. She talked about the added barriers that lesbians and their children face when trying to access DV services and explained the role of the LEAPS (Lesbian Education Advocacy Peers Support) specialist working group that works to ensure that issues relating to lesbians and their children are reflected through appropriate policy development. Nav's presentation is available on the Another Closet website. For more information about the NSW WRM visit <http://www.wrrc.org.au/>

**Kevin Bloom & Alison Cowell, (Positive Central, Community HIV Allied Health Team)**

**Challenges and Successes: Clinical case management with HIV positive people experiencing domestic violence.**

Kevin and Alison shared practice from the Inner West Sydney based Positive Central Social Work team who work with clients affected by HIV and experience domestic violence in same-sex relationships. They offered observations on some of the difficulties associated in working with partners who may also be primary carers who are suspected of perpetrating violence. They explored some of the impacts of domestic violence on case management processes of engagement, assessment, goal setting, service co-ordination and review and offered some insights into the professional and personal challenges of working with clients throughout the cycles of violence.

### **Breakout session 3 – Indigenous Perspectives**

**Kassa Bird (Domestic Violence Worker, Ballina Byron Family Centre)**

**Aboriginal Lesbians and Domestic Violence**

Kassa presented findings from her work with Aboriginal lesbians living in Bundjalung country in the Northern Rivers region and shared some of the stories, coping mechanisms and specific issues relating to domestic and family violence for the Aboriginal women she spoke to. Kassa also talked about the resources and knowledge base that the research project formed the basis for and discussed some of the reasons why Aboriginal people might not be engaged by non-Indigenous domestic violence services.

**Jason Lonesborough (Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer and Senior Programs Officer, NSW Police)**

**Two-One**

Jason spoke about the significance of being gay or lesbian in Aboriginal communities and how in traditional culture, being gay or lesbian, was seen as "special" or "unique" as you were seen to have both male and or female qualities. Traditionally speaking, gay or lesbian people were considered an equal and were not subject to any form of ill treatment. He outlined the challenges of being gay or lesbian today with the influence of white culture and religious beliefs, and specifically about the challenges facing Aboriginal victims of domestic/family violence, such as:

- Shaming people
- Being outcast by community people
- Lack of trust to report DV/FV to police due to historical legacy of policing Aboriginal communities in the past
- Lack of understanding and acceptance in some communities compared to those communities who accept GLBTI people with out hesitation
- Educating communities and the Police about Aboriginal issues/culture, particularly gay and lesbian issues
- The NSW Police Force commitment to include gay and lesbian issues in corporate Aboriginal Strategic Directions
- The NSW Police Force commitment to provide cultural awareness training to Police and include GLBTI information as a component of the training.

Jason also described his experience as a police officer and the challenges he faced being a "gay black cop".

**Breakout session 3 – Working with Men**

**Greg Millan (Men's Health Services).**

**Working with gay, bisexual and trans men affected by domestic violence**

Greg facilitated a 30-minute workshop on his work with men affected by domestic violence. He talked about the needs of men that are often not met by DV services and programs in Australia and explored useful strategies for people who work with men. Greg presented the model that he has developed through his years of experience working with men. For more information visit his website <http://www.menshealthservices.com.au>

**Trish Thompson & Paul Webb (Victoria AIDS Council).**

**The Victorian Revisioning Male Perpetrators Program.**

Trish and Paul presented a 30-minute workshop on the Revisioning Program for gay and bisexual men who use violence against their male partners. The workshop offered participants a new perspective on the issues that face gay men in accessing help in this area, exploring at internalised homophobia as a therapeutic issue affecting the wellbeing of same-sex couples in a heteronormative society. They proposed that one of the key issues in relations to DV in a same-sex relationship is the effect and impact that domestic violence has on the whole of community. For more information on the Revisioning Program see the Victoria AIDS Council website page <http://www.vicaids.asn.au/revisioning>

**Final panel** – The final panel was designed to allow a variation of perspectives from professionals working in the field. Speakers were selected so that there was variety from throughout the day. It was also deliberately less structured and formal than the preceding sessions as the working group felt that many people would be tired after a day of large and smaller sessions. Moo Baulch facilitated the session and asked people to briefly share some useful experiences of cross-sector collaboration and to describe personal strategies for keeping healthy when working in a sector which often involves trauma and violence.

