

FLIPSIDE

The Association of Participating Service Users



LOVE IS LOVE

No. 46 Winter 2018

INSIDE

Articles and Stories:

Editorial

The girl underneath the long blonde hair

Being gay in AOD treatment

Newheaven

False perceptions of reality!

In the grey

Leaving the dark days behind

The gender unicorn

Drug and alcohol support services for LGBTIQ+ community

Art:

Front page by APSU

p. 6 'woMAN' by N.C.

p. 14 'You can't erase us' by Sophie Ruolle

All other illustrations are photographs of street art around Melbourne taken by APSU.

Editorial

The lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) community is diverse and consists of very distinct groups. The people among these groups can sometimes be very different, however one of the uniting experiences of LGBTIQ+ individuals is that most of them have experienced discrimination and harassment in broader society, at work, with institutions, and sometimes even in their own family.

A disproportionate number of LGBTIQ+ people in our community experience mental health issues. Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are twice as likely to have a mental health disorder and five times more likely to have attempted suicide than the rest of Australians. Transgender people are eleven times more likely to have attempted suicide.¹

These statistics are very sad, but they are unfortunately not so surprising. Growing up in a society that rejects you for who you inherently are and tells you that it's wrong to be you, poses an overwhelming challenge. When the world around you is telling you that you are bad and deserving of loathing, it is very likely that at least some part of you will start believing that. So societal homophobia becomes internalised homophobia, creating a complex internal conflict between your identity and the belief that your identity is inherently wrong. This multifaceted experience of societal homophobia, internalised homophobia and various forms of discrimination and violence often leads to poor mental health, drug and alcohol addiction and other health risks.

Social attitudes towards the LGBTIQ+ people in Australia have been shifting in the last couple of decades, and particularly in the last few years, thanks to the strenuous work of the LGBTIQ+ activists. This shift culminated in November 2017 when Australia became the 27th country to legalise same sex marriage, following an overwhelming 'Yes' vote by postal survey. This result was a strong and much needed message of equality and acceptance.

The stories in this issue talk about journeys of self-acceptance through a maze of external pressures. They draw a map of what we as a society can inflict on individuals when we decide to ignore voices which say that there is more than one way to be. We thank our contributors for sharing them with us.

Edita

References

- 1) National LGBTI Health Alliance, 2016, "Snapshot of mental health and suicide prevention statistics for LGBTI people", viewed 1 June 2018 <<https://lgbtihhealth.org.au/statistics/>>.

Flipside No.46 Winter 2018

Concept, editing and layout: Edita

Copy-edit: Graham

All contents featured in Flipside are produced by people who use alcohol and drug services and by impacted family members.

DISCLAIMER:

The views and opinions expressed within Flipside do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of APSU.

If you have any original articles, poems or artwork that you would like to see in Flipside you may submit them to:

apsu@sharc.org.au

or APSU 140 Grange Road Carnegie VIC 3163

phone: (03) 9573 1776

ABN: 18052525948

The girl underneath the long blonde hair

When I was young, I was very attracted to my dad's young, beautiful partners. He had a plethora of gorgeous women. These feelings were really confusing and I was so ashamed of them I couldn't even mention them to my psychologist at the time. In the racist family I grew up in, being gay was viewed as even worse than coming home with a person with a different colour skin.

Growing up, I dressed like a boy. I wore a top hat and tails to my dad's wedding and hated my grandmother when she made me wear dresses. As I got older, the boyish clothing started to box me into a category, which my family shunned, so I quickly changed my tune and got as feminine as possible. I dated many boys, did girly things, with my girly friends and even became quite homophobic.

So how do you kiss boys, when their touch irritates your skin?

Easy! Get drunk! Get plastered, actually, and blacking out works too. Anything to keep up the façade. Alcohol was my solution for a while, because in my family, while being lesbian was absolutely unacceptable, drinking alcoholically wasn't.

