

Top tips for inclusive responses to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Gender Diverse, Intersex, Queer and Asexual (LGBTIQ+) People experiencing family violence

1. Engagement:

When engaging with clients for the first time, don't assume you know their gender, sexuality or relationship status. Use open questions and non-gendered terms to support the person to feel comfortable in telling their story. Don't be afraid to ask somebody their preferred name or pronouns, and remember to introduce yourself with your pronouns.

2. Naming their experience as family violence:

LGBTIQ+ people may not see themselves in family violence narratives. Providing examples of where you can hear power and control can be extremely useful for people in making sense and locating their experiences.

This can assist with supporting someone to identify their own risks, normalise their experiences and make decisions about their safety.

“What you have told me, I can hear as a pattern of behaviour that has made you feel intimidated, controlled, and scared. What you are describing to me is family violence.”

3. Information gathering and sharing:

When assessing risk and safety, be transparent about why you are asking for the information. Recognise that for many in LGBTIQ+ communities collection and use of identifying information has been used as a tactic to cause harm and in a small community, may lead to somebody being identified/ outed when not safe to do so. Be mindful of how much information you are sharing with services and ensure to ask for consent when disclosing identity factors such as gender, sexuality, pronouns, what name they would like to be referred to as.

4. Risk assessment and risk management:

Ensure you are listening for and identifying risk indicators across a wide range of behaviours. When identifying use of power, control and coercion, consider factors such as concealment of the relationship, threatening to out the victim survivor to friends and family, non-traditional family/ parenting structures, and family violence perpetrated by family of origin not just intimate partners.

Be aware of the increased rates of sexual violence, family violence and other forms of violence against transpeople and other LGBTIQ+ people.

Safety planning and support for LGBTIQ+ people may require you need to be creative, flexible and strong advocates.

5. Referral:

The vast majority of family violence services are set up for cisgender women and children who are victim/ survivors of violence.

You will need to assess what services are safe and appropriate for LGBTIQ+ clients, and be prepared to advocate for them to access these services.

If you're not sure what services exist, reach out to a service such as Rainbow Door for a secondary consult.

6. Reflective practice:

Regularly check in with the person you're supporting about their experience of the support and service. Ask if there are adjustments that can be made at an individual or service level that would make their experience more affirming.

7. Secondary consultation:

If you need further information or are unsure of how to best respond to LGBTIQ+ clients, please reach out to Rainbow Door for secondary consultation and support.

Rainbow Door:

We are a free specialist LGBTIQ+ helpline providing information, support, and referral to all LGBTIQ+ Victorians, their friends and family.



1800 729 367



0480 017 246



support@rainbowdoor.org.au

Under the Family Violence Risk and Management Framework (MARAM) many Victorian workforces have prescribed roles and responsibilities in recognising and responding to family violence.

The **MARAM Practice Guides** provide more information and detailed guidance regarding risk factors and presentations, barriers to accessing and engaging with support, and practice considerations.

This resource provides supplementary information to prompt further consideration and support your development as a family violence professional.