

Changing with pride

A national framework to prevent violence against LGBTIQA+ people

Our Watch and Rainbow Health Australia

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This framework makes a number of suggestions for further reading. These suggestions are hyperlinked in the online version of this framework, which is available at: ourwatch.org.au/change-the-story/changing-with-pride

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Acknowledgement of Country

Our Watch and Rainbow Health Australia at the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS) acknowledge and pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of the land on which our offices are located, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. As national organisations, we also acknowledge the Traditional Owners and custodians of Country across Australia, and pay our respects to them, their cultures and their Elders past, present and future.

Our Watch and Rainbow Health Australia also acknowledge organisations and advocates working to advance and protect the human rights, health, wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQA+ people, including Sistergirls and Brotherboys.



Recognition of previous work in this field

Our Watch and Rainbow Health Australia, a program of the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS) at La Trobe University, undertook this project in partnership. It is based on the groundbreaking work produced by Rainbow Health Australia since 2020 in the *Pride in Prevention* suite of resources.

We thank our advisory group members, technical advisors and the stakeholders who contributed their time, insights and expertise throughout the project.

Our Watch and Rainbow Health Australia acknowledge the history of movements for LGBTIQA+ rights and women's rights, and the work of generations of activists, advocates and practitioners to create the environment that has enabled this framework. We thank and acknowledge the organisations and individuals who have paved the way for this work through their dedication to the prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people.

We also acknowledge LGBTIQA+ people who are victim-survivors, and those who have lost their lives as a consequence of violence.

Our Watch is not an LGBTIQA+ organisation, but works in partnership and solidarity with LGBTIQA+ communities, advocates and organisations to inform policy and practice to advance primary prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people.

This framework marks an important step in acknowledging previous experiences of exclusion and discrimination experienced by LGBTIQA+ communities, and moving forward together to create change.

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Note on terminology

The acronym LGBTIQA+ is used in this framework to describe lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer, asexual and aromantic people and communities, with the plus indicating that there are many and varied ways that people and communities describe themselves.

Variations on this acronym appear throughout the document, particularly when quoting or describing research, policy or resources that have used different terms. In particular, we note that sometimes these variations will include the 'I' (referring to people with innate variations of sex characteristics, also known as intersex people) or the 'A' (referring to asexual and aromantic people) without explicitly addressing or engaging with these communities. We have sought to meaningfully include these communities through reviews of practice guidance, peer-reviewed literature and consultations with intersex, asexual and aromantic people and organisations. These efforts must continue to inform future advocacy and action to prevent violence against all LGBTIQA+ people.

We acknowledge that the language used by and for LGBTIQA+ communities is not fixed, and have made every effort to use language throughout that is both current and respectful.

A range of resources provide glossaries and guides to terminology and language that LGBTIQA+ people and communities use to describe themselves.

USEFUL RESOURCES:

- *Glossary of LGBTQ+ terms* (ACON) – related to people of diverse sexualities and genders
- *A guide to language and terminology* (Transhub) – related to trans and gender diverse people
- *Briefing: Who are intersex people?* (InterAction) – related to people with innate variations of sex characteristics
- *FAQs: Aros and Aces* (Ace and Aro Collective AU) – related to asexual and aromantic people.

A range of terms are also used in policy and practice across the country to describe violence. These include 'violence against women', 'gender-based violence' and 'family, domestic and sexual violence'. LGBTIQA+ people experience all of these forms of violence – both as women and as LGBTIQA+ people – as well as other forms of violence, abuse and harassment.

Rainbow Health Australia has produced two tip sheets on LGBTIQA+-inclusive language and terminology in family and gender-based violence prevention and gender equity work:

- Tips for using inclusive language and terminology.
- Tips for advocating for inclusive language.

We have tried to keep the terminology used in this framework as simple and clear as possible, in line with government commitments to prevent and respond to violence against LGBTIQA+ people, as outlined in the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032*.[1]

Acknowledgements

This framework would not have been possible without the generous contributions of many people who have helped shape, inform and improve the framework as it developed. In particular, Our Watch and Rainbow Health Australia at ARCSHS sincerely thank the following people.

Rainbow Health Australia staff who contributed to the project and the development of the framework include Jami Jones, Belinda O'Connor and Julia Earley. Our Watch project staff include Krista Seddon, Ellen Poyner, Caroline D, Alexia Newsome and Shaez Mortimer.

The lead author for the framework was Marina Carman, who was supported with ongoing expert advice, input and additional authorship by Emma Partridge, Jackson Fairchild, Jami Jones and Belinda O'Connor. Shane Worrell and Sarah Hewitt provided support through authorship of background papers.

The following members of a Technical Advisory Group provided expert guidance and contributions to the development of this framework: Adam Bourne, Shane Tas, Stephanie Lusby and Wei Leng Kwok. Additional expert input in drafting was provided by Karla McGrady.

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Many stakeholders and experts were involved in the national consultation that has informed this framework (as detailed in 'Section 1 – Introduction'). Jackson Fairchild led the process and report related to the national consultation, ensuring wide representation across locations, communities, sectors and areas of expertise. Karla McGrady and Jackson Fairchild collaboratively facilitated consultations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. In Queensland, this process was led by Rocky Byrne and the team at 2Spirits.

We acknowledge Our Watch's CEO Patty Kinnersly, Director of Innovation Krista Seddon, the Board, and Chair Moo Baulch for their governance and support of this work. We also acknowledge the leadership of Jami Jones, Program Lead of Rainbow Health Australia and Adam Bourne, Director of ARCSHS at La Trobe University, where Rainbow Health Australia is located.

Foreword from the Our Watch Chair

I am proud to introduce *Changing with pride*, Australia's national framework for coordinated, evidence-informed action to prevent violence against LGBTIQA+ people and communities.

LGBTIQA+ people in Australia experience disproportionate rates of violence and discrimination. But this violence is not inevitable. It can be prevented. *Changing with pride* sets out a shared direction for creating the conditions in which every LGBTIQA+ person can live authentically, participate fully and thrive - free from stigma, discrimination and violence.

For more than a decade, Our Watch has worked alongside governments, workplaces, community organisations and prevention practitioners to build the knowledge, systems and momentum needed to prevent gender-based violence before it starts. *Changing with pride* extends this work by recognising that violence against LGBTIQA+ people is shaped by intersecting forms of inequality and discrimination, and by the social, cultural and systemic conditions that influence how people are valued, included and treated.

Preventing violence against LGBTIQA+ people requires more than responding to its impacts. It requires us to address the underlying social, cultural and systemic conditions that enable violence and discrimination in the first place. This means challenging the norms, structures and practices that limit equality and inclusion, and building communities where LGBTIQA+ people are respected, valued and able to thrive.



LGBTIQA+ organisations and communities have been central to the development of *Changing with pride*. Their leadership, expertise and lived experience build on decades of advocacy and action to create safer, more inclusive and equitable communities, and are fundamental to effective prevention.

Our Watch and Rainbow Health Australia have partnered to develop *Changing with pride*, drawing on evidence, expertise and consultation across LGBTIQA+ communities and the broader prevention sector. I acknowledge and thank the many people and organisations who have contributed their knowledge, leadership and lived experience to this framework. I particularly recognise LGBTIQA+ communities whose advocacy has long called for stronger action to prevent violence and whose leadership continues to shape a more inclusive and equitable Australia.

LGBTIQA+ communities are diverse, and experiences of equality, inclusion and violence differ across people, identities and communities. The experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQA+ people, including Sistergirls and Brotherboys, are also shaped by the ongoing impacts of colonisation, as well as intersecting forms of inequality and discrimination. Effective prevention must recognise this diversity and respond to the distinct experiences, strengths and priorities of different communities.

Creating a future free from violence against LGBTIQA+ people is a shared responsibility. Governments, organisations, institutions, communities and individuals, including people who are not LGBTIQA+, all have a role to play in advancing equality, inclusion and respect.

Changing with pride provides a shared foundation for this work. I encourage organisations and communities across Australia to use the framework to guide action, strengthen collaboration and contribute to lasting social and systemic change.

Together, we can create a future where every LGBTIQA+ person can live with pride, safety, equality and belonging, and where everyone can thrive.

Moo Baulch
Chair, Our Watch

Foreword from the Rainbow Health Australia Director

The release of *Changing with pride* marks a significant milestone for LGBTIQA+ communities in Australia and for our collective efforts to prevent gender-based violence.

This framework represents far more than the work of our two organisations. It is the culmination of years of advocacy, leadership and action by LGBTIQA+ people, communities and organisations. It reflects the efforts of those who have worked tirelessly calling for action to address violence affecting LGBTIQA+ people. Their persistence and leadership have made *Changing with pride* possible.

Rainbow Health Australia has played a key role, in partnership with LGBTIQA+ communities, organisations and researchers, in building awareness and understanding of family and sexual violence against LGBTIQA+ people and establishing recognition of this violence. Rainbow Health Australia is located within the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS) at La Trobe University, drawing directly on two decades of ARCSHS research into the drivers and dynamics of this violence and effective approaches to preventing and responding to it. We have used this research to advocate for national policy change, helping to ensure that LGBTIQA+ people are explicitly recognised in the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children*.

LGBTIQA+ people must be at the centre of our efforts. LGBTIQA+ communities hold unique insights and understanding of the drivers and dynamics of violence impacting LGBTIQA+ people, as well as the strategies needed to prevent it. Primary prevention must bring community expertise and experience together with evidence.



Lasting change will only be possible when LGBTIQA+ communities, in all their diversity, shape outcomes that affect them.

Throughout the national consultation process, we found sectors and communities that have key skills and are deeply committed to this work. We heard a willingness to build on existing knowledge and momentum, and to work together to centre LGBTIQA+ communities. The development of *Changing with pride* has itself demonstrated the partnership and collaboration required for effective prevention work. This framework was shaped through relationships built between communities, organisations, researchers, governments and the prevention sector. To successfully prevent violence against LGBTIQA+ people we must continue to work in this way, navigating differences and forging common ground together.

Changing with pride is an internationally-leading contribution to the field of violence prevention. It is a testament to Australia's continued leadership in preventing gender-based violence. This framework gives us a chance to recognise how far we have come. It also offers a pathway towards a future where LGBTIQA+ people live free from stigma, discrimination, violence or abuse, and are respected and celebrated in their relationships, communities and families.

Jami Jones
Director, Rainbow Health Australia



SECTION 1

Introduction

Violence against LGBTIQA+ people is a serious violation of human rights. Globally and across Australia, LGBTIQA+ people experience intimate partner violence, domestic and family violence, sexual violence and sexual harassment, alongside other forms of violence, abuse and harassment, at significant levels. However, this violence is not inevitable – it is preventable.

About this framework

To stop violence against LGBTIQA+ people before it starts, it is critical to identify and address the underlying drivers of violence – the specific social factors that make violence more likely and enable it to continue.

This framework describes the drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people and how these overlap with the drivers of men's violence against women.

Understanding and addressing the drivers, and the broader social context in which violence against LGBTIQA+ people occurs, are key to preventing this violence from happening in the first place. This approach is known as primary prevention.

Primary prevention is part of a continuum of critical work that provides support to victim-survivors, addresses perpetration and intervenes early to address risk. Each part of the continuum across primary prevention, early intervention, response and recovery plays a vital role. No one part can succeed in isolation. Each needs acknowledgement, investment and support. Within this context, the specific focus of this framework is primary prevention.

All Australian governments have responsibility for ensuring the health, safety and equality of LGBTIQA+ people as part of their international human rights obligations. There are many important prevention actions that only governments can and should initiate. However, prevention is not only a government responsibility. Every sector, institution, organisation, community and individual has a role to play in preventing violence against LGBTIQA+ people.



This framework serves as a companion document to *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia*.[2]

Change the story brings together international research, and nationwide experience, on what drives violence against women and what is needed to guide an effective national approach to preventing this violence.

Change the story includes an acknowledgement of the overlapping drivers of violence against women and LGBTIQA+ people.[3]



This was informed by Rainbow Health Australia's groundbreaking work *Pride in Prevention: A guide to primary prevention of family violence experienced by LGBTIQ communities*.[4]

This framework expands on the evidence and guidance contained in *Pride in Prevention* by:

- building on and deepening the understanding of violence against LGBTIQA+ people and its dynamics and impacts, including an intersectional analysis of this violence
- offering a conceptual model that explains the underlying drivers of this violence, including the overlap with the drivers of violence against women
- providing a set of actions that address the drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people, and identifying stakeholders and priority sectors and settings for action
- describing principles for prevention that should guide the way the actions are implemented.

Our vision

Our vision is a world where all LGBTIQA+ people experience full equality and are celebrated for being themselves.

We are committed to working together towards a future where all people enjoy happy and healthy relationships and families. We all deserve the right to live free from stigma, discrimination, violence or abuse of any kind.

By taking a primary prevention approach, we can eliminate violence against LGBTIQA+ people before it occurs.

Advancing LGBTIQA+ equality is essential to ending violence. This means building a society where LGBTIQA+ people are valued and able to fully realise their human rights. It means LGBTIQA+ people participating fully in all places where people live, learn, work and socialise, and in all aspects of society, on a safe and equal basis with all other people.

Achieving LGBTIQA+ equality will create better health and wellbeing outcomes for LGBTIQA+ people, more cohesive workplaces and communities, more respectful relationships and more equal decision-making practices in public and private spaces.

LGBTIQA+ equality and gender equality go hand in hand. We can't achieve one without the other. We must work together – across sectors and organisations – to make this future a reality.

An Australia where all people live free from violence is an achievable long-term goal. But it can only be realised by addressing the drivers of violence, which are deeply entrenched in our culture, society and communities.

We all have a role to play in creating a society that is respectful, equal and free from violence.



Context and history

A policy and programmatic focus on the prevention of violence against women has been an important development in Australia, brought about by many dedicated advocates, practitioners and organisations. This focus is vital and necessary, given the gendered nature and dynamics of so many experiences of violence in intimate and family relationships, as well as in public and private spaces.

