

# Community model of care for older LGBTI

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# Origins of VAC

- The Victorian AIDS Council grew from the huge community response to the onset of the AIDS epidemic in the early 1980s

# What is Community Support?

- A volunteer based program providing a range of services in Melbourne and regional areas for people living with HIV.

# Focus of the services?

- Health and well-being
- Social connection
- Independence

# Evolution of the program

- Peak of the epidemic (1984-97)
- After medications (1997-2007)
- Local volunteer teams (2007-)



# Advantages of the team structure

- Rapid volunteer engagement
- Support for volunteers
- Client support adjusted promptly as needs change
- Flexibility if volunteer availability changes
- Helps avoid clients becoming dependent on one volunteer

# Rainbow Connection

- Support extended to broader LGBTI community, in line with new VAC strategic plan
- Aims to assist aged members of the LGBTI community who are socially isolated or need practical support

# What will be similar to our HIV support?

- Social connection
- Practical support
- Volunteer team structure



# What will be different?

- Longer term support
- Primary aim to maintain independence at home
- All volunteers from the LGBTI community

# Challenges

- How to identify clients?
- Risk of LGBTI people becoming invisible in mainstream aged care services and losing connection with their community

# Case study 1

- Sam, 65
- Long-term client
- Attended regular group social functions
- Now starting a peer support group, monthly coffee catch-up
- Also supporting a client living with schizophrenia
- “I think we can buy our own coffee. The VAC is not a bank and it is important for clients to be independent.”

# Case study 2

- Paul, 34
- History of not connecting
- Introduced to Tuckerbag nutrition program
- Continue healthy cooking using recipes provided
- Engage in conversation with volunteer
- “Can’t believe the turnaround of circumstances in a very short time”

Thank you, questions?