I had to drink a lot to kiss boys, but it was nothing compared with how much I had to drink in order to kiss a girl. I kissed my first girl 3 days before my 18th birthday, this was 8 years after I had my first feeling of attraction towards women. I felt fireworks for the first time. After they wore off though, I felt so guilty, like something was wrong with me. NOBODY could know! I went even deeper into hiding, but it was not as easy to hide anymore with someone else involved.

At the studio I worked in, I was very hands-on with my clients, so when I came out to my boss, she suggested I not tell any of the clients just in case I made them uncomfortable. I committed to the disguise and I went to loads of their heterosexual weddings, year-ends and baby showers in floral dresses with the most handsome man I could find on my arm. I worked at the studio for 6 years and never disclosed the gender of my actual partners to my clients.

So how do you keep an act like that up for 6 years?

Easy! Alcohol and lots of amphetamines. That way I could get blind drunk to deal with the shame of being with a woman at night and still be able to have the get-up-and-go to get to work at 6:30am for my first client AND stay skinny... Winning!

I couldn't keep it up though, I'd either end up blacking out through my alarm clock and missing my first client, or called in sick one too many times. Eventually I lost my job.



I tried to start my life over in a new place, but the same thing happened. This time it took only 4 years for the wheels to come off again. I found it increasingly harder to hide the part of me I didn't want people to see.

The pressure became too much and the drugs just stopped working. The very thing that gave me enough confidence to be the person I needed to be, now made me too paranoid to leave the house. I hit my rock bottom hard and 10 years after picking up my first drug, I stumbled into a treatment centre. I had lost everything and was willing to do anything so that I didn't feel the pain again. By that time, I had realised that using only prolongs the pain.

After my stint in rehab I moved to Melbourne with my girlfriend and I was the person my girlfriend needed me to be. I wore the clothes that she wore. I was definitely a lesbian, but still hugely ashamed of it, so I isolated in the relationship and hid underneath my long blonde hair.

When we split up and I realised I had absolutely no identity without her, so I threw myself into work, addictively I might add. This too was not a solution. Eventually I got

burnt out and had to walk away from the job. I suddenly had loads of time off and no tools to be able to cope with the feelings that were coming up. Four twelve step meetings a week and extreme step work didn't even cut it. So, in desperation, I started to work with a therapist. She addressed my childhood trauma, my identity crisis and the internalised homophobia that I never knew I had.

The work started paying off. It encouraged me to make the first lesbian friends I have ever had in my whole life and I even had the courage to march for marriage equality. I spent a year searching for myself and I've found me, or at least a very big part of me - like the part that can answer the question if somebody asks me what I want or what I am worth. I have been learning how to love me and accept me, just the way that I am. This is a new and incredible feeling, to be comfortable with who I am, even if I do decide to wear boys' clothing every now and again.

Anonymous



'woMAN' by N.C.

Being gay in AOD treatment

My first and only experience of treatment in the AOD sector was at the age of 36. The options I was presented with were at this stage extremely scary. I was told that through the public system it would be at least 2-3 months wait, but if I had private health insurance there were other options. The truth was that I didn't have private health insurance, because during active addiction this was never a priority for me. I was given the option to use my superannuation under medical grounds and go to a private rehab.



The scary thing for me, almost as much as putting down the drugs was going to a service where I did not know if it was OK for me to be me. For all of my life I have learned that to keep myself safe, that if I was to hold a partner's hand, to be intimate in public, I needed to always constantly scan my surroundings to check if it was safe.

From an early age I was told by my father that if I was gay he would disown me, and he did. I was bullied at school for being too feminine, that I hung around girls and that I was different. I learnt that my inner child learnt ways of coping that included to isolate, spend time in my room and escape to music. I used food to deal with my feelings.

In my time in treatment I had to learn to share my insecurities and learn to trust heterosexual males. This was done in groups, with a male counsellor and at 12-step meetings. It was also suggested that I get a male sponsor and share my steps and form a relationship. As difficult as this was for me it taught me that not all men will reject me, based on my core beliefs of my father. The consequence was that I learnt to trust men in various types of relationships, including a relationship with myself, intimate relationships and men in the fellowship.