As a reflection of broader social exclusion, the experiences of LGBTIQA+ communities have only very recently been acknowledged, recognised and included in research, programs, policy and investment related to violence prevention. A focus only on men's violence against women has unintended negative consequences, where LGBTIQA+ people may be less likely to recognise their experiences as violence, and less likely to seek or receive help.

This framework seeks to address the exclusion of LGBTIQA+ people – in all aspects of society, including within the sectors engaged with prevention of all forms of family, domestic and sexual violence, and violence against women.

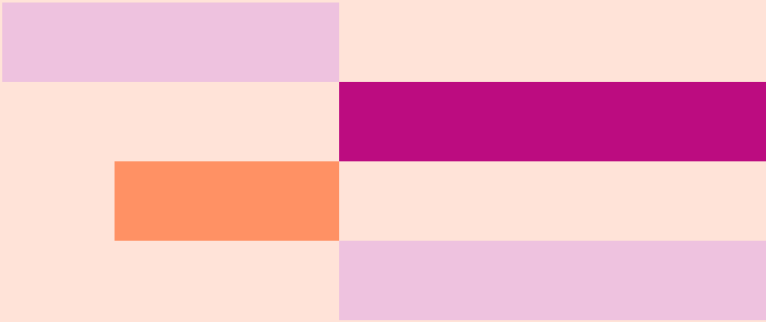
All state and territory governments have committed to the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032*[5] (the National Plan), which puts forward a bold and shared goal to end gender-based violence in one generation. The National Plan specifically includes an acknowledgement that LGBTIQA+ people experience gender-based violence, and that, therefore, LGBTIQA+ people of all genders are included in the plan. The National Plan clearly defines the term 'women' as inclusive of cis and trans women. It acknowledges that gender is socially constructed, while having real effects on the lives of Australians. It also specifically mentions the need for actions to prevent and respond to violence against Sistergirls and Brotherboys, and for this to be culturally responsive and tailored to their needs.

This framework was funded under the National Plan as a critical contribution towards ending gender-based violence. It lays a foundation for understanding and shared action to prevent violence against LGBTIQA+ people across the country.

Who should use this framework?

This framework offers guidance to support evidence-informed, intersectional and principled approaches to policy and practice that contribute to the prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people.

It can be used by anyone involved in policy development or program funding, design, planning or implementation, and those working 'on the ground' in numerous fields. In particular, the framework aims to highlight and equip 'priority cross-sectors' – namely, organisations and individuals working in LGBTIQA+ family violence, health, wellbeing and equality, and those working in family, domestic and sexual violence, violence against women, women's health and gender equity. There are many sectors and initiatives already contributing to primary prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people, and the framework provides guidance on how this work could be supported to develop further.



Methodology

The framework has been developed based on:

- two background papers that examined current Australian and international research and literature (peer-reviewed and grey) on violence against LGBTIQA+ people
- a background paper that reviewed policy documents and approaches at Commonwealth, state and territory levels across the country – including policy related to family and sexual violence, violence against women, LGBTIQA+ health and wellbeing, education, mental health and others
- a background paper that reviewed existing funded interventions and programs nationally that aim to prevent violence against LGBTIQA+ people
- available guidance about the primary prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people, in particular *Pride in Prevention,* as well as Our Watch's *Change the story*
- guidance and collaboration of technical advisors and advisory groups (see Acknowledgements for details)
- a national stakeholder consultation with close to 100 participants, including LGBTIQA+ organisations, advocates and activists, alongside organisations and individual experts engaged in research, policy and practice related to the prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people
- a dedicated, community-led consultation with organisations working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQA+, Sistergirl and Brotherboy communities in the Northern Territory and Queensland, using a place-based approach.

Additional details of the methodology for the national consultations are provided in the appendices to this framework:



National consultation report for *Changing with pride* (Appendix A)



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQA+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy domestic and family violence consultation report for Queensland (Appendix B)



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQA+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy domestic and family violence consultation report for the Northern Territory (Appendix C)

What does the framework include?

The framework is organised into seven sections.

1. INTRODUCTION:	introduces the framework, our vision for the future, context and history, as well as methodology.
2. KEY CONCEPTS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES:	explains the key concepts, theoretical frameworks and guiding principles that underpin the framework, including a summary of specific guiding principles for working with and for LGBTIQA+ communities (to be explored further in 'Section 6 – Putting this into Practice').
3. UNDERSTANDING VIOLENCE AGAINST LGBTIQA+ PEOPLE:	considers the current evidence base and aims to build understanding about violence against LGBTIQA+ people, including its prevalence, nature, dynamics and impacts.
4. DRIVERS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST LGBTIQA+ PEOPLE:	outlines a conceptual model that shows how the gendered drivers of violence and drivers specific to LGBTIQA+ people overlap, intersect and compound to create an environment in which violence against LGBTIQA+ people is more likely, and persists over time. This includes consideration of additional intersecting forms of oppression that drive violence, alongside additional factors that may influence the probability and frequency of violence against LGBTIQA+ people.
5. STAKEHOLDERS AND ACTIONS FOR PREVENTION:	provides a comprehensive set of foundational and essential actions for a broad range of stakeholders that together tackle the underlying drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people, and the broader social context of inequality. This section also includes a range of actions that address additional factors likely to influence violence against LGBTIQA+ communities.
6. PUTTING THIS INTO PRACTICE:	describes in detail a set of principles to guide the implementation of the actions needed to prevent violence against LGBTIQA+ people. These include both general violence prevention principles and specific principles for working with and for LGBTIQA+ communities, based on guidance contained in the Pride in Prevention suite of resources.
7. CONCLUSION:	summarises the framework, and reiterates the importance of undertaking the collective work described in the framework to create a future where all LGBTIQA+ people live free from violence.



SECTION 2

Key concepts and guiding principles

Approaches to preventing violence against LGBTIQA+ people must be informed by evidence and theory, strongly uphold human rights and be guided by appropriate principles. This will help to ensure that violence prevention efforts are effective, inclusive, transformative and do no further harm. This framework has been carefully developed to guide and support this work.

This section explains the key concepts, theoretical frameworks and guiding principles that underpin this framework, including primary prevention, a human rights approach, intersectionality and a socio-ecological approach. It also considers specific guiding principles for working with and for LGBTIQA+ communities.

Primary prevention of violence

Primary prevention is a social change strategy that aims to stop violence from happening in the first place. The term 'primary prevention' draws from public health and refers to addressing the 'primary' or 'upstream' drivers of a problem to prevent it from occurring.

Change the story is Australia's evidence-based framework to guide a coordinated and effective national approach to preventing violence against women. *Change the story* makes it clear that the prevention of violence against women is an ambitious and long-term approach that aims for widespread social change, working alongside other parts of the continuum to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. The framework shows that prevention must work across the whole population to challenge the harmful attitudes, beliefs, values, practices and power imbalances that drive violence against women.

As set out in the National Plan, primary prevention is one part of a continuum that also includes:

- early intervention, which intervenes where there is higher risk of violence, and aims to stop early signs of violence from escalating
- response and recovery efforts, which respond after violence has occurred.

The focus of this framework is specifically on primary prevention. However, a comprehensive and holistic approach to violence against LGBTIQA+ people must involve a combination of interlinked strategies, where primary prevention, early intervention, response and recovery complement and support each other. LGBTIQA+ organisations have long-term expertise in providing trusted and community-led programs of work and services that span this continuum. Developing this further, and integrating effectively with mainstream programs and services across the country, requires increased attention and dedicated investment into the future.

LGBTIQA+ human rights

Preventing violence against women requires upholding the rights of women and girls as codified in the *United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*.[6]

Similarly, approaches to LGBTIQA+ equality and rights are founded on international agreements, such as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*[7], which establishes that all people have an equal right to live free from violence, persecution, discrimination, harassment and stigma. Further to this, in 2015 the United Nations adopted a joint statement on ending violence and discrimination against LGBTI people[8], and recently the UN Secretariat adopted a strategy on the protection of LGBTIQ+ people from violence and discrimination.[9]

Achieving LGBTIQA+ equality requires long-term effort that promotes legal, economic and social equality, while also transforming social norms and power dynamics across society.

Intersectionality

This framework applies an intersectional approach to understanding violence against LGBTIQA+ people. The term 'intersectionality' was introduced in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw to shine a light on the compounding oppression experienced by Black American women, as a result of the intersection of sexism and racism. Intersectionality has since become used more broadly as a concept that provides a lens through which to understand multiple and intersecting systems of oppression and power.

An intersectional analysis is vital to understanding the overlap of violence against LGBTIQA+ people and violence against women. It highlights the intersection of different systems of oppression and power in driving violence, and shared interests in acting together against these systems.

An intersectional approach recognises that the experiences of individuals and groups within LGBTIQA+ communities are influenced by multiple and intersecting systems of oppression – both as LGBTIQA+ people and as people impacted by sexism, racism, colonialism, myths about culture, ableism and classism. Additional forms of discrimination and inequality also impact LGBTIQA+ people, such as age, religion, immigration status and geography. These influence the prevalence and dynamics of violence experienced by LGBTIQA+ people, and must be attended to in policy, programming and practice that aim to prevent violence.

Understanding and addressing overlapping systems of oppression can be a powerful way to enact solidarity and allyship in social change – which is central to a primary prevention approach.

Socio-ecological approach

A socio-ecological approach has been key to Australia's national approach to the prevention of violence against women. This approach was developed in response to evidence that 'no single factor can explain why some women or groups of women experience higher rates of violence than others, while others are more protected from it'.[10] Instead, violence is the outcome of interactions among many factors at different levels of society – individual and relationship, organisational and community, system and institutional, and societal.

These factors include the ideas, values or beliefs that are common or dominant in a society or community – called social norms. These norms are reflected in institutional, organisational, community and relationship practices or behaviours, and are supported by social structures, both formal (such as legislation) and informal (such as hierarchies within a family or community).[11] A socio-ecological analysis helps to explain violence in a social context, rather than as an individual act only.

Pride in Prevention put forward a preliminary conceptual model for understanding the drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people, across each level of the social ecology. This was the first time that conceptual approaches developed for the prevention of violence against women had been comprehensively adapted and applied to LGBTIQA+ experiences. This groundbreaking work set the basis for the development of the model contained later in this framework.



Guiding principles for working with and for LGBTIQA+ communities

In addition to the key concepts and theoretical frameworks outlined earlier in this section, the following principles should guide all work with and for LGBTIQA+ communities.

These principles draw from existing guidance in the *Pride in Prevention* suite of resources, and from the national consultation undertaken to inform this framework. These principles are vital for implementation of the framework by key stakeholders – including government and non-government agencies, organisations and services – in partnership with LGBTIQA+ communities. This will be covered in detail in 'Section 6 – Putting this into practice'.

Meaningful engagement, community ownership and partnership

All primary prevention that aims to address the experiences of LGBTIQA+ people must be done in ways that build community leadership and capacity. 'Nothing about us without us' is a phrase that establishes the principle of community ownership. This can involve LGBTIQA+ community-led prevention, as well as a range of methods that other organisations can use for consultation, codesign, collaboration and partnership. The key point is that engagement must be meaningful, respectful, and address the interests and needs of LGBTIQA+ communities.



See *Pride in Prevention Partnership Guide*[12]

Whole-of-population and shared approach to prevention

Just like the prevention of violence against women, primary prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people must take a whole-of-population approach. It cannot only be 'targeted at' LGBTIQA+ people – especially as much of this violence is perpetrated by people from outside these communities. Prevention of violence against women takes a 'gender transformative' approach that 'actively works to challenge and transform gender norms, roles, relations, power imbalances and their impacts'.[13] LGBTIQA+ communities and organisations have existing expertise and much to offer in further developing the shared practice of transforming rigid, binary and hierarchical social constructions of gender and sexuality as significant drivers of both violence against women and violence against LGBTIQA+ people and communities.



See *Pride in Prevention Program Guide*[14]



Strengths-based and values-based messaging

LGBTIQA+ people experience poorer outcomes in a wide range of health and wellbeing domains, but this is not because they are LGBTIQA+. Instead, these outcomes are a result of the pathologisation of LGBTIQA+ bodies, identities and relationships (both historical and current) and related discrimination, inequality and oppression. To counter this, violence prevention work must be strengths-based. This means moving beyond tolerance or acceptance and instead grounding this work in an explicit celebration of the unique and positive aspects of LGBTIQA+ communities and experiences. Appealing to universal values can also be powerful, for example through messaging that promotes the idea that 'everyone deserves to be able to be their authentic self, and to live and love freely'.

See *Pride in Prevention Messaging Guide*[15]

Evidence-building through reflection and learning

Historically, LGBTIQA+ experiences of family, domestic and sexual violence have been under-researched and largely absent from research and data. At times, these evidence gaps have been put forward as an argument against including these communities in violence prevention policy and programs.[16] However, in recent years there has been an increased research focus on LGBTIQA+ experiences of violence, and gaps in national datasets in Australia are beginning to be addressed. Those who have forged ahead and begun to implement programs and initiatives have learnt much about working in this space. Ongoing attention to evaluation, reflection and sharing lessons learned will help to further build and strengthen the evidence base.

