

Youth Advisory Committee on the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, gender-diverse, queer, questioning, asexual, agender and otherwise gender and sexuality-diverse (LGBTQ+) young people

Terms of Reference 2022¹



The Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use

Faculty of Medicine and Health

University of Sydney



Date: August 2022

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¹ This Terms of Reference will be reviewed, discussed, modified, and accepted by the prospective LGBTQA+ EYAC during the inaugural meeting.

Acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, gender-diverse, queer, questioning, asexual, agender and otherwise gender and sexuality-diverse
TOR	Terms of Reference
The Matilda Centre	The Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use
LGBTQ+ YAC	Youth Advisory Committee on the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, gender-diverse, queer, questioning, asexual, agender and otherwise gender and sexuality-diverse young people



Background

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, queer, questioning, asexual, agender, and otherwise sexuality and gender-diverse (LGBTQ+) young people experience disproportionately higher rates of mental ill-health and/or substance use compared with their heterosexual and cis-gender counterparts. Adapting and targeting prevention efforts to the unique needs of LGBTQ+ is critical for reducing these disparities. A well-known risk factor both mental ill-health and substance use, and one which LGBTQ+ young people are at relatively increased risk of experiencing, is trauma and traumatic stress. Trauma-informed approaches toward prevention – that is, mental health and substance use prevention programs that realise, recognise, and respond to trauma, its signs, symptoms, and impacts, actively resisting re-traumatisation - demonstrate significant promise. Further research is required to better understand and test the preventative utility of trauma-informed prevention, especially for reducing disparities in mental ill-health and substance use among LGBTQ+ young people.

In 2022, The Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use funded a Postgraduate Scholarship to [Leslie Peters](#) (they/them) to complete a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Medicine and Health at University of Sydney from March 2022 and September 2025.

This PhD program of work aims to (i) better define the burden, nature and interrelations of trauma, mental ill-health, and substance use among LGBTQ+ young people; (ii) identify emerging risk and protective factors for these; and (iii) refine and evaluate existing mental ill-health and substance use prevention programs to meet the unique and trauma-informed needs of LGBTQ+ young people.

Leslie is supervised by [Dr Emma Barrett](#), Program Lead in Trauma and Crime Research at The Matilda Centre; [Professor Nicola Newton](#), Direction of Prevention at The Matilda Centre; and [Dr Yael Perry](#), Co-Head of Youth Mental Health at Telethon Kids Institute.

This PhD program of work is being conducted at The Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use (The Matilda Centre), a multi-disciplinary research centre committed to improving the health and well-being of people affected by co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders, especially adolescents, teenagers, and young adults.

This LGBTQ+ EYAC will provide input and advice to this PhD program of work and related activities.

The success of this work depends on the voices of LGBTQ+ young people and their diverse perspectives, experiences, feelings, and needs. The LGBTQ+ YAC is a forum for the proactive seeking and meaningful inclusion and actioning of the insights, advice, guidance, and direction of LGBTQ+ young people for this PhD program of work. We welcome and strongly encourage the participation of people from across the rainbow community, especially trans, non-binary and gender diverse people, people of colour, Asian Australians, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Purpose

The purpose of the LGBTQ+ YAC is to provide advice, guidance, and input for the PhD program of work that ultimately aims to reduce disparities in mental ill-health and substance use among LGBTQ+ young people using a trauma-informed prevention approach. This project involves the analysis of population-level datasets, the design, undertaking and analysis of focus groups, and to a lesser extent, the refinement and evaluation of an online school-based prevention program. The specific purpose of the LGBTQ+ YAC in the context of this research project is to:

- Provide insight, advice and guidance on study design, data collection, and data analysis and interpretation
- Ensure the research respects and reflects the needs and voices of LGBTQ+ young people regarding mental ill-health and substance use prevention

Term

This Terms of Reference document is effective from July 2022 to June 2025.

Membership

Membership will comprise LGBTQ+ young people aged 16-20 years currently living in an Australian state or territory. To facilitate membership recruitment, a call for expressions of interest will be made to members of The Matilda Centre’s Youth Engagement Network as well as other peak bodies and community organisations, including The Gender Centre, Twenty10, and LGBTIQ+ Health Australia.

Minority stress compounds across multiple minority identities. It is imperative that the LGBTQ+ YAC represents the intersectional breadth of the rainbow, including trans, non-binary, and gender-diverse people, people of colour, including Asian Australians, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Therefore, the committee will comprise six members and include at a minimum two trans and/or non-binary people, one person of colour, and one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person.

Members of the LGBTQ+ YAC may have experience relating to the following criteria:

1. Lived experience of mental ill-health and/or substance use
2. Lived experience of living a truthful, authentic, resilient life, in the face of adversity

Membership terms are one-year block periods. However, LGBTQ+ YAC members will have the option to automatically renew their membership for a second year. At the end of their second term, LGBTQ+ YAC members are invited to discuss a possible third term with LGBTQ+ YAC Chair. Where LGBTQ+ YAC do not wish to renew their terms, previous applicants who expressed interest will be contacted and assessed accordingly.



Meetings and Administrative Support

- Meetings will occur approximately four times a year to coincide with the start and finish of each project stage.
- All meetings will be chaired by one of the members
- Decisions within the LGBTQ+ YAC will be made by consensus (i.e., members are satisfied with the decision even though it may not be their first choice). If not possible, the advisory group chair will make a final decision.
- Meeting agendas and minutes will be provided by the Chair. This will include:
 - preparing agendas and supporting information for the LGBTQ+ YAC
 - preparing meeting notes and information
- Research team members, including Leslie, will support the Chair in taking meeting notes, and preparing and circulating meeting agendas and notes
- Proposed agenda items will be provided at least two weeks prior to the meeting and final agenda will be distributed at least one week prior to the meeting.

Roles and responsibilities of LGBTQA+ YAC members

Members of the LGBTQA+ YAC can expect:

- To be treated with dignity and respect
- To feel listened to, affirmed, and validated
- To have their preferred name and/or pronouns used correctly and respectfully
- To have their ideas and opinions listened to and valued
- To participate in an inclusive, strengths-based, empowering forum which actively denounces discrimination and exclusion
- To have the opportunity to discuss and endorse significant decisions and/or actions during the research project
- To receive ongoing acknowledgement and feedback on how their input and guidance has contributed to the project activities and outputs
- To play an active and meaningful role in research that will significantly improve the health and well-being of LGBTQ+ young people

Where appropriate, members will support the research team by:

- Preparing for and attending 4x1-hour meetings each year
- Advising on the key activities and outputs from the project
- Sharing expertise and guidance regarding the direction and dissemination of the research



Support, recognition, and acknowledgement

- Members will be reimbursed at the rate of \$30 per hour *pro rata* capped at \$100 per day for attending project milestone meetings (maximum of 4 per year).
- Before members are asked to participate in additional meetings or activities, the LGBTQ+ YAC will be clearly advised if reimbursements for participation are available.
- Upon the end of their terms, LGBTQ+ EYAC members will be provided with a letter of recommendation and support that can be used for future work or study purposes.
- LGBTQ+ YAC members who resign or are otherwise unable to continue their terms will also be provided with a letter of recommendation and support.
- The contribution of LGBTQ+ YAC members will be recognised through acknowledgement in final reports, publications and/or presentations.
- LGBTQ+ YAC members are encouraged to discuss