**National network discussion** - Jackie Braw from the LGBTIQ DV Interagency and Greg Adkins from the National LGBTI Health Alliance summarised the discussion from the preceding evening held at ACON in relation to the creation of a national network. Greg announced that the Health Alliance would provide a virtual space for the discussion to continue and invited all participants to join this. For more information see the LGBTI Health Alliance website <http://www.lgbthealth.org.au/>

The MCs closed the day with a summary of some of the highlights and an acknowledgment that the day was about healing; on a personal level for those of us affected by domestic and family violence, and on an organisational level, the awareness that many are working in the area and that we have had the opportunity to learn together and to share our experiences to better achieve outcomes in the area of DV for our community.

## Appendix 2 - Conference evaluation responses



### 3<sup>RD</sup> BIENNIAL (FIRST NATIONAL) LGBTIQ DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CONFERENCE 2011 SYDNEY

#### **INCLUSION & DIVERSITY**

##### CONFERENCE EVALUATION

#### **Q1. How would you rate the conference overall? (Please circle)**

Excellent (31) Good (13) Satisfactory (3) Poor (1)

#### **Q2. What part of the conference did you find the most useful?**

Somewhere over the rainbow was a great concept. Some sessions focusing on collaboration were great.

Panel discussion with the young people was brilliant. Breakout session 1 was great. Breakout session 3 was good in parts but did not really give practical advice about improving inclusion.

Indigenous workshops.

Transgender and Intersex talks.

The breakout groups – policing, trans and intersex perspectives and working with men – really really good!

All.

Workshop Presentations.

Working with men and youth panel.

Positive Central. Inner City Legal Service.

Working with men. Youth panel.

Research session.

Networking.

Hungry beast kids. Donna Adney and her force.

Youth group panel was phenomenal!!! So inspirational that the new generation can be so vocal, confident, informative and active!  
Panel with young people. Session on transgender and intersex.

Networking.

Sessions in general. The youth were inspiring in the morning and also good to talk about coping mechanisms in the afternoon.

Presentations.

Women from QLD with their presentation

Presentations

Legal, Policing and hearing from the young people.

Break out sessions

Connecting with other services and finding out what they provide.

he stories

The session on research - perhaps though because I am a researcher myself.

The content

Networking with other services/attendees, the panel discussion with young people, hearing stories from trans\* participants

Panel interviews

Research stream and narratives of client experiences

Networking and sharing of resources

Service providers available, services available in my own state (Queensland) and future hopes for collaboration.

The youth panel was particularly inspiring - and the diversity of

participants was commendable.

Being able to interact on the ground and explain to people the illegality of DV related behaviour, explain police responsibility under current NSW legislation in responding to DV which appeared to clear up a lot of confusion and misconception within the community.

Networking, provision of information at stalls and some sessions.

The talks on research were the most interesting, eg. reasons why lesbians stay in abusive relationships.

Networking with other experts in the field and knowing how they collaborate with each other

Youth part was great, and I enjoyed the research part

All the information provided and shared between participants.

Networking and Research

as a student and a newbie to the community services industry any information is useful to me, i found most things i heard interesting.

I enjoyed hearing from the young people at the start of the day and found the transgender/intersex discussion the most useful from the presenters on the day

All! But I did really appreciate the opportunity to network and the resource table was excellent too

The sessions during the Research breakout.

Resources, diversity of presenters, good ideas for what could work in our region. Liked the young people panel but would have been good to have geographical diversity.

The Police breakout session.

Youth panel, Research, end panel

Breakout session 1 - Inclusion and diversity Breakout session 3 - Best Practice

The 'Working With Men' session.

### **Q3. What part of the conference did you find the least useful?**

There was no stream that explored lesbian perspectives. Being inclusive can preference intersex and transgender perspectives rather than allowing space for all and honoring knowledge from the history.

