



Sexuality, sex and gender diversity position statement

1. Purpose

This position statement sets out the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation's (ANMF) support for the rights of sexuality, sex and gender diverse people in health care.

2. Definitions

Sexuality, sex and gender diverse (SSGD) refers to any person who is not heterosexual and cisgender.

Cisgender refers to a person whose gender conforms to the dominant social expectations of the sex they were assigned at birth.

3. Context

SSGD people face stigma, discrimination, and marginalisation. This experience can be exacerbated for SSGD people who are also members of other marginalised populations (for example, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, or people living with disability).

SSGD people also experience poorer health than people who are not SSGD, with higher rates of:

- suicide ideation and self-harm¹
- depression and anxiety disorders²
- homelessness³
- substance use disorders and tobacco use^{4,5}
- stress linked to poor health outcomes⁶
- intimate partner violence.⁷

Research shows discrimination occurs in health settings. For example, in 2020, more than 25 per cent of SSGD Victorians reported experiencing unfair or discriminatory treatment by nurses, doctors and other staff.⁸

Eradicating all forms of discrimination is a human right, health, and union issue.

¹ Skerrett DM, Kólves K, De Leo D. 2015. Are LGBT Populations at a Higher Risk for Suicidal Behaviours in Australia? Research Findings and Implications. *Journal of Homosexuality*. 2015;62(7):883-901.

² Ibid.

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics. General social survey. 2014. Available at <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4159.0#Anchor5>.

⁴ Hughes T, Szalacha LA, McNair R. 2010. Substance abuse and mental health disparities: comparisons across sexual identity groups in a national sample of young Australian women. *Soc Sci Med*. 71(4):824- 31. 11.

⁵ Berger I, Mooney-Somers J. 2016. Smoking Cessation Programs for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex People: A Content-Based Systematic Review. *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*. 19(12):1408- 17.

⁶ Flentje A, Heck N, Brennan J, Meyer I. 2019. The relationship between minority stress and biological outcomes: A systematic review. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*. 43:673–94.

⁷ State of Victoria. 2016. The Royal Commission into Family Violence: Volume 5 Report and recommendations, <http://rcfv.archive.royalcommission.vic.gov.au/MediaLibraries/RCFamilyViolence/Reports/Final/RCFVVol-V.pdf>. Melbourne: Royal Commission into Family Violence. Contract No.: 132.

⁸ Victorian Agency for Health Information. 2020. The health and wellbeing of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer population in Victoria: Findings from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2017 p52. <https://www.bettersafercare.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/The-health-and-wellbeing-of-the-LGBTIQ-population-in-Victoria.pdf>.



4. Position

The ANMF condemns all forms of discrimination, including discrimination based on sexuality, sex and gender diversity.

It is the position of the ANMF that:

1. All people have a legal, moral and fundamental human right to be treated fairly and equitably, regardless of sexuality, sex, gender, or any other personal characteristics.⁹
2. All people have the right to equitable access to healthcare and positive health outcomes.
3. All people have the right to be treated with dignity and respect in all healthcare settings, including disability and aged care – this includes being addressed by their nominated names and pronouns.
4. It is the responsibility of nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing to be informed about SSGD and the effects of stigma on people's physical and psychosocial health.¹⁰
5. All healthcare services should provide mandatory training on SSGD and inclusive practice.
6. Nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing should actively promote inclusivity in healthcare, including when collecting personal details, when they should offer inclusive gender options and gender-neutral honorifics such as Mx.

5. Position statement management

Document type: Position statement	Review process: Federal Executive every three years
Title: Sexuality, sex and gender diversity	Last reviewed: November 2023
Endorsed: December 2020	Next review: November 2026

⁹ Sex Discrimination Act 1984, amended 2013. See <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2013C00012>.

¹⁰ Assistants in nursing refers to all care workers however titled.