See *Pride in Prevention Evaluation Guide*[17]



SECTION 3

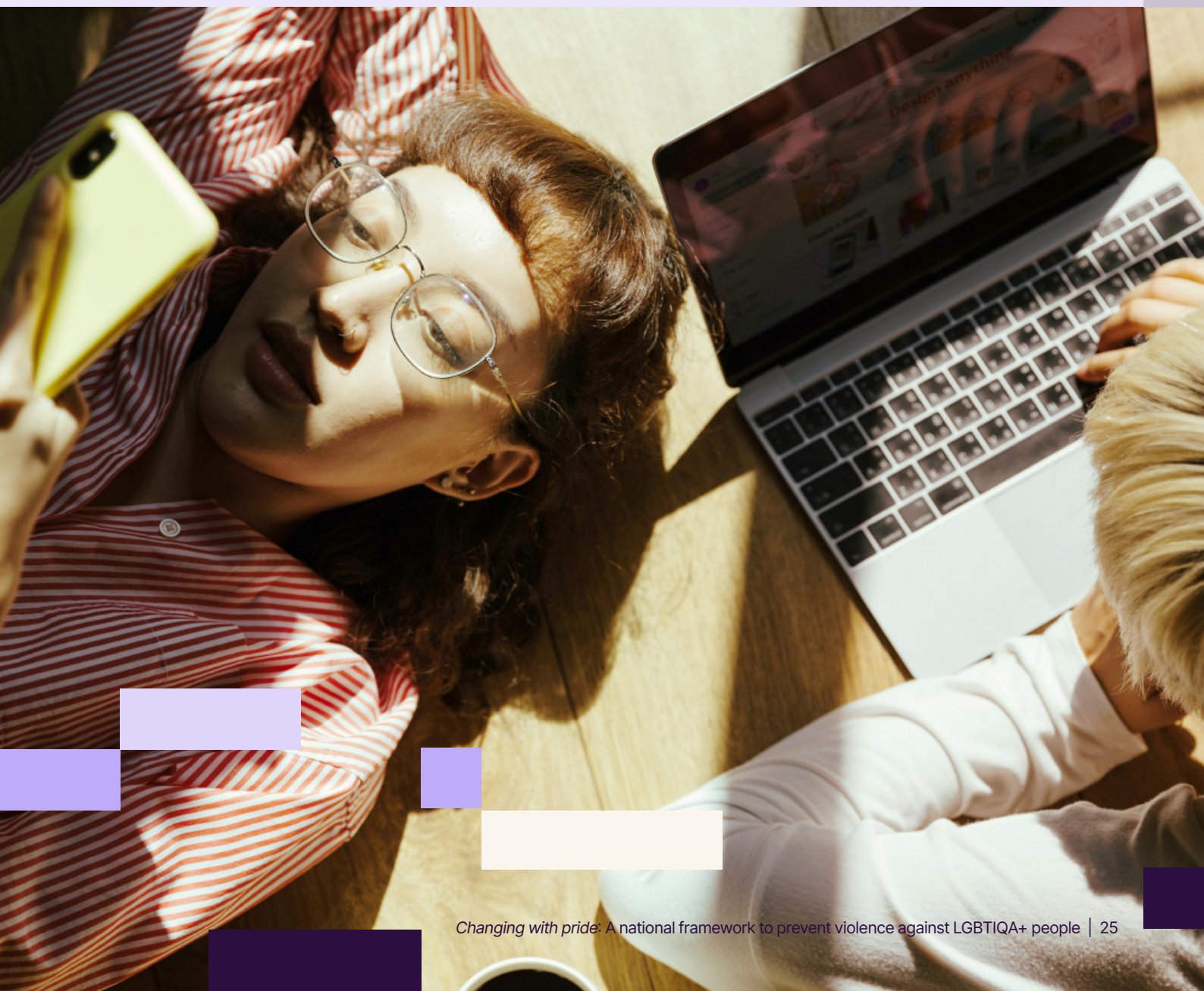
Understanding violence against LGBTIQA+ people

Violence against LGBTIQA+ people is a prevalent, serious and preventable abuse of human rights. This section is designed to build understanding about violence against LGBTIQA+ people, including its prevalence, nature, dynamics and impacts.

In line with the approach taken to the prevention of violence against women outlined in *Change the story*, this framework considers all forms of violence against LGBTIQA+ people. The prevention approach outlined here will, if implemented, have a positive impact across the range of different forms of violence against LGBTIQA+ people.

The available evidence paints a compelling picture of significant rates of intimate partner violence, domestic and family violence, sexual violence and sexual harassment experienced by LGBTIQA+ people.

LGBTIQA+ people also experience violence in many areas of their lives, including in institutional settings (e.g. education and health or other care services), workplace harassment, street-based violence and harassment, online abuse and hate crimes.



Current research and data sources

A growing number of studies, primarily from Australia, the US, Canada and the UK, are deepening understanding of violence against LGBTIQA+ people. In particular, research published since *Pride in Prevention* in 2020 has significantly expanded knowledge of intimate partner, domestic, family and sexual violence experienced by LGBTIQA+ people in Australia.[18]

At the same time, there remains a lack of comprehensive population-level data on prevalence of violence against LGBTIQA+ people, due to data collection frameworks that exclude LGBTIQA+ people, or ask only limited questions about respondents' identities and experiences. The *Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) 2021-22 Personal Safety Survey (PSS)* included questions on sexual orientation for the first time, finding significantly higher rates of physical violence, sexual violence and harassment for lesbian, gay, bisexual and other non-heterosexual women.[19] However, most datasets currently capture only binary cisgender identities, which limits the availability of prevalence data for LGBTIQA+ people. Even if more diverse gender identities are captured, these are often not disaggregated or reported.

Nevertheless, several Australian studies focused on LGBTIQA+ people have provided important insights. These include the *2018 Australian Trans and Gender Diverse Sexual Health Survey*,[20] ACON's *LGBTQ+ people's experiences and perceptions of sexual violence*,[21] La Trobe University's *Private Lives 3*[22] and the *2024 National Survey of LGBTIQA+SB Experiences of Sexual Violence*.[23] These studies have added to recent international and Australian research demonstrating that LGBTIQA+ people experience significant violence in their intimate partner and family relationships. This violence shares features and similarities with violence against women, most notably that most perpetrators are cisgender men.[24] However, there are also differences and complexities to consider.

Prevalence of intimate partner, family and sexual violence

Intimate partner violence

Rates of intimate partner violence experienced by LGBTIQA+ people are often found to be similar or even higher in comparison to heterosexual or cisgender people.[25] *Private Lives 3*, a large-scale national survey of more than 6,800 LGBTIQ adults in Australia, found that, amongst those surveyed, 60.7% of participants reported experiencing intimate partner violence of some kind – with especially high rates for non-binary people, trans men and trans women, as well as for pansexual, queer, lesbian and bisexual people.[26] This is consistent with research that has found elevated risk among bisexual people (particularly bisexual women) compared to heterosexual people,[27] and trans and gender diverse people compared to cisgender people,[28] as well as higher risk for non-binary people.[29]

Reporting to police is often low,[30] and barriers to reporting include fears around discrimination and lack of understanding from service providers.[31] LGBTIQA+ people face particular difficulties in recognising and naming their experiences as violence – as a byproduct of public narratives and service responses that are, understandably, focused on men's violence against women.[32]

Family violence

Violence experienced by LGBTIQA+ people in their families is significant, but under-researched. *Private Lives 3* found that 64.9% of participants reported experiencing family violence of some kind – and that this violence is perpetrated by parents (biological and non-biological), siblings, extended family members, in-laws and grandchildren.[33]

LGBTIQA+ people can experience violence both in their 'families of origin' (biological or adoptive) and their chosen families. However, the high levels of family violence reported by LGBTIQA+ people need to be understood in a broader context of discrimination and inequality.

A longstanding body of literature considers experiences of rejection or acceptance in relationships between LGBTIQA+ children and young people, and their parents. Coming out to family has long been identified as a period of particular risk for violence,[34] while family acceptance has consistently been found to be a protective factor for health and wellbeing.[35]

Private Lives 3 found that across their intimate partner and family relationships, participants reported high levels of physical violence, verbal abuse, sexual assault, financial abuse, emotional abuse, harassment and stalking, property damage, social isolation, threats of self-harm and suicide, as well as 'identity-based' abuse – for example, threats to 'out' people or withhold gender affirming care.[36] 'LGBTIQ-related abuse' was common, with just over 40% of participants reporting that violence was targeted at them because they were LGBTIQ.[37] Other studies have also found high rates of 'identity abuse' targeted at LGBTIQA+ people in their families.[38]

Sexual violence and harassment

LGBTIQA+ people are at elevated risk of sexual violence,[39] but reporting of these experiences to police or services is frequently found to be low.[40] Lifetime experiences of sexual violence or coercion are especially high among trans and gender diverse people,[41] as well as bisexual women and lesbians compared to heterosexual women.[42]

LGBTIQA+ people also experience significant sexual harassment. The Respect@Work national inquiry found that LGBTIQ people were at higher risk than the general population of experiencing sexual harassment at work.[43] The *2021 National Student Safety Survey* showed significantly higher prevalence of sexual assault and sexual harassment in Australian universities for bisexual, gay and lesbian students compared to heterosexual students.[44]

Knowledge about specific LGBTIQA+ experiences

There is a significant gap in research about violence in the intimate and family relationships of people with innate variations of sex characteristics (also termed intersex variations or differences of sex development). However, these experiences are widely reported and need to be understood within the broader context of structural violence experienced by people with innate variations of sex characteristics.

Intersex people are born with sex characteristics that do not conform to normative definitions of 'male' or 'female'[45] – in contrast to those whose bodies are assumed to align and are termed 'endosex'. Many intersex people are subjected to invasive medical and clinical procedures, from repeated genital examinations[46] to 'normalising' medical treatments,[47] often without their consent. Intersex people have called for structural change to end these human rights violations and the 'pathologisation and stigmatisation of healthy intersex bodies', advocating for bodily autonomy and self-determination.[48] Assumptions that intersex people are queer are also known to have specific adverse impacts on people with innate variations of sex characteristics who grow up to be cisgender and heterosexual, with this lack of comprehension also impacting policy related to all people with innate variations of sex characteristics.

There is limited academic research looking at the experiences of asexual and aromantic people, but some community-led research.[49] People who feel little to no sexual or romantic attraction often report being excluded and made to feel invisible across society, as a consequence of social norms that determine sexual and romantic relationships. There is some evidence that people across the spectrum of asexuality experience significant sexual violence and harassment, linked to experiences of pathologisation, stigmatisation, social pressure and even 'corrective' violence.[50] Further research is needed with asexual and aromantic people.

Lastly, there is a need to more fully understand the particularly high rates of violence against trans and gender diverse people (and trans women in particular). An emerging focus is looking at the overlapping impacts of transphobia and misogyny (sometimes called 'transmisogyny').[51] More research is needed to explore specific patterns of violence, perpetration and risk, as well as effective service and prevention approaches.

Broader experiences of violence

LGBTIQA+ people often experience multiple forms of violence, from multiple perpetrators – across life stages and in many different contexts. This includes significant experiences of stigma, discrimination, violence and abuse in public and various institutional settings.

In *Private Lives 3*, participants were asked if they had experienced specific forms of violence or harassment based on their sexual orientation or gender identity in the past 12 months. The most frequently reported forms were social exclusion; verbal abuse; harassment, such as being spat at or offensive gestures; written threats of abuse; or refusal of service. Concerningly, 3.9% of participants reported a physical attack or assault with a weapon in the past 12 months due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.[52] Within this data are marked differences in rates of violence based on gender identity, income, education, employment, disability and geographic location.[53]

A range of research also shows that trans and gender diverse people experience a 'multitude of violence' linked to their gender identities,[54] with indications that this is increasing in Australia.[55] Trans women, for example, face sexual, physical, verbal, psychological and financial violence from family members, intimate partners, friends, strangers, police and practitioners based on their gender.[56] These experiences occur across society, including in education, health and other state settings.[57]

Intersectionality and experiences of violence

A range of overlapping forms of oppression, inequality and discrimination influence and shape LGBTIQA+ experiences of violence.

Some Australian studies have looked specifically at the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQA+, Sistergirl and Brotherboy people – finding high levels of violence from multiple perpetrators, including partners, close friends and family members,[58] along with social exclusion and threats of violence from family and community.[59] The studies note that these experiences need to be understood in the context of the ongoing impacts of colonisation, and that significant levels of racist, homophobic and transphobic discrimination and violence are perpetrated by non-Indigenous people.

These findings are in line with Our Watch's *Changing the picture: A national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children*.[60] This framework makes clear that violence against women is not part of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Instead, violence is perpetrated both by Indigenous and non-Indigenous men, and needs to be understood as a product of colonisation, and as systemic and intergenerational.[61] Participants in the national consultations for this framework consistently named the ongoing effects of colonisation as a critical component of the underlying social conditions that drive violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQA+, Sistergirl and Brotherboy people.

Similarly, many LGBTIQA+ people also experience racism, and discrimination based on myths about 'culture' or their migration or visa status. This influences a combination of homophobic, transphobic and racist violence – across society and within families and communities. International research has shown that LGBTIQA+ people of colour are more likely than white LGBTIQA+ people to experience intimate partner violence.[62] Other studies have explored the experiences of LGBTIQA+ people from multicultural and multifaith backgrounds, focusing on their experiences of family acceptance, abuse and erasure.[63] For trans women of colour, sexual violence is a common experience.[64]

LGBTIQA+ people with disabilities experience a high level of violence, especially sexual violence. *Private Lives 3* revealed that participants with moderate or severe disability were significantly more likely to experience both intimate partner violence and family violence, compared to those without disability.[65] Other research has found elevated risk of family abuse for trans people living with disability.[66]

Significant violence occurs along the life course for LGBTIQA+ people. *Writing Themselves In 4,* the largest survey on the health and wellbeing of LGBTQA+ young people in Australia, involved more than 6,400 participants aged 14–21.[67] Almost one in four participants had experienced homelessness, and more than one-quarter of those participants noted this was due to being LGBTQA+. Many cited experiences of family rejection and family violence.

Overall, there is evidence that LGBTIQA+ people who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, people of colour, or from migrant and refugee backgrounds are more likely to experience violence. Those living with disabilities and young people are also at higher risk, as are those with lower access to income, employment and housing.[68]

More research is needed to better understand how these intersecting forms of inequality and oppression influence the prevalence and dynamics of violence experienced by LGBTIQA+ people, although this should not preclude taking action to prevent this violence now.

Perpetration of violence

There are significant gaps in understanding perpetration of violence in Australia, including violence against LGBTIQA+ people. However, knowledge is steadily increasing, including recent research in Australia.[69] Violence against LGBTIQA+ people is perpetrated both by LGBTIQA+ people and by people who are not LGBTIQA+. People who are not LGBTIQA+ are responsible for significant violence against LGBTIQA+ people in intimate and family relationships, public places and institutional settings. Many LGBTIQA+ people will experience multiple forms of violence across relationship types and contexts, throughout their lives.