Breakout session 2 – Research. I was extremely challenged and confronted by the blatant dismissal of the role of power in DV, the dismissal of feminism, the focus on the medical model of psychological excuses for DV and the ridiculous notion that restorative justice is appropriate in DV relationships. The last presenter really needs to read the UNSW Report on this issue.

Opening address and keynote address.

The opening address?

None.

Too many large group sessions. Keynote.

Not enough time for presentation – perhaps consider 2 day conference.

Hong Kong research.

Many presentations spent majority of time advocating their service not addressing the main issues.

Best practice – Anti Discrim Board.

The misogyny of the anti feminist attitudes. Over simplifying of a radical feminist analysis is not helpful.

Was all good.

Too many workshops and I wanted to attend all of them!!

Nothing all great!

Nil.

having to go down stairs and up stairs for a cigarette:)

The guy on men's health using the Conference Forum as a tool for "Men's Group "

Too many speakers in the morning and too many large group sessions.  
More smaller workshops would have been better

Having 2 Politicians do speeches / presentations.

Panel discussion at the end

The panel at the end was a little long winded.

a lack of strategy

Perhaps the keynote address, repeating things many of us already knew. This was the case for some of the sessions throughout the day - I didn't feel that my understanding was developed quite significantly.

It was the most useful conference I have been to in years

The panel discussion at the end - perhaps it was the end of the day and I was a little exhausted by then?

Having to choose forums and not being able to attend all topic areas.

As a women's DV worker, I didn't need information on working with men. However I know it needs to be there for LGBTIQ communities.

The limited time on each presentation / session.

There was nothing I didn't like - I found all of teh conference useful and informative

N/A

For me the "Over the rainbow" panel was the least useful as it did not offer much from a DV context. It does have potential as a proactive type initiative similar to love bites and probably would benefit with that type of approach towards healthy relationships targeting young people. The panel at end of conference seemed to me to be very focused on the individuals as opposed to the organisation that they represented. Appeared more personal than actual professional related.

Some sessions focused only on what is occurring within the particular organisation/service rather than with a broader view or perspective.

Panel on young LGBTIQ people.

None

Sometimes it feels like a lot of talk and not a lot of action

All information was useful to myself and the service i am employed for.

None

there was no part of the conference that wasn't useful to me.

The opening 2 speakers

Hard to say. I found all of it to be so helpful.

The session at the end on collaboration - it might have been better with just a few of the speakers and facilitated discussion about the challenges and best ways to collaborate. I also thought the youth panel had tremendous potential, but the young people might have needed more support in preparing and reflecting on their ideas to be better able to share that information.

Timeframe. Too much squashed into small time - would have been good for sessions to be longer and more interactive, skill based. - The panel at the end - not the fact that it happened, but it could have been much more useful to have something like a hypothetical to show how people actually work in the sector and work in partnership, who to refer to etc.

The transgender and Intersex session

none! All good

Nothing it was all relevant

Michael Lam's presentation.

**Q4. Will you use the information from the conference in your work?  
(Please circle)**

Yes (44)                      No    (3)

Technically I'm not at work I'm a student but will find it useful in life

Definitely

Advice, suggestions.

But thats only because it isn't related

**Q5. Was the venue appropriate?**

Yes (45)      No (3)

couldnt see the speakers well beyond the front rows

Easy to get to.

Larger venue needed.

However, the chairs were incredibly uncomfortable and that detracted from enjoyment of the conference.

except those uncomfortable chairs!

Great venue

Hard to get to and too early start for people travelling from outside of Sydney. Main conference room not appropriate for seeing presentations.

**Q6. Was the catering satisfactory?**

Yes (48)      (No)

Coffee good too!

Lovely food, thankyou.

The morning tea was good but the sandwiches could have been better

**Q7. Do you have any other comments for the conference organisers?**

I was concerned at the lack of adequate time for discussion particularly in the session on Research – interesting presentations however would have liked to critique the way in which a feminist approach was denigrated and the way in which power and control paradigm was put to one side in favour of an internalised homophobic paradigm (in itself this mirrors patriarchy!!)

The organisers did a great job, a very smoothly run event. Congratulations on an excellent first national conference.

It was a really good conference, challenges the way I think and expanded my knowledge base, it was a very valuable conference.

