

Supporting Inclusive Practice Through Asking Questions About Gender and Sexuality

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Background: Research shows the Gender and Sexuality Diverse (GSD) community experience higher rates of drug use compared to the general population, however, they have not been represented in Alcohol and other Drug (AOD) treatment datasets. In 2016, NADA made the decision to include data items in NADAbase - an online data collection system for NGO AOD services in NSW. With a move from government to make these items mandatory, it is important that the AOD workforce are supported to ask the questions and improve care provided to the GSD community.

Intervention: ACON and NADA developed an eLearning module to support the workforce, in addition to a number of recorded webinars, and direct support to organisations to improve the uptake and quality of data. In response to the new ABS standard and these items becoming mandatory from 2024, the eLearning module has been expanded and updated.

Implementation: As the data items in NADAbase are currently optional, the uptake has been slow, but steadily increasing since implementation in 2016. The most recent data in NADAbase shows that approximately 0.3% of people accessing services identify as gender diverse and approximately 3.3% identify as sexuality diverse.

Conclusion and next steps: NADA and ACON are considering different ways to support the AOD sector as we are aware of the harms that can be experienced by people accessing AOD services. Additionally, a strategy is required to respond to the increase in data for the GSD community to ensure privacy and confidentiality, and that the data be used appropriately to inform service delivery.