In *Private Lives 3*, 57% of participants who reported intimate partner violence said that this violence was perpetrated by a cisgender man, while for those reporting family violence, the most likely perpetrator was a parent (72.7%).[70] In an Australian survey of 330 LGBTQ+ adults with experiences of sexual violence, about half described the perpetrator as LGBTQ+ (including cisgender men), while most perpetrators who were not LGBTQ+ were identified as cisgender men.[71] Most violence against transgender people is perpetrated by cisgender men.[72]

Recent literature has begun to explore perpetration of intimate partner violence by LGBTIQA+ people. In some research, minority stress, such as internalised homophobia and discrimination, has been associated with both intimate partner violence victimisation and perpetration.[73] However, others have challenged how within LGBTIQA+ communities violence may be 'excused or minimised, since it could be seen as emerging from distress or trauma rather than being an active abuse of power'.[74] Assumptions that violence in LGBTIQA+ relationships is mutual can also serve to minimise violence.[75]

Sexual violence is perpetrated at significant levels against LGBTIQA+ people, but also by LGBTIQA+ people. Researchers have observed that gaining an accurate picture of this violence can be complicated by the tendency for LGBTIQA+ people to have unique understandings and experiences around sexual consent,[76] with one contributing factor being a lack of inclusive sexuality education. Other research has considered how myths and stereotypes about sexual violence and LGBTIQA+ people can serve to wrongly justify sexual violence and blame victim-survivors.[77]

It is important to ensure, encourage and enable accountability for LGBTIQA+ people who use violence, and there is recent evidence emerging from perpetrator interventions with LGBTIQA+ communities. One Australian study found that some GBTQ men find it difficult to identify their behaviour as intimate partner violence, partly due to dominant narratives about men's violence against women, while others draw on dominant scripts about masculinity and male entitlement to explain their use of violence.[78]

Impacts of violence

The impacts of violence against LGBTIQA+ people are significant and wide-ranging – although less is known about this in relation to LGBTIQA+ people because existing research and data about the impacts of violence has often not been inclusive.

Violence can be lethal, near lethal and cause significant physical injury. Victim-survivors can experience significant emotional impact, including post-traumatic stress and suicidality. This impact needs to be understood in the context of significantly poorer mental health for LGBTIQA+ people. Data from *Private Lives 3* shows that suicidal ideation, suicide attempts and high psychological distress among LGBTIQA+ people were likely to occur alongside experiences of intimate partner violence and family violence.[79]

A range of research has also linked LGBTIQA+ experiences of violence with homelessness,[80] problematic alcohol use (which can be higher for LGBTIQA+ people[81]), and lower levels of education, income and access to housing.[82] All of these outcomes likely reflect the impacts of violence, as well as being factors in themselves that increase risk and make it harder to escape or recover.

The impacts of violence can be compounded when the experiences of LGBTIQA+ victim-survivors are minimised or excluded. Help-seeking can unfortunately result in further marginalisation when services do not cater for LGBTIQA+ people and their needs.[83]

LGBTIQA+ people face significant barriers to accessing affirmative family, domestic and sexual violence services and support.[84] Dominant heteronormative and cisnormative narratives make it more difficult for LGBTIQA+ people to recognise and label experiences of violence,[85] and also mean that many service providers, structures and systems fail to respond effectively. *Private Lives 3* provided important insights into service preferences and need, with 57.5% of participants saying they would prefer to access mainstream services that are LGBTIQA+ inclusive, while 33.8% preferred LGBTIQA+-specific services.[86]

Understanding the drivers of violence

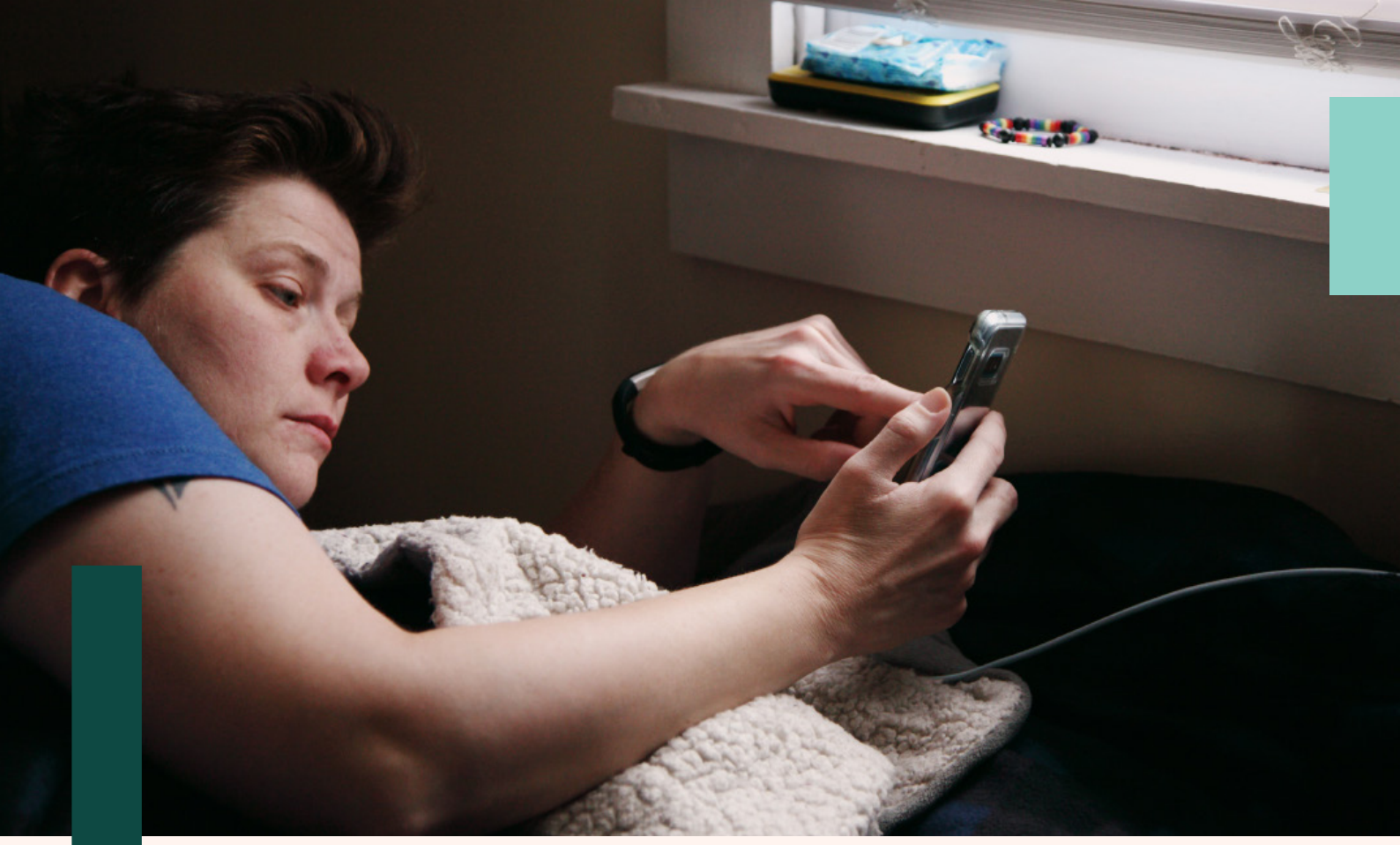
There is a growing focus in recent literature on how looking only on men's violence against women may exclude LGBTIQA+ communities from prevention and intervention efforts.[87] In response, specific conceptualisations of violence against LGBTIQA+ people are beginning to emerge. These draw from feminist theories of violence against women, combined with a critique of cisnormative and heteronormative models that reinforce a gendered binary in understanding violence.[88]

The social explanation of violence against women, detailed in *Change the story*, provides an opportunity to explore violence against LGBTIQA+ people in a similarly socio-ecological way, as something shaped by a range of social norms, structures and relationships. *Pride in Prevention* was groundbreaking in developing conceptual and practical approaches along these lines.

As *Change the story* explains, men's violence against women results from discriminatory 'institutional, social and economic structures, social and cultural norms, and organisational, community, family and relationship practices'.[89] These create an environment in which men and women are not treated or recognised as equal, and men's violence against women is both more likely, and more likely to be condoned.

A conceptual model for understanding the drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people can build on this explanation – acknowledging gender inequality and gendered patterns of violence, and recognising that LGBTIQA+ people are similarly considered unequal to cisgender and heterosexual people.

This is the social context that gives rise to violence against LGBTIQA+ people and means that this violence is minimised and condoned. The following section will develop this further and outline a conceptual model for understanding the drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people.



SECTION 4

Drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people

Through an extensive search of the literature, consultation with stakeholders across Australia, and the guidance of expert advisory groups, it is evident that the drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people overlap with the drivers of violence against women, but are also specific and distinct.

There is no one factor that causes or creates violence. However, *Change the story* outlines four key factors that consistently predict violence against women at a population level, and explain its gendered patterns.

> These factors are termed 'gendered drivers' because they arise from gender-discriminatory institutional, social and economic structures, social and cultural norms, and organisational, community, family and relationship practices that together create environments in which women and men are not considered equal, and violence against women is both more likely, and more likely to be tolerated and even condoned.[90]

The cornerstone of gender inequality is rigid, binary and hierarchical norms around gender, where women are considered unequal to men. These norms are closely related to norms around sexuality, which assume that heterosexuality (in a nuclear family) is the only 'normal' and socially acceptable form of intimate relationship and family structure.

These rigid, binary and hierarchical norms around gender and sexuality are critical to the creation and reproduction of a social context in which LGBTIQA+ people are considered less equal, less worthy and even 'deviant' or in need of 'correction'. Just as attitudes, behaviours, systems and structures produce and reinforce gender inequality, LGBTIQA+ people face contexts that consistently reinforce their experiences of stigma, discrimination and inequality.

Figure 1 provides a conceptual model that shows how the gendered drivers of violence and specific drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people overlap, intersect and compound to create an environment in which violence against LGBTIQA+ people is more likely to occur and persist over time.

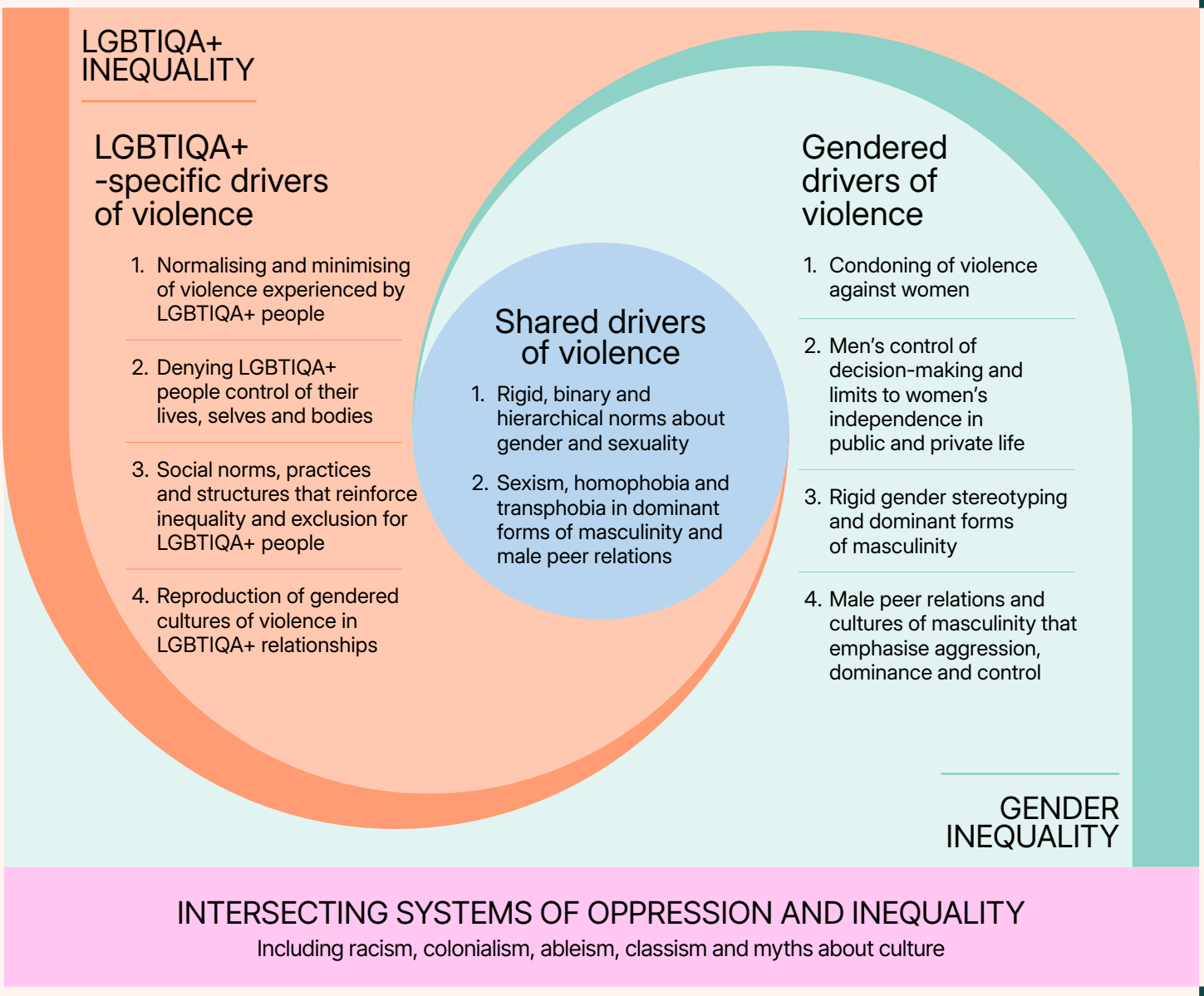
These drivers can be described broadly at a population level, but the circumstances within which instances of violence occur are complex. There are other important factors that play a role (even the most important role) in many instances of violence, but on their own do not explain the patterns of violence against LGBTIQA+ people that are seen across society. These additional factors are discussed at the end of this section.

