

“ALL THE FACTORS THAT HAVE MADE GAY MEN AT RISK OF HIV SINCE THE START OF THE EPIDEMIC ARE IMPACTING US NOW” A BLUEPRINT FOR IMPROVING THE HEALTH & WELLBEING OF THE TGD COMMUNITY IN NSW: A MEPA/GIPA CASE STUDY OF CO-DESIGN IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

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Background/Purpose: Community leadership is vital in developing responses to current health disparities that exist for trans and gender diverse (TGD) populations. Meaningful engagement and partnership with TGD communities within a peer/lived experience framework, are key to understanding how social and systemic issues interplay with health for TGD people.

Approach: Utilising a MIPA/GIPA framework, ACON engaged a group of TGD people to lead the development of a health policy for how ACON works in these communities. ACON provided secretariat and writing support, but left key decision making up to the advisory group.

Outcomes/Impact: The transfer of leadership to affected communities resulted in significant outcomes for ACON. Our consultation had an overwhelming response from community: over 450 respondents to a survey and more than 170 people attended face-to-face consultations across six sites.

We also developed a list of 28 issues relevant to community, which were outside the initial scope of the policy. Placing trust in TGD leadership, we were able to broaden the document, developing *A Blueprint for Improving the Health & Wellbeing of the Trans and Gender Diverse Community in NSW* which implicated ACON and stakeholders in ensuring positive health outcomes for TGD people.

High community participation rates throughout the consultation process are attributed to a trans-led partnership approach. This consistent focus on elevating lived experience was integral to the Blueprint development.

Innovation and Significance: The Blueprint provides a way forward for improving the health and wellbeing of TGD communities across NSW. It has been developed by the community, for community, and provides a best practice approach to peer/lived experience leadership. This process is an example of how to meaningfully engage, consult and value the leadership and lived experiences of TGD community members in policy development and design.

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