

## BOARD POSITION STATEMENT

### Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transsexual, Intersex & Queer (LGBTIQ) Clients and Staff

WRISC Family Violence Support Inc (WRISC) believes in safety, equality and opportunity for all people. We aim to promote respectful relationships through services which enhance the safety, autonomy and wellbeing of women and children.

LGBTIQ clients have been identified as a broad community at greater risk of violence, suffering lower general health and with significantly poorer mental health than the general community.

While some consumers are aware that services displaying a rainbow on a door, window or website are indicating that they are LGBTIQ “friendly, increasingly LGBTIQ consumers want assurances that services understand and will respond to their needs in a positive inclusive and professional manner”. (*Beyond a rainbow sticker*, 2012-2013)

WRISC will actively ensure we are able to provide services which are responsive, appropriate, sensitive and supportive.

#### Key Findings

- Approximately 3-4% of the Australian population identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual.
- Australians of diverse sexual orientation, sex or gender identity may account for up to 11% of the Australian population.
- Same-sex couples make up about one per cent of all couples in Australia. The number of same-sex couples more than tripled between 1996 and 2011.
- In 2011, there were 6300 children living in same-sex couple families, up from 3400 in 2001. Most of these children (89%) are in female same-sex couple families.
- There are no firm figures for Australian intersex population, but estimates suggest 1 in 1000 people are intersex.
- Levels of violence against LGBTIQ people in Australia have remained unchanged, with transgender women, in particular, at greater risk of hate crime and sexual assault than others in the LGBTIQ community.
- LGBTIQ people suffer lower general health than the general population, with significantly poorer mental health, with young people 16 to 24 more vulnerable to mental health problems.

#### WRISC's Key Messages:

- WRISC is committed to providing an accessible and inclusive service for all community members, with focus on all vulnerable and at risk women and children.
- WRISC will ensure that the service welcomes as clients and staff all who identify as women.
- WRISC will ensure staff members, board members and volunteers are provided with appropriate training and ongoing support of LGBTIQ inclusive practice.
- WRISC are developing and will utilise LGBTIQ inclusive intake forms and other documents.
- In recruiting staff, WRISC will welcome all applications in support of our inclusive practice.

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- WRISC has committed to a systemic approach to developing an LGBTIQ inclusive service, and ensuring our service meets the six standards set out below, which form part of the Rainbow Tick national accreditation process:
  1. Organisation and capability
  2. Workforce development
  3. Consumer participation
  4. A welcoming and accessible organisation
  5. Disclosure and documentation
  6. Culturally safe and acceptable services