The conceptual model is a simplification of complex issues. It seeks to visually depict the social context of inequality for LGBTIQA+ people and the specific drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people. It also illustrates that additional systems of oppression and power play a role in driving or influencing the prevalence and dynamics of this violence.

This conceptual model is intended to inform both current prevention work and ongoing research. As more prevention work is implemented and more evidence emerges over time, the model can be refined.

FIGURE 1

Conceptual model for the drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people



Gendered drivers of violence against women

The following expressions of gender inequality have been shown in international evidence to be most consistently associated with higher levels of men's violence against women across society.

GENDERED DRIVER 1

Condoning of violence against women

GENDERED DRIVER 2

Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life

GENDERED DRIVER 3

Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity

GENDERED DRIVER 4

Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control

GENDERED DRIVER 1

Condoning of violence against women

When societies, institutions, communities or individuals support or condone violence against women, levels of such violence are higher.[91] Violence against women is condoned through widely held beliefs, attitudes and social norms about gender, which intersect with those about race, ethnicity, age, class, disability and sexuality.

Men who hold these beliefs are more likely to perpetrate violence against women, and both women and men who hold these beliefs are less likely to take action to support victims and hold perpetrators to account.[92] Violence against women is also condoned through the various legal, institutional and organisational structures and practices that reflect and reinforce these beliefs, attitudes and social norms.

GENDERED DRIVER 2

Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life

Violence is more common in relationships in which men control decision-making and limit women's autonomy, have a sense of ownership of or entitlement to women, and hold rigid ideas on acceptable female behaviour.[93] Constraints on women's independence and access to decision-making are also evident in the public sphere, where men have greater control over power and resources. Collectively these various forms of male dominance, power and control, and the limiting of women's autonomy contribute to men's violence against women by sending a message that women have lower social value and are less worthy of respect.



GENDERED DRIVER 3

Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity

Promoting and enforcing rigid, binary and hierarchical gender stereotypes reproduces the social conditions of gender inequality that underpin violence against women. In particular, stereotypes of masculinity play a direct role in driving men's violence against women. Men who form a rigid attachment to socially dominant norms and practices of masculinity are more likely to demonstrate sexist attitudes and behaviours, hold violence-supportive attitudes, and perpetrate violence against women.[94] Globally, rates of violence are higher in societies, communities and relationships where there are more rigid distinctions between the roles of men and women, and more stereotypical notions of the 'ideal' man or woman, and where dominant forms of masculinity are rigidly adhered to.[95]

While some men challenge or reject these stereotypes of masculinity, there are many who accept and support them, or who feel pressure to live up to them. Further, many men do nothing to challenge this gendered system that benefits them and negatively impacts women.

GENDERED DRIVER 4

Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control

Male peer relationships, both personal and professional, that are characterised by aggression, dominance, control or hypersexuality are associated with violence against women.[96] In such peer groups, adherence to these dominant forms of masculinity increases men's reluctance to take a stand against violence-supportive attitudes, and can increase the use of violence itself. Structural factors – such as poor organisational cultures, inadequate policies and insufficient penalties – can support or excuse violence-supportive attitudes and behaviour, particularly in male-dominated contexts.[97]

Shared drivers

In describing the social context that gives rise to violence against LGBTIQA+ people, there is substantive overlap between the gendered drivers and the drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people.

Two shared drivers in particular are described below as the specific expressions of gender inequality and LGBTIQA+ inequality that work together to drive violence against women and LGBTIQA+ people.

SHARED DRIVER 1

Rigid, binary and hierarchical norms about gender and sexuality

SHARED DRIVER 2

Sexism, homophobia and transphobia in dominant forms of masculinity and male peer relations

SHARED DRIVER 1

Rigid, binary and hierarchical norms about gender and sexuality

Rigid, binary and hierarchical social norms around gender are central to the gendered drivers of violence against women. These norms assume a binary categorisation of all people into 'male' and 'female', and set rigid expectations about people's attributes and social roles through fixed ideas about masculinity and femininity. These norms serve to erase and exclude people whose bodies, identities and expressions of gender do not fit neatly into binary categories, leading to significant experiences of stigma, discrimination and inequality, particularly for trans and gender diverse people. This is sometimes called 'cisnormativity'.

The specific experiences of people with innate variations of sex characteristics are increasingly described and understood as a result of 'endosexism'. This refers to the system of stigma, discrimination and inequality that impacts people whose bodies align with social norms related to sex characteristics in comparison to those with innate variations in sex characteristics.

Rigid, binary and hierarchical social norms around sexuality are closely intertwined and related to those about gender – through the idea that a man and a woman in a heterosexual relationship is the only 'normal' form of intimate relationship and the only legitimate family structure. This is sometimes called 'heteronormativity'. Social norms around gender and sexuality also impact asexual and aromantic people, who are excluded, dehumanised and even targeted for violence because they do not conform.

These norms create an environment where inequality for LGBTIQA+ people is accepted and justified. In a context where LGBTIQA+ people are seen as less equal and worthy, and LGBTIQA+ relationships as less legitimate, violence against LGBTIQA+ people is more likely to occur and more likely to be condoned. This violence has devastating impacts for LGBTIQA+ people. It also serves to reinforce and maintain the gendered attitudes, behaviours, systems and structures that drive violence against women.

SHARED DRIVER 2

Sexism, homophobia and transphobia in dominant forms of masculinity and male peer relations

Socially dominant forms of masculinity are reliant on language, cultures and practices that are both sexist, as well as homophobic and transphobic.[98]

According to dominant social norms and expectations, men must reject LGBTIQA+ people and traits that are stereotypically assumed to be related to these communities in order to be a 'real man'. In particular, men must reject gay or bisexual men and trans and gender diverse people to avoid being labelled 'feminine' or 'unmanly'. Homophobia and transphobia are used to ridicule, bully and even punish 'transgressions' against dominant forms of masculinity. This is reinforced through male peer relations that are based on sexism, homophobia and transphobia, especially in male-dominated contexts. In addition, men are socialised to feel shameful about sexual and romantic attraction to other men, or to trans and gender diverse people. Many hide their attraction or their relationships because of this.

This directly drives the perpetration of violence against LGBTIQA+ people, just as it also serves to drive men's violence against women by reinforcing sexism and dominant forms of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.

LGBTIQA+ -specific drivers

In addition to the shared drivers, four specific expressions of LGBTIQA+ inequality serve to create an environment where violence against LGBTIQA+ people is more likely.

LGBTIQA+-SPECIFIC DRIVER 1

Normalising and minimising of violence experienced by LGBTIQA+ people

LGBTIQA+-SPECIFIC DRIVER 2

Denying LGBTIQA+ people control of their lives, selves and bodies

LGBTIQA+-SPECIFIC DRIVER 3

Social norms, practices and structures that reinforce inequality and exclusion for LGBTIQA+ people

LGBTIQA+-SPECIFIC DRIVER 4

Reproduction of gendered cultures of violence in LGBTIQA+ relationships

LGBTIQA+-SPECIFIC DRIVER 1

Normalising and minimising of violence experienced by LGBTIQA+ people

When LGBTIQA+ people are made invisible and excluded socially, their experiences of violence are also less visible. Violence against LGBTIQA+ people is often overlooked, excused, condoned or even justified as necessary to 'correct' transgressions against dominant social norms.

As a result of this social context, LGBTIQA+ people themselves may come to believe that they deserve violence, and may struggle to identify and name their experiences as violence.[99] Public discussions that focus only on men's violence against women can also inadvertently exacerbate the exclusion of LGBTIQA+ people from policy, research, service and programmatic responses to violence.

Stereotypes about LGBTIQA+ people are common and frequently contribute to their experiences of violence being misunderstood and minimised. For example, it is often assumed that violence does not occur in lesbian and gay relationships, or that it is not serious. Identification of the perpetrator can be obscured[100] when stereotypes about gender roles are overlaid onto LGBTIQA+ people and their relationships. This limits recognition and understanding of violence against LGBTIQA+ people.

Another assumption that serves to minimise violence against LGBTIQA+ people is that they experience intimate partner violence only at the hands of other LGBTIQA+ people. The reality is that most violence against LGBTIQA+ people is perpetrated by people outside these communities, particularly for bisexual women and trans and gender diverse people, who experience violence predominantly at the hands of cisgender men.[101]

More broadly, a focus only on intimate partner violence can obscure the many other forms of violence that LGBTIQA+ people experience, including violence in their families of origin, workplaces, schools and from strangers in public places.

LGBTIQA+-SPECIFIC DRIVER 2

Denying LGBTIQA+ people control of their lives, selves and bodies

Rigid, binary and hierarchical social norms around gender and sexuality serve to reinforce and excuse barriers to full legal recognition and social affirmation of LGBTIQA+ bodies, identities and relationships. When LGBTIQA+ people are seen as less equal and less worthy of holding and exercising basic human rights, violence against them is more likely.

Just as men's control of decision-making limits women's access to control, resources, power and independence, LGBTIQA+ people are similarly excluded from institutions, structures and decisions that significantly impact on them.

While legal recognition and rights have advanced significantly in Australia, LGBTIQA+ people do not currently have equal rights across the country. Bodily autonomy – the right to control decision-making about one's own body – is a critical issue for trans and gender diverse people and people with innate variations of sex characteristics. This is not consistently available – and discriminatory healthcare experiences are common.[102]

LGBTIQA+-SPECIFIC DRIVER 3

Social norms, practices and structures that reinforce inequality and exclusion for LGBTIQA+ people

Rigid, binary and hierarchical social norms around gender and sexuality work together to privilege cisgender and heterosexual people, relationships and experiences, while marginalising and oppressing LGBTIQA+ people. These social norms, practices and structures create an environment that reinforces inequality for LGBTIQA+ people, and create space for a variety of expressions of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. This has significant impacts on LGBTIQA+ people's health and wellbeing, and also drives violence against them.

Because of stigma, discrimination and violence, LGBTIQA+ people have significantly poorer health outcomes, particularly with respect to mental health,[103] and less access to housing, education and work. Where LGBTIQA+ people are excluded and unequal, this creates an environment where people are more likely to perpetrate violence against them.

LGBTIQA+-SPECIFIC DRIVER 4

Reproduction of gendered cultures of violence in LGBTIQA+ relationships

Just like everyone else, LGBTIQA+ people grow up in a gendered social environment. This influences their experiences of violence in intimate and family relationships, and also influences the roles and behaviours of LGBTIQA+ people themselves, in complex ways.

One aspect of this gendered social environment is the acceptance and legitimation of expressions of anger, aggression, dominance and control by men, alongside expectations that women should be accepting, submissive and subordinate. This broader social context influences the violence that many LGBTIQA+ people experience at the hands of cisgender men in intimate partner or family relationships. It also influences the use of violence by LGBTIQA+ people – through patterns that can involve one person assuming aspects of gendered roles or behaviours (regardless of gender). Recognising and challenging the reproduction of gendered cultures of violence in LGBTIQA+ relationships will support LGBTIQA+ people to enjoy loving, safe and respectful relationships.

In addition, gendered cultures of violence involve the abuse of power in the context of gender inequality. Linked to this, people who use violence can exert power by exploiting and leveraging a range of inequalities against LGBTIQA+ people. This includes inequalities related to gender identity and expression, sexuality, wealth and additional forms of discrimination and stereotypes being used against LGBTIQA+ people.

Intersecting systems of oppression and inequality

Additional forms of oppression, and their corresponding systems of inequality, power and privilege, intersect with gender inequality and LGBTIQA+ inequality. This contributes to increased prevalence, and influences the nature and dynamics of violence perpetrated against LGBTIQA+ people.

Many LGBTIQA+ people also experience the impacts of racism, colonialism, myths about culture, ableism and classism – across society and even within their own community. This drives violence for LGBTIQA+ people in complex ways. Additional forms of discrimination and inequality are also important, such as those related to age, religion, immigration status and geography. 'Section 3 – Understanding violence against LGBTIQA+ people' outlined a review of current evidence on the complex ways this impacts various communities and cohorts within LGBTIQA+ communities.

Further, given the broader context of gender inequality that intersects with LGBTIQA+ inequality, women who are LGBTIQA+ are also impacted by sexism and discrimination, both within their personal relationships and more broadly. This can include sexism from other LGBTIQA+ people.

Additional factors that influence violence

Gender inequality and LGBTIQA+ inequality give rise to the shared and specific drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people, but there are a range of other factors that also play a role.

Change the story points to four reinforcing factors for violence against women: condoning of violence in general; experience of, and exposure to, violence (e.g. in childhood); factors that weaken prosocial behaviour (e.g. poverty and disadvantage at neighbourhood level, heavy alcohol consumption, heavy gambling, natural disasters and crises); and backlash and resistance to prevention and gender equality.

International evidence shows that these factors can play an important role in many instances of violence – and can even be the most important factor. These factors interact with the gendered drivers to increase the probability or frequency of violence against women.[104] This means that specific legislative, policy and programmatic responses are needed to address these factors, along with society-wide primary prevention focused on the gendered drivers.

Many of the factors outlined above can be assumed to play a role in violence experienced by LGBTIQA+ people. In addition, a range of specific factors may have a contributing influence. This includes factors that increase risk for victim-survivors, and limit their ability to escape violence, access services, recover and thrive. It also includes factors that influence a person's choice to use violence. Perpetration is always a choice, but it is important to understand and address factors that can influence perpetration.

The following are significant issues for LGBTIQA+ communities:

- barriers to education
- barriers to housing, income and employment
- higher rates of mental ill health
- higher rates of alcohol and other drug use, some of which may be problematic
- higher lifetime experiences of stigma, discrimination, abuse and violence
- barriers to accessing LGBTIQA+ -inclusive services.[105]

More research is needed to understand the influence of these factors in relation to violence, and how addressing them can contribute to prevention – in an integrated way with efforts to address the social drivers of violence.