One part of my ongoing recovery is attending meetings for LGBTIQ+ as I need a space that is safe to talk about issues and concerns relevant to me sexual identity and preference.

Anonymous

Newheaven

Upon meeting her, 'Tis heaven,'
She said to the deathly sixteen year old
her mouth plastered on her face so damaged,
twisting like her heart, wringing the salt
that irritated the fissures red and raging
carved deep into her sunken cheeks.

The young lover called out 'Slut!' the night she wore those pants
and while they danced under the fluorescent lights of the occupational
therapy room
the seducer's knee dissolved into her mindlessly willing crack
unaware that the heart of this child's blooming lust wanted to get there
to the mentor inside,
instead a crushed doll, who barely managed to utter the scream
smacked onto her damaged face surfaced;
and how her heart wrung salt.

Fine boned were her pallid hands
As they shattered in the air when used as speech
pieces of the dead drifted above her whilst spread out on the foyer's couch
her long arms widely gesticulating;
the young girl watched her with her bare feet buried in carpeting
deep, red, benefitting the private patient's entre-vous.



Beyond them were people so to speak, crumbs carelessly left to drop
after a bite taken from a strata rife with sodden morsels
steaming hot with bubbling anxiety
people so to speak,
their squelching psychosis creeping the already haunted corridors
the walls of which invisibly smudged by thousands of finger prints
begging for their identities .

Fingerprints polished off the glass three times daily
by nurses cosy in white might
standing behind their fortress of their meticulously kept station
Dosing out breakfast, lunch and dinner medication to the diagnosed
revolving with that door
breathing in, breathing out breakdown.

The young woman's mind easily modified produced for her a kiss;
on her puffed cheek her parched lithium lips dwelled momentarily
her sad sac arms embraced sluggishly,
steady was the pulsating pull of her innocence.

by Denize Rightly (denizenrightly.com)

False perceptions of reality!

I thought my life was as close to perfect as it gets. A 44yo male, living in Sydney, who owned his own apartment and an investment property, a sports car, daily personal trainer, good friends, great best friend and a gorgeous puppy dog.

During my life I had dabbled in the odd party drug like ecstasy, mdma and some liquid speed, but never in a large quantity or regularly. Alcohol was my main drug of choice and only socially – never out of control.

How quickly a perfect reality can crumble and fail. There was a change of State Government, which meant new management at work. I was busy doing my own job, as well as a second role, and studying at university, so I was under pressure.

Then one evening, when I was out walking my puppy, he got away from me and in the blink of an eye was run over and killed by a car. This was the beginning of my depression and feeling of low self-worth.



Within two weeks of my puppy dying, my best friend was rushed to hospital and put in ICU. I was racing from work at 10pm at night to the hospital for 3 days and on the third day he died. He had an abscess on his liver that had been misdiagnosed by his doctor, and the poison had gone straight to his brain and killed him. The depression became more intense. I was in a bad place, and terribly exhausted from being over-worked with no support and having a huge university workload.

Suddenly, I also realised that I was the victim of a deliberate, very nasty and personal campaign of harassment and bullying at work. It had been in full flight for about 2 months before I actually realised what was going on and had it confirmed by a colleague.

My new boss, the perpetrator, was not just undertaking the campaign against me for political purposes, but also out of his own personal jealousy of me being an openly gay man, while he led a life of deceit being married and having children, not having the courage to come out until he was too old to enjoy the gay life. He as much as said this to me when we first met, before he undertook his campaign of vicious nastiness. This cut really deep.

The level of vehemence was second to none. I had never thought that such horrifying campaign could be undertaken by one person against another, especially in the workplace. Yet here it was, and it was happening to me.

I tried to stand up for myself, but he was in management and had the support of

Human Resources. I later also learned that there actually exists a 'program' that is undertaken in the Public Service / Corporate Sector to support and cover up deliberate harassment and bullying to force an employee to leave.

