

Sex, Sexuality and Gender Diverse AOD Worker Network Terms of Reference

Background:

In December 2019, NSW's peak alcohol and other drug (AOD) organisation, NADA, established a Gender and Sexuality diverse AOD worker network. The aim was to "provide a space for AOD workers in gender and sexuality diverse (GSD) communities to support one another in their everyday work with co-workers and clients, and to foster discussions about how to make AOD services more LGBTQ+ inclusive." The Network was in keeping with a broader National Drug Strategy which prioritises gender and sexuality diverse people as related to their AOD use. Representatives from NADA reached out to VAADA to gauge interest in whether a similar Network could be established in Victoria.

An expression of interest was sent via VAADA's ENEWS for initial membership, and a survey was distributed following the Network's first meeting to capture the membership's thoughts and ideas on the purpose and governance of the Network. The Network was named "Sex, Sexuality and Gender Diverse (SSGD) AOD Worker Network" to ensure inclusivity of colleagues and clients with intersex variations.

Purpose:

The network has a dual purpose to:

- provide a supportive network for sex, sexuality and gender diverse workers in the AOD sector;
- improve AOD services for sex, sexuality and gender diverse people.

Responsibilities and Functions:

Specifically, the members will be responsible for:

- Volunteering to chair network meetings
- Participating in regular network meetings
- Determining priorities through consultation, practice wisdom and experience, feedback from sex, sexuality and gender diverse people accessing treatment
- Overseeing the development and implementation of an activity work plan, and assessment of its effectiveness annually

It is expected that all members will work together in a collaborative, respectful, supportive and collegiate way.

The Network will aim to create spaces of mental and physical safety at all times, where people can express their identities and engage positively and fully within the network.

Decision Making:

Decisions will be reached by consensus. If this is not possible, then at least a two thirds majority agreement of meeting attendees is required – at the discretion of the VAADA and the Chair.

VAADA's Responsibilities:

VAADA has responsibility for providing support, communication and coordination of network activities.

VAADA will provide secretariat support (recording meeting networks) in the event that no other member volunteers.

Reporting Relationships:

An update of network activity will be provided to the VAADA Board and staff and also the sector through email updates. VAADA will also update activity of the network via its annual report.

Method of Evaluation:

Annual review of Terms of Reference against the work plan.

Quorum:

A quorum is not required for all meetings of the network to continue. If attendance of a meeting is deemed too low to be workable or valuable (as decided at the beginning of the meeting by all members in attendance), it may be postponed or cancelled – at the discretion of VAADA and the Chair.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Where discussions and/or information are tabled at a network meeting that are of a sensitive nature they will be held in the strictest confidence – Chatham House Rules will apply.

Conflict of Interest:

It is the responsibility of all network committee members to make any conflict of interest known to the Chair. Where a committee member is deemed to have a real or perceived conflict of interest in a matter that is being considered at a meeting, the committee member may be excused from discussions and deliberations on the issue.

Membership:

The membership is comprised of Victorian AOD workers who identify as sex, sexuality and/or gender diverse. Workers are inclusive of those providing frontline services, management, administration and research.