In addition to the factors outlined above, LGBTIQA+ people can be a target for violence motivated by backlash and resistance. Organised backlash and resistance to LGBTIQA+ equality is both political and social, and is closely tied to broader efforts to turn back progress on gender equality. This serves to create unsafe environments, makes violence against LGBTIQA+ people more likely, and means that violence is more likely to be excused or even legitimised. Anticipating and addressing backlash and resistance must be a focus in planning and implementation of actions to prevent violence against LGBTIQA+ people.

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SECTION 5

Stakeholders and actions for prevention

Ultimately, the only way to reduce the prevalence of violence against LGBTIQA+ people is to take a primary prevention approach that addresses the social context in which this violence occurs, and shifts its underlying drivers. A robust approach to prevention requires multiple, long-term, mutually reinforcing strategies to address both LGBTIQA+ inequality and gender inequality, alongside additional intersecting systems of oppression and inequality.

These strategies must target:

- social and cultural norms (dominant ideas or common beliefs)
- structural and systemic discrimination (such as legislation and policies)
- organisational, community, household and relationship practices.

A cohesive national effort, and increased and sustained investment, are needed to drive the significant social change that will prevent violence against LGBTIQA+ people from happening in the first place.

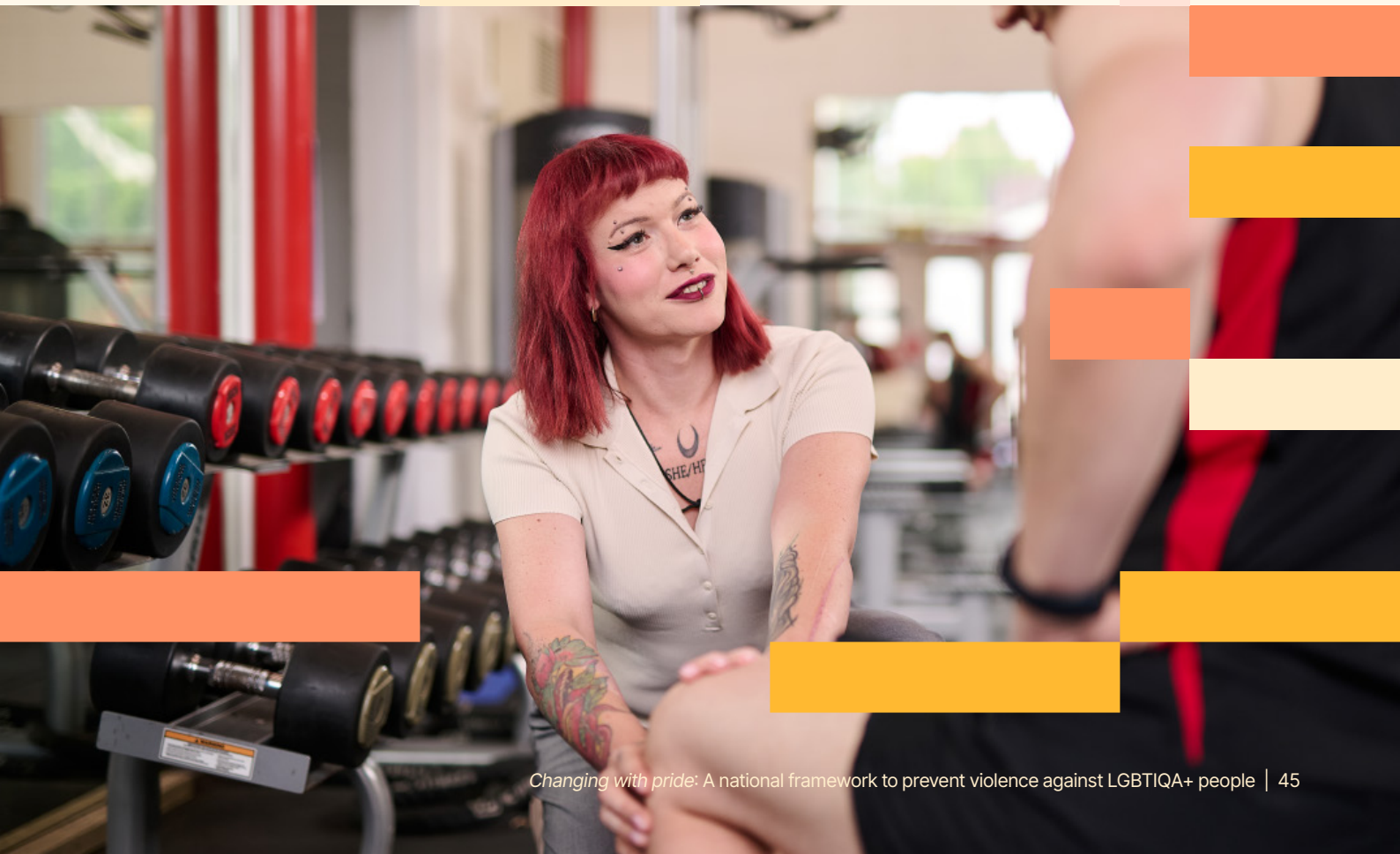
This section outlines a comprehensive set of actions that directly address the underlying drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people, and the broader social contexts of gender inequality and LGBTIQA+ inequality (see 'Section 4 – Drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people'). It also outlines actions to address additional factors that are likely to influence violence against LGBTIQA+ people.

The actions proposed in this section draw on:

- the available evidence
- recommendations from stakeholder consultations
- the guidance of advisory groups and experts
- previous recommendations for action made in *Pride in Prevention* and its associated resources
- the established primary prevention guidance contained in *Change the story* and associated Our Watch resources.

Actions are needed in many sectors and settings, and at all levels of society. This will require the leadership and participation of various stakeholders. Therefore, the actions outlined in this section have also been informed by an analysis of key stakeholders.

Pride in Prevention put forward a number of initial priorities for action, based on an analysis of key stakeholders and promising work already underway. The national consultation to inform this framework has updated and built on this foundation, and provides a detailed view of existing and potential work that can inform prioritisation of efforts.



Roles for key stakeholders

Stakeholders in the prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people include government and non-government agencies, organisations and services. Key stakeholders also include LGBTIQA+ people and advocates, community-led and specialist organisations, and indeed all people, communities and organisations as allies and supporters.

Action is needed in both LGBTIQA+-specific and other contexts – with collaboration and coordination across these. To address the overlapping drivers of violence and to deliver truly gender transformative approaches in prevention, a range of sectors and settings will need to be involved.

LGBTIQA+ communities, advocates and organisations must be supported to engage and participate in prevention initiatives. However, prevention cannot just be the responsibility of LGBTIQA+ people. Further guidance on implementation is covered in 'Section 6 – Putting this into practice'.

Government responsibilities

Governments have primary responsibility for ensuring and realising the human rights of LGBTIQA+ people, and have access to levers (legislative, policy and investment) that are essential for creating lasting change.

Commonwealth, state and territory policies and plans have increasingly recognised LGBTIQA+ communities, including in the areas of family, domestic and sexual violence, violence against women, women's health and gender equity. Across these policies and plans, LGBTIQA+ people's experiences of violence are increasingly included, and linked to stigma and discrimination. In policy specifically related to violence prevention, there is growing recognition of the shared drivers of violence (based on rigid and binary social norms around gender and sexuality). *Pride in Prevention* has been influential in these developments and is widely cited.

However, translating policy commitments into action will require a significant increase in attention and investment. There is currently minimal investment dedicated to prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people across the country. Specific measures are urgently needed, guided by this framework. In particular, funding and support should be targeted towards LGBTIQA+ organisations, in order to support collaborative work across a number of 'priority cross-sectors' that are identified and described in this section.

Priority cross-sectors for collaboration and action

Prevention is most likely to succeed if existing work is leveraged and brought together in new ways, with new supports put in place, to enhance collaboration and achieve common aims.

The national consultation for *Changing with pride* identified priority cross-sectors for collaboration and action. These sectors were originally outlined in *Pride in Prevention* as important starting points for change. Since the release of this resource, practical collaboration has increased and strengthened – as evidenced by the partnership between Our Watch and Rainbow Health Australia that has produced this framework.

The priority cross-sectors for primary prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people are organisations and services working in:

- LGBTIQA+ family violence, health and wellbeing, and equality
- family, domestic and sexual violence, violence against women, women's health and gender equity.

Any organisations working to prevent violence against women must engage with and include LGBTIQA+ communities – this work is not separate but inextricable. Many organisations and services have begun to expand their language and programs to be inclusive of LGBTIQA+ communities, while maintaining their focus on ending men's violence against women.

Meanwhile, LGBTIQA+ advocates, organisations and services are becoming more connected with violence prevention work, and some key organisations and advocates have been able to act as a 'bridge' with LGBTIQA+ programs and services that may not use the language or concepts outlined in this framework, but undoubtedly contribute to addressing the drivers. LGBTIQA+ organisations and services have long-term expertise in challenging social norms and advancing equality. Others have significant expertise specifically in violence prevention, including working with particular communities, such as trans women. This work has grown in a context of minimal investment, but as a reflection of deep commitment to community-led prevention by particular individuals and organisations. (See the national consultation report for *Changing with pride* for more details.) This expertise must be funded, recognised and acknowledged in bringing the 'priority cross-sectors' together.

In addition, a focus on LGBTIQA+ violence prevention is increasingly integrated within community-led organisations and programs for the prevention of violence against women that are working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, migrant and refugee communities and women living with disabilities. As one example, the standalone *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan to End Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence 2026–2036* specifically includes a focus on LGBTIQA+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy peoples.[106] In addition, the national consultation for this framework has shown that Aboriginal community-controlled organisations are well placed to lead culturally safe violence prevention, early intervention, response and healing programs, drawing on necessary cultural authority, trusted community relationships, and deep expertise in how colonisation, racism, rigid gender norms and stigma shape violence.

There is significant potential to build on overlapping work and collaborate across these priority cross-sectors to advance the implementation of the actions detailed in this section of the framework.

Additional priority sectors and settings

A number of additional sectors and settings should be prioritised in actions to prevent violence against LGBTIQA+ people. The national consultation revealed substantive existing work already underway that could be built upon immediately. Doing so will require actions both by government and non-government organisations working in each of these spaces.

The priority sectors and settings are:

- health and wellbeing
- education
- media, social media and online
- sport
- workplaces and organisational change
- men and masculinities.

The policy context for this work is sound, as LGBTIQA+ communities are identified as a priority community in most relevant Commonwealth, state and territory policies and plans across these areas. Despite consistent recognition that LGBTIQA+ communities experience poorer outcomes across a wide range of policy domains, specific and funded commitments are often absent. Nevertheless, a solid foundation exists for future efforts.

Health and wellbeing



Commonwealth, state and territory programs and policy have advanced significantly in supporting LGBTIQA+ health and wellbeing. There is now a dedicated *National Action Plan for the Health and Wellbeing of LGBTIQA+ People 2025–2035*.[107] LGBTIQA+ communities are considered across a range of health-related policies across the country addressing mental health, suicide prevention, sexual health and harm minimisation.

There is significant potential to support and develop collaborative initiatives aimed at addressing the drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people within a focus on LGBTIQA+ health and wellbeing. A focus on alignment and collaboration across the government portfolios of health, LGBTIQA+ equality, women and violence prevention should be a priority in implementation.

Education



Education settings must be a priority focus for prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people. This includes early childhood education and care, primary and secondary education, and tertiary education such as TAFE, university, and vocational and other training.

There is significant overlap in work being done in these settings to address gender inequality and violence against women, and LGBTIQA+ equality and violence against LGBTIQA+ people. The latter includes programs aimed at addressing bullying in schools, which is a particular issue for LGBTIQA+ young people. Specific opportunities exist to improve integration across programs, and for governments to adopt whole-of-system approaches to implementing best practice respectful relationships and sexuality education.

Many of those working in violence prevention in school settings report significant and growing resistance and backlash in school communities around gender equality, and simultaneously around LGBTIQA+, particularly trans, inclusion. This points directly to the intertwined nature of this work, and the need for greater coordination and joint effort.

Media, social media and online



There are opportunities to align efforts underway to improve media reporting of violence against women and violence against LGBTIQA+ communities, simultaneously.

Existing efforts to leverage online spaces to advance prevention should also be supported. Increasingly, social media and online platforms are key to reaching and engaging with wider audiences. Existing online campaigns, messages and initiatives targeted towards gender equality and LGBTIQA+ equality must be mutually reinforcing.

A focus is also required on promoting and building capability for safety online, given the vital role that online settings play in facilitating connection for LGBTIQA+ people, especially LGBTIQA+ young people. This must go hand in hand with efforts to address online harm and backlash.

Sport



Sports settings have been a focus in promoting both gender equality and LGBTIQA+ equality – through community engagement, leveraging male peer groups and male leadership, and providing a safe and educative space for young people.

Efforts in these areas are increasingly integrated, and practitioners report that it is impossible to advance the prevention of violence against women in these spaces without also addressing the impacts of homophobia and transphobia. There is significant potential for the future development of more specific and targeted efforts in sports settings to address the drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people.

Workplace and organisational change



There is significant work underway across the country to improve workplace inclusion and safety for women as well as a growing focus on improving LGBTIQA+ inclusion in workplaces. This is often taking place within efforts to secure whole-of-organisation commitment to equality, including commitments to transform workplace cultures and contribute to social change more broadly – examples here include actions taken across local government, the public sector and the corporate sector.

Many LGBTIQA+ organisations provide training and consultancy to workplaces, and the Rainbow Tick provides accreditation and guidance on LGBTIQA+ inclusion for organisations across six key standards.

Connecting across equality initiatives underway in workplaces would yield significant benefits. Within this, efforts to address sexual harassment and improve workplace entitlements related to family, domestic and sexual violence must ensure that LGBTIQA+ communities are kept in scope.

Men and masculinities



Direct engagement of men and boys can be a specialised focus of some prevention work, but it is ultimately necessary in all work to prevent men's violence against women – through a focus on transforming masculinity and engaging men as allies. The overlap of this work with efforts to prevent violence against LGBTIQA+ people is significant and should be recognised more specifically in future efforts aimed at engaging men and masculinities.

