

# ADDRESSING INCLUSION OF TRANSGENDER AND GENDER DIVERSE (TGD) CLIENTS IN BED BASED AOD SERVICES IN VICTORIA

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**Introduction and Aims:** Transgender and gender diverse (*TGD*) people have been identified as a high risk group with regards to substance use. However these communities have a level of engagement in residential withdrawal units and rehabilitation facilities under-representative of the identified level of need. In addition, there is a lack of information on how to respond to the needs of TGD clients in these settings. This presentation outlines the development of best practice guidelines for inclusion of TGD clients in bed based AOD services.

**Design and Methods:** This paper presents the results of a needs assessment in alcohol and drug services across Victoria. Results are presented from targeted qualitative interviews of service leadership, focus groups with front line clinicians and consultation with TGD community. A literature review also informed the project. This process identified strengths and resources within the sector that support inclusive responses to transgender and gender diverse community members by alcohol and drug services and provided understanding of the challenges currently being faced by workers and consumers. Findings are used to inform the development of best practice guidelines in partnership with the Victorian Alcohol and Other Drugs Association (*VAADA*).

**Results:** This project identified:

- a lack of current documented or evidenced based approaches to providing service bed based services to this client group.
- that flexible, gender affirming responses to the needs of trans and gender diverse community members are realistic for services and effective for clients
- New best practice guidelines for inclusion of TGD clients in bed based AOD services

**Implications for Practice or Policy:** This project provides best practice guidelines specifically addressing the inclusion of TGD clients into residential AOD services. This project has supported the development of policy and practice guidelines that are a direct response to the needs of workers and consumers in Victoria.