Invisible People No More! Why the implementation of the Australian Bureau of Statistics Standard for Sex, Gender, Variation of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables, 2020 is so important.

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Background: Despite data evidencing that members of LGBTQ+ communities use alcohol, tobacco and other drugs at elevated rates compared to the broader population, there is little understanding of the utilisation of drug and alcohol services by LGBTIQ+ people and how services should be planned and delivered to meet the need of these communities due to poor or non-existent data collection.

Description of Model of Care/Intervention: LGBTIQ+ Health Australia (LHA), participated in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Sex, Sex Characteristics, Gender and Sexual Orientation Reference Group, to provide expert advice on updating the 2016 Sex and Gender Standard.

The updated Standard, developed by the ABS to standardise the collection and dissemination of data relating to sex, gender, sex characteristics and sexual orientation was released in 2020.

Effectiveness/Acceptability/Implementation: Many jurisdictions across Australia have specific LGBTIQ+ health and wellbeing policy and LGBTIQ+ people are included in national and jurisdictional drug and alcohol policies as priority populations. Despite this, knowledge, and uptake, of the ABS 2020 Standard remains unacceptably low. The lack of Census data on LGBTIQ+ people also negatively impacts on alcohol and other drugs service planning.

Conclusion and Next Steps: This presentation will inform delegates about the specific variables in the 2020 Standard, the benefits of embedding it within current data systems and will explain why the inclusion of the 2020 Standard in the 2026 Census is critical to improving accessibility to and experiences of alcohol and other drug services in Australia for LGBTIQ+ people.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:
None