The role of homophobia and transphobia in reinforcing socially dominant forms of masculinity means that all efforts to engage men in gender equality and violence prevention must purposefully include LGBTIQA+ people. These areas of work are increasingly intertwined due to the growth in backlash narratives, and the interrelationship between sexist, homophobic and transphobic attitudes among young men.[108]

All of the stakeholders, sectors and settings outlined in this section will be critical in successfully implementing the actions in this framework.

Foundational actions

There are three ‘foundational actions’, that together will create an enabling environment for primary prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people.

FOUNDATIONAL ACTION 1

Ensure all gender equality and violence prevention work appropriately includes LGBTIQA+ communities

FOUNDATIONAL ACTION 2

Ensure that work addressing LGBTIQA+ equality is supported to enhance violence prevention

FOUNDATIONAL ACTION 3

Ensure inclusion, coordination and prioritisation at all levels of government

The prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people has so far received relatively little attention and investment. As a result, implementation of the actions contained in this section will require critical groundwork to be laid. There are three ‘foundational actions’, that together will create an enabling environment for primary prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people.

Many of these foundational actions are specifically the responsibility of governments at Commonwealth, state and territory levels. However, the actions contained here cannot be implemented by governments alone. This must be done in partnership with LGBTIQA+ communities themselves, and the broader sectors that need to be engaged in the primary prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people. The analysis of key stakeholders earlier in this section is important in shaping and guiding the actions outlined here.

FOUNDATIONAL ACTION 1

Ensure all gender equality and violence prevention work appropriately includes LGBTIQA+ communities

- Ensure that any initiative (whether legislation, policy or practice) designed to address gender equality or prevention of family, domestic and sexual violence specifically considers how to include LGBTIQA+ people, in appropriate ways. This includes government and non-government policies, strategies and programs.
- Enhance and support political and civil society leadership to drive gender equality and violence prevention efforts that are inclusive of LGBTIQA+ communities.
- Invest in targeted prevention work to address the shared drivers of violence, while also ensuring that broader prevention work addressing men’s violence against women is inclusive of LGBTIQA+ communities.



FOUNDATIONAL ACTION 2

Ensure that work addressing LGBTIQA+ equality is supported to enhance violence prevention

- Resource LGBTIQA+ organisations and advocates to participate in and inform violence prevention policy, planning, implementation and evaluation to address the LGBTIQA+-specific drivers of violence.
- Ensure that national and state strategies, plans, policies, frameworks, legislation and practice relevant to LGBTIQA+ equality, health and wellbeing consider the nature and impacts of violence against LGBTIQA+ people, and promote action to address the drivers. This should include challenging all forms of oppression, discrimination and inequality that play a role in driving or compounding violence against LGBTIQA+ people.
- Collaboratively build cross-sector relationships to connect existing prevention efforts involving LGBTIQA+ people with broader work to advance LGBTIQA+ equality.

FOUNDATIONAL ACTION 3

Ensure inclusion, coordination and prioritisation at all levels of government

- Establish and maintain processes to coordinate public policy work that supports prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people across jurisdictions and portfolios related to LGBTIQA+ communities, family, domestic and sexual violence, violence against women and gender inequality.
- Ensure LGBTIQA+ communities are prioritised in national and state primary prevention workforce development, in order to advance workforce diversity and build capability for LGBTIQA+ primary prevention.
- Include LGBTIQA+ communities and their right to live free from violence in key policy documents and government strategies across health, education, sport and other relevant portfolios.
- Include LGBTIQA+ representatives in permanent mechanisms at federal, state and territory levels to enable full participation of LGBTIQA+ communities in the design and implementation of legislation and policies that affect them.
- Build funded evaluations into all programmatic funding in order to support evidence-building and lessons to be shared and integrated in future initiatives.
- Ensure the inclusion of LGBTIQA+ communities in national research agendas and datasets,[109] and fund research to enhance inclusive and intersectional understandings of violence and address critical evidence gaps.
- Establish accountability processes for, and independent monitoring and evaluation of, Australia's implementation of the actions contained in this framework.

Essential actions

Based on an evidence-based understanding of violence against LGBTIQA+ people, and the drivers of violence examined in Section 4 of this framework, the following 'essential actions' must be prioritised for implementation.

The essential actions build on the foundational actions, and together make up a comprehensive approach to preventing violence against LGBTIQA+ people.

ESSENTIAL ACTION 1
Work in solidarity to challenge rigid, binary and hierarchical norms around gender and sexuality

ESSENTIAL ACTION 2
Ensure all work to address socially dominant masculinities and male peer relations includes efforts to challenge homophobia and transphobia

ESSENTIAL ACTION 3
Validate LGBTIQA+ experiences of violence, and promote the right of all LGBTIQA+ people to live free from violence

ESSENTIAL ACTION 4
Promote and uphold the rights of LGBTIQA+ people to control their lives, selves and bodies

ESSENTIAL ACTION 5
Change social norms, practices and structures to ensure inclusion and celebration of LGBTIQA+ people

ESSENTIAL ACTION 6
Strengthen individual, relationship and community capabilities for safe and loving relationships with LGBTIQA+ people

ESSENTIAL ACTION 1

Work in solidarity to challenge rigid, binary and hierarchical norms around gender and sexuality

- Elevate preventing all forms of violence against LGBTIQA+ people in the national agenda, with a focus on the shared drivers with violence against women.
- Take collaborative action in all sectors and settings, across society and across the country, to challenge rigid and binary stereotypes around gender and sexuality, and counter inequality and discrimination experienced by LGBTIQA+ people.
- Resource, develop and implement initiatives that challenge LGBTIQA+ inequality, gender inequality and intersecting forms of oppression, while also effectively monitoring and responding to backlash and resistance.

ESSENTIAL ACTION 2

Ensure all work to address socially dominant masculinities and male peer relations includes efforts to challenge homophobia and transphobia

- Engage men and people of all genders across society to challenge rigid attachments to masculinity, focusing on attitudes and behaviours that are controlling, dominant or aggressive.
- Promote positive male peer relationships and challenge male peer group cultures that disrespect women and LGBTIQA+ people.
- Instil policies and practices in male-dominated settings and organisations that are inclusive and respectful of LGBTIQA+ people, and that address homophobic and transphobic attitudes and behaviours.
- Resource specific initiatives to work with men in supportive ways to reduce shame and encourage healthier relationships with trans women, non-binary people and bisexual women.
- Challenge justifications for men's violence and aggression, focusing on the ways in which homophobic, transphobic and gendered justifications for violence interact.

ESSENTIAL ACTION 3

Validate LGBTIQA+ experiences of violence, and promote the right of all LGBTIQA+ people to live free from violence

- Create initiatives, and support and resource those led by LGBTIQA+ communities, that challenge the norms, attitudes and practices that excuse violence against LGBTIQA+ people, and target specific stereotypes that are a barrier to prevention.
- Improve media reporting to increase the visibility of violence against LGBTIQA+ people in respectful ways; convey the seriousness and prevalence of this violence; frame stories in an ethical way; and eliminate the use of stereotypes that condone violence.
- Establish initiatives that increase LGBTIQA+ people's understanding of what behaviours constitute violence; build their confidence to challenge these behaviours; and increase community awareness and support for violence prevention.
- Ensure all efforts to prevent violence against LGBTIQA+ people focus on perpetrator accountability, and challenge narratives that shift blame from the person using violence to the victim-survivor and other excuses for violence.

ESSENTIAL ACTION 4

Promote and uphold the rights of LGBTIQA+ people to control their lives, selves and bodies

- Use legal and policy measures to address discrimination, inequality and human rights violations against LGBTIQA+ people, focusing on bodily autonomy, self-determination, choice and control.
- Ensure the right to affirmation of gender in identity documents; gender-affirming care; and equal access to legal, economic and social rights for LGBTIQA+ people.
- Promote the right of LGBTIQA+ people to have a say in decision-making that affects them, at all levels of government and across society.

ESSENTIAL ACTION 5

Change social norms, practices and structures to ensure inclusion and celebration of LGBTIQA+ people

- Build understanding of the compounding impacts of multiple forms of violence, discrimination and inequality on LGBTIQA+ people, and ensure a coordinated government and non-government effort to prioritise action to change this.
- Invest in campaigns, public communications and online safety initiatives that seek to prevent violence against LGBTIQA+ people through strengths-based and values-based messaging, and ensure that similar work to prevent violence against women includes LGBTIQA+ communities effectively and respectfully.
- Promote workplace policies and practices that challenge inequality, discrimination and harassment of LGBTIQA+ people at work, and ensure organisational commitments that contribute towards social change for LGBTIQA+ equality.
- Ensure collaboration and mutual support across policies, programs and initiatives to promote gender equality and LGBTIQA+ equality, and change social norms across the life course, especially in education settings.
- Support greater integration and broader rollout of programs and initiatives to promote gender equality and LGBTIQA+ equality in sport, and leverage their combined impact in violence prevention.
- Generate high-quality research and data about all forms of violence against LGBTIQA+ people to guide targeted prevention initiatives and to ensure that the experiences of all LGBTIQA+ people are considered.[110] LGBTIQA+ people should be active participants in the data collection process, and in decisions made on the basis of this data.

ESSENTIAL ACTION 6

Strengthen individual, relationship and community capabilities for safe and loving relationships with LGBTIQA+ people

- Support programs that build the capability of LGBTIQA+ people to enjoy healthy relationships based on equality and respect, as well as the capability of their partners and families to support and respect them.
- Engage with men and boys - particularly those who are in intimate, dating or familial relationships with LGBTIQA+ people - to promote a range of alternatives to dominant norms of masculinity, and an emphasis on embracing equality and demonstrating respect towards LGBTIQA+ people.
- Improve LGBTIQA+ inclusion in services – in particular, family, domestic and sexual violence services. LGBTIQA+ people in every state and territory should be able to choose to access an LGBTIQA+ community-led service or an inclusive 'mainstream service'.



Supporting actions

It is also important to consider and work collaboratively on actions to address additional factors that influence violence (see 'Section 4 – Drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people'). This makes an important contribution towards overall national prevention goals.

More needs to be done to understand the range of factors that contribute to violence against LGBTIQA+ people. A range of supporting actions, however, will contribute significantly to addressing the additional factors likely to impact LGBTIQA+ people, as outlined in Section 4.

These include:

- ensuring equitable access to safe educational environments, including school, university, vocational education and other training
- reducing poverty and increasing the economic security of LGBTIQA+ people, and their access to safe and affordable housing
- tackling employment discrimination, increasing employment opportunities and ensuring that employers create environments that are safe, enabling, welcoming and supportive for LGBTIQA+ people
- ensuring access to LGBTIQA+ community-led and LGBTIQA+-inclusive services, in particular those that focus on mental health or address problematic alcohol or other drug use
- improving access to safe and inclusive health, community and other public services.

Overall, addressing significant lifetime experiences of stigma, discrimination, abuse and violence for LGBTIQA+ people will go a long way towards supporting the prevention of violence for future generations. Addressing resistance and backlash to LGBTIQA+ equality will also be key.

Conclusion

This section has outlined key stakeholders and identified a range of priority sectors and settings where existing work could be built upon into the future. Based on this, a comprehensive set of foundational, essential and supporting actions has been put forward to accelerate and guide work to prevent violence against LGBTIQA+ people.

Effective implementation will require both specific and dedicated attention and increased and sustained investment – well beyond what has been committed to date. The actions that have been outlined will need to be closely interlinked with efforts to address gender equality and the gendered drivers of violence, creating mutually reinforcing efforts towards the same goals.

Implementation of the actions will require significant attention to engagement and partnerships with LGBTIQA+ communities, and effective cross-sector collaboration. Section 6 will consider in detail how to put key principles into practice, in order to advance implementation.



SECTION 6

Putting this into practice

This section outlines how to put into practice a set of guiding principles in the implementation of the actions needed to prevent violence against LGBTIQA+ people. These are drawn from practice guidance contained in the *Pride in Prevention* suite of resources, and from the expertise of stakeholders consulted in the development of this framework.

This section is designed to be read in conjunction with Our Watch's *Change the story* and the *Prevention Handbook* website[111], which contain general principles to guide primary prevention work. In addition, *Changing the picture*[112], *Changing the landscape*[113] and *Men in focus*[114] provide specialised guidance on work to prevent violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, violence against women with disabilities, and efforts to engage men in prevention. Guidance on engaging migrant and refugee communities in violence prevention is covered in *Intersectionality Matters*[115] developed by the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health.[116]

The section details general prevention principles contained in these resources, alongside the specific, additional principles that are important for implementation of the actions contained in this framework.



General prevention principles

The following general prevention principles are outlined in *Change the story* and have been adapted for the purposes of this framework:

- Use all available policy, legislative and regulatory mechanisms.
- Use the essential actions detailed in *Change the story* to address the gendered drivers of violence.
- Take an intersectional approach – that is, address the intersections between multiple forms of oppression.
- Combine techniques across multiple settings and sectors to make change 'stick'.
- Work at multiple levels to transform social norms, structures and practices.
- Be explicit about the intended audience, and design or tailor approaches to suit each setting and audience, rather than applying a one-size-fits-all model, in order to respond to the diversity of the Australian population.
- Take a gender transformative approach – that is, aim to transform harmful gender roles, practices, norms and unequal power relationships.
- Ensure specific, intensive effort with communities affected by multiple forms of oppression, with additional resourcing in these contexts.
- Draw on a range of appropriate evidence and expertise, including from research, practice and people with lived experience.
- Build partnerships across sectors and communities, and between violence prevention and gender equality specialists and other organisations.
- Work across the life course, including with children, young people and adults.
- Challenge harmful ideas about masculinity.
- Develop reflective practice, where practitioners reflect on their own social position, values and assumptions, and those of the organisation in which they work.
- Scale up what works and ensure the long-term sustainability of effective initiatives.
- Evaluate and innovate to continually build evidence and promote learning.
- Connect prevention activity to the response sector, and establish mechanisms to respond to disclosures from victim-survivors and perpetrators that may arise through their engagement with a prevention initiative.