Inspiring.

Great job. Do it again.

Venue ok however chairs very uncomfortable for having to sit for long periods of time.

Recommend a two day conference.

Thanks very much – very impressive that you can run this kind of conference at such a reasonable cost! Some really interesting talks – keep up the good work.

Where was the lesbian stream? We had men, koori, trans, intersex. Program misleading – research 1<sup>st</sup> speaker was about gay men only. 2<sup>nd</sup> speaker advertised as female researched all LGBTIQ. Even to examples Elizabeth Broderick gave did not include a cisgendered lesbian.

No more oily rag give them more resources. Perhaps film or record plenary session or key note speakers. Email available perhaps.

More stats about intersex community.

So interesting and really well organised. Congratulations!

Well done to such a small but dedicated team

People should be safe to talk about male victims of domestic violence without being harrassed by some women present with very closed minds around the issues men have as victims of domestic violence.

I felt a bit "conflicted" on the day as there were some sessions that I was interested in but they were on at the same time

Well done pulling it all together. It's great to network and see what everyone is doing and how we can work together.

It was a national conference and I thought it was unfortunate that national dv/health peaks were not there.

Overall, well done. It is great to see this developing into something important and major.

I think you did a great job and I feel re-energised to do the work that I have been doing. If at all possible I would like to know a bit more about services that are available to those who use violence, However, all in all, well done!

Congratulations in maintaining the SSDV conferences over the years.

Really good conference and I look forward to seeing how the progress unfolds in the coming years. I would like to see longer workshops with facilitators to brainstorm initiatives and capitalise on the shared knowledge and experience within the room. Streams around: working with perpetrators; working with victims; and community health promotion/education would be great. However, a longer conference would be awesome as many roles have crossover and this would enable people to look at more than just one stream.

I think this is an up and coming big issue and should be held on a yearly basis and locations should differ. Sydney is a very "gay-friendly" city and each year locations should change to hear experiences from different cities. Savory morning tea would be nice as well :) Thanks for a great conference! Loved it!

The conference should be held over 2 days to allow all sessions to be attended. There appeared to be some valuable sessions running concurrently that were missed due to the inability to clone attendees to allow them to be in several places at once. I appreciate the difficulty in coordinating such a large collection of uniquely diverse (yet similarly connected) backgrounds which is why it should be set over 2 days (minimum) to adequately address each of the LGBTIQ areas equally and not shoehorn all issues into the one pot. More time would really open up the discussion points and allow for greater collaboration from the group.

Overall the conference was very good. Most sessions were interesting/useful and the opportunity to network was welcome. The opening and keynote speeches were excellent.

Thank you very much for organising such a wonderful event. Whilst it is great to see so many experts in the field across the regions, it might be even more beneficial in future to provide more international perspectives since DV is a global issue. Also even within Australia, it will be interesting to see how support services will approach differently towards clients from different ethnicity due to cultural influences.

Thank you for a mind opening day. I look forward to networking with other services in this field.

much thanks and appreciation to you all for the work you put in to organising this conference.:o)

Well organised. Good having the directions to the venue as being from interstate and not knowing Sydney I found this very useful.

Thank you very much for organising this. Coming from interstate and seeing what is happening in NSW and other areas was SO helpful and motivating

The conference was good, but I felt it only scratched the surface of the issues. Much of the sessions simply talked about what a problem this is and how their agency is attempting to provide services. But there is so much more opportunity for difficult and innovative conversations. For example, does/how can current national and state policy address LGBTIQ domestic violence; will the forthcoming personal safety survey be designed for LGBTIQ individuals; what work is happening internationally; what is the context, typology, lethality of violence and is it different from heterosexual DV; are victims and perpetrators accessing services - if not, why?, etc

Some quietly spoken presenters in the breakout sessions needed amplification

Given that it was such a jam packed agenda more time for discussion and reflection would have been useful, especially at the workshops. Overall, it was a fantastic event the organisers should be very proud of.

## **THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**

For more information about the work of the NSW LGBTIQ Domestic Violence Interagency visit

[www.anothercloset.com.au](http://www.anothercloset.com.au)

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