Context of backlash and resistance

An important overarching concern in implementation of this framework is the need to anticipate and plan for resistance and backlash in any project that involves or includes LGBTIQA+ communities. Resistance and backlash to LGBTIQA+ equality is common, intense, organised and can be politically and socially sanctioned. Increasingly, resistance and backlash directed at LGBTIQA+ people is also likely in any gender equality work that seeks to challenge rigid and binary norms, discriminatory ideas and practices.

Forms of resistance and backlash are varied and can be complex, layered or come from outside as well as from within LGBTIQA+ communities. For instance, there may be resistance or backlash to trans inclusion within feminist spaces, or resistance and backlash to gender equality within LGBTIQA+ spaces.

Managing resistance and backlash experienced in doing this work is an ongoing weight and challenge for individuals and organisations. Resources are available to support responses to backlash and resistance to gender equality,[117] many of which are also useful in working out how to respond to backlash and resistance specific to LGBTIQA+ communities.

Additional guidance is contained in the *Pride in Prevention* resources, particularly the *Pride in Prevention Messaging Guide* and *Pride in Prevention Program Guide*.

Putting specific principles into practice: Working with and for LGBTIQA+ communities

In addition to the general prevention principles outlined earlier in this section, the following specific principles should guide all work with and for LGBTIQA+ communities. These principles have been drawn from the *Pride in Prevention* suite of resources and the national consultation undertaken to inform this framework.

Meaningful engagement, community ownership and partnership

All primary prevention that aims to address the experiences of LGBTIQA+ people must be done in ways that build community leadership and capacity. 'Nothing about us without us' is a phrase that establishes the principle of community ownership. This can involve LGBTIQA+ community-led prevention, as well as a range of methods that other organisations can use for consultation, codesign, collaboration and partnership. The key point is that engagement must be meaningful, respectful, and address the interests and needs of LGBTIQA+ communities.

The direct engagement of LGBTIQA+ communities, advocates and organisations is vital for primary prevention activities, both those aimed at LGBTIQA+ communities and those aimed at broad populations of which LGBTIQA+ communities are a part. This engagement is the only way to ensure that programs and messaging are inclusive, accurately reflect the experiences of LGBTIQA+ people and resonate with these communities.

A barrier to meaningful engagement is that many LGBTIQA+ organisations are small and under-resourced, stretching resources as they aim to create change across a wide range of sectors and address different aspects of LGBTIQA+ rights, health and wellbeing. Other organisations should carefully consider how to facilitate the involvement and participation of LGBTIQA+ organisations, and aim to build their capacity, rather than adding to existing workloads.

Collaboration in practice is complicated by resource constraints and power differentials that can exist between organisations working with and for LGBTIQA+ communities, and government and larger, better resourced organisations dedicated to men's violence against women. This must be openly acknowledged and explicitly addressed in practice through clear and purposeful action.

Where work is led by governments or non-LGBTIQA+ organisations, there are a range of ways to involve and engage LGBTIQA+ people and organisations – including inviting feedback, creating advisory group positions, or using other consultation mechanisms such as focus groups or surveys. Engagement is more likely to be meaningful if it is genuine, timely, transparent, responsive and, preferably, remunerated. A 'co-design' approach is increasingly put forward to ensure that governments meaningfully engage communities in policy and program initiatives that impact them, and that programs are delivered in ways that do not inadvertently do harm to the communities they seek to help.

Co-design and community engagement are often focused on the delivery of specific projects and activities. However, longer-term attention to partnerships and relationships with LGBTIQA+ organisations will help to make community engagement and co-design more effective. These relationships must be built purposefully over time, with intention and specific effort, in order to yield these benefits.



For detailed guidance on putting this principle into practice, see the *Pride in Prevention Partnership Guide.*

Whole-of-population and shared approach to prevention

Just like the prevention of violence against women, primary prevention of violence against LGBTIQA+ people must take a whole-of-population approach. It cannot only be 'targeted at' LGBTIQA+ people – especially as much of this violence is perpetrated by people from outside these communities. Prevention of violence against women takes a 'gender transformative' approach that 'actively works to challenge and transform gender norms, roles, relations, power imbalances and their impacts'.[118] LGBTIQA+ communities and organisations have existing expertise and much to offer in further developing the shared practice of transforming rigid, binary and hierarchical social constructions of gender and sexuality as significant drivers of both violence against women and violence against LGBTIQA+ people and communities.

A whole-of-population approach is the only way to change widespread attitudes and norms that drive violence against LGBTIQA+ people. Effective prevention must address the realities that many LGBTIQA+ people are in intimate partner and family relationships with people outside of these communities, and that the majority of violence against LGBTIQA+ people is perpetrated by cisgender men.

All primary prevention initiatives must focus on the gendered drivers of violence alongside the overlapping and specific drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people, and those related to intersecting systems of oppression and inequality. Specific consideration must be given to LGBTIQA+ inclusion at the inception of every violence prevention initiative. At a minimum, inclusion must involve defining 'women' in ways that specifically include trans women, and acknowledging that 'women' and 'LGBTIQA+' are not mutually exclusive categories. But beyond this, all primary prevention must take a gender transformative approach.

There is much to learn from existing practice being undertaken by and with LGBTIQA+ communities, which involves innovative and responsive techniques aimed at challenging and changing social norms around gender and sexuality. Ultimately, a truly gender transformative approach must involve simultaneously addressing men's violence against women, and violence against LGBTIQA+ people. Primary prevention of men's violence against women cannot succeed without addressing the overlapping social contexts for violence against women and LGBTIQA+ people, and the specific drivers of violence arising from these. Attention to this shared work will only accelerate progress and expand the transformative potential of all efforts.



For detailed guidance on putting this principle into practice, see the *Pride in Prevention Program Guide.*

Strengths-based and values-based messaging

LGBTIQA+ people experience poorer outcomes in a wide range of health and wellbeing domains, but this is not because they are LGBTIQA+. Instead, these outcomes are a result of the pathologisation of LGBTIQA+ bodies, identities and relationships (both historical and current) and related discrimination, inequality and oppression. To counter this, violence prevention work must be strengths-based. This means moving beyond tolerance or acceptance and instead grounding this work in an explicit celebration of the unique and positive aspects of LGBTIQA+ communities and experiences. Appealing to universal values can also be powerful, for example through messaging that promotes the idea that 'everyone deserves to be able to be their authentic self, and to live and love freely'.

Primary prevention messaging and programs should promote a vision of the future where people of all genders, sexualities and bodies can enjoy happy and healthy relationships and families, and full social, economic and political participation.

Addressing the gendered drivers of men's violence against women can be done in ways that simultaneously challenge, rather than reinforce, the silencing and exclusion of LGBTIQA+ communities and their experiences. This requires specific attention to avoid messaging that inadvertently reinforces binary understandings of gender and sexuality.

Care must also be taken to avoid messaging that inadvertently further pathologises LGBTIQA+ people, identities and relationships – such as describing LGBTIQA+ people as 'vulnerable' or overemphasising the negative aspects of being LGBTIQA+. Messages should be strengths-based, and promote celebration of LGBTIQA+ people, their families and relationships. Values-based messaging can be very effective, appealing to values such as love, choice, belonging and self-determination.

It is particularly important to check messaging and language with LGBTIQA+ organisations and advocates, as this changes quickly. If engaging LGBTIQA+ people as spokespeople or asking people to tell their stories, all organisations must ensure ethical approaches are taken when using these stories, in ways that respect control and ownership.



For detailed guidance on putting this principle into practice, see the *Pride in Prevention Messaging Guide*.

Evidence-building through reflection and learning

Historically, LGBTIQA+ experiences of family, domestic and sexual violence have been under-researched and largely absent from research and data. At times, these evidence gaps have been put forward as an argument against including these communities in violence prevention policy and programs.[119] However, in recent years there has been an increased research focus on LGBTIQA+ experiences of violence, and gaps in national datasets in Australia are beginning to be addressed. Those who have forged ahead and begun to implement programs and initiatives have learnt much about working in this space. Ongoing attention to evaluation, reflection and sharing lessons learned will help to further build and strengthen the evidence base.

Every primary prevention project must give consideration to learning and evaluation at the outset, to ensure that each project adds to the evidence base. This is especially important for work with LGBTIQA+ communities, which to date have received less attention and fewer resources.

Funded and independent evaluations are ideal, but some form of evaluation can be built into the planning and implementation of all prevention projects. Evaluation should aim both to capture the change created by an activity, and ensure the quality of the work. This means ensuring that projects are in keeping with the collective and collaborative effort required for primary prevention, and are accountable to LGBTIQA+ communities.



For detailed guidance on putting this principle into practice, see the *Pride in Prevention Evaluation Guide*.



SECTION 7

Conclusion

This framework has focused on developing a deeper understanding of violence against LGBTIQA+ people. It has drawn on the available evidence and stakeholder consultations to demonstrate the prevalence, nature, dynamics and impacts of this violence, and to explore its underlying drivers and the actions needed to address these.

Violence against LGBTIQA+ people takes many forms and occurs at significant rates. Through careful analysis, a picture has emerged of the overlap between the drivers of violence against women and drivers of violence against LGBTIQA+ people, alongside a range of LGBTIQA+-specific drivers. Violence is also influenced by intersecting forms of oppression, discrimination and inequality experienced by LGBTIQA+ people.

The framework presented a conceptual model (Figure 1) that visually depicts the unique, overlapping and intersecting drivers of this violence. This model aims to help deepen understanding and inform effective prevention work and ongoing evaluation and research.

Violence against LGBTIQA+ people is preventable. The comprehensive set of actions outlined in this framework will help to address the broader social contexts of LGBTIQA+ inequality and gender inequality, and the shared and specific drivers of violence. These actions will also address a range of additional factors that make this violence worse. Implementing the actions in this framework will require additional and dedicated commitment, attention and investment.

The actions are broad, and they can and should be applied by different stakeholders in different ways. Applying the set of principles for prevention also outlined in this framework will help to ensure that this work is undertaken collaboratively, respectfully and safely with LGBTIQA+ communities, and that it creates effective and sustainable prevention in practice.

This framework provides a foundation for a primary prevention approach, and a guide to undertaking the collective work that is needed to create a future where all LGBTIQA+ people live free from violence.

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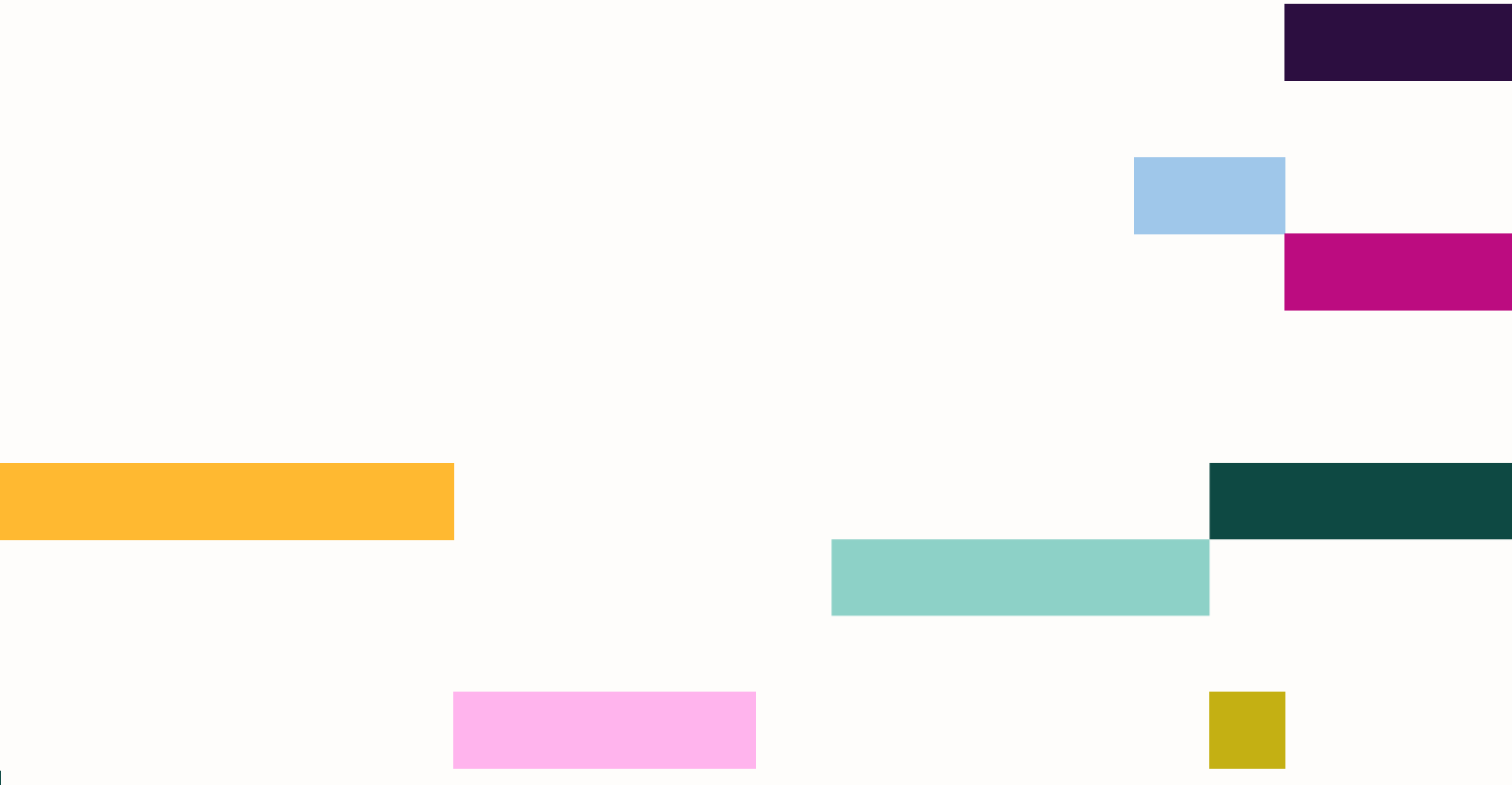
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