Later I realised I was stupid to try to stand up for myself, because it only meant that the voracity of the harassment got much worse causing for my health to be affected in a far greater way than it would have been if I had just succumbed to the bullying and left.

I sought medical help as I became very depressed and isolated myself from everyone in my life because I felt that I was a failure for not being able to stop what was going on. This was another mistake, because my GP, in his concern for my welfare, prescribed me the highest dose of Zyprexa, a very dangerous anti-psychotic. This sent me into a zombie-like state. I would wake up at 6am with lights flashing on either side of my eyes and the feeling of an Olympic size concrete swimming pool smashing right in the front of my head, not being able to lift my head off my pillow until 1 or 2 in the afternoon.

My cognitive abilities were next to none and my depression was even worse than it had been. I began acting out in manners to hurt myself when I was semi functional during the afternoon and evening, as I felt I deserved to be hurt because of what a failure I had become.

I had never heard of ice. I had heard of a drug called Tina and had sworn never to try it, as I had heard what it had done to a good friend's fiancé. She had not known he was a user of the drug until one day she received a call from him from Parramatta Gaol. They had a 6 week old baby and he was sentenced to 6 years in prison.

I began to have anonymous sexual hook-ups online. I'd have men come to my home



and hurt me with sex to reinforce in my mind that I was worthless and deserving of being hurt. It wasn't long before I hooked up with a professional from the Legal Fraternity, who worked for a Statutory Body in the Law. This person offered me a thing called a pipe and a drug called ice. He assured me it would make the sex unbelievable and that it was safe.

First puff, 10 hours of sex, \$500.

Fast forward 6 months. Puffing about an 8ball (36 points) every 2 days. Sex with 100 people. Having live sex online with hundreds of people watching. Sold investment property \$300,000. Severe paranoia. Totally withdrawn. Cut ties with all friends and social networks. Total belief that I am worthless. Lost 35 kilograms. Still no cognitive awareness that I have a drug addiction.

Fast forward to 12 months. Sex with another 100 people. Still using an 8 ball every 2 days, however I've been shot up about 40 or 50 times. I now have a group of about 20 male hanger offers as I have money. Total paranoia. Selling home. Belief that I am worthless. Lost a further 10 kilos and finally beginning to realise that I am a drug addict and out of control.



Fast forward 3 months – Circuit Breaker – I receive in the mail an invitation from my favourite and special Godparents to their 50th Wedding Anniversary interstate. This causes a major cognitive shift in my mindset and behaviour. I realise that someone does love me. I undertake to go to the party. I know that I cannot go using drugs and stop immediately. I travel to the party and although I am paranoid, physically and mentally unwell, I do well.

I see my parents at the party. I haven't spoken to them for over a year at this point. I buy their dinner and a bottle of champagne and receive no acknowledgement or conversation. This makes me determined to try to get my life back on track.

I return to Sydney. I moved in with my best girlfriend, her husband and their 3 children, who were all under 8 at this time. I owe this family my life – there really is no other statement or truth greater than this. Not only did they give me somewhere to live, they also gave me unconditional love. I had the important job of keeping home, school drop offs and being what was left of the old me. I got to a point where I felt that I had overstayed my welcome and that they needed their home and their family life back, so I left.

I purchased a ute and a caravan, and spent the next 9 months driving up and down

the East Coast trying to stay clean. I had never had any dealings with anyone that had a drug addiction (that I knew of). I had known people that had issues with drugs, but seemed to get them under control. But, sadly, this meant that I wasn't aware of such things as detox and rehab.

That said, I had the experience of a lifetime on my journey. I got to meet Australians I would have never met and saw places people only dream of going to in their lives. There were many places where I stopped that I was able to find ice and get high and go straight back to go without collecting \$200. Gold Coast, through Brisbane, through Sunshine Coast being the worst I've come across in Australia. Cesspit of drugs everywhere. Ice is out of control and everyone is using it. There were miners flying in from Mt Isa or Toowoomba for the weekend and spending \$20,000 in a weekend to party on ice and, as they did, they would fuck other men, even though they would normally be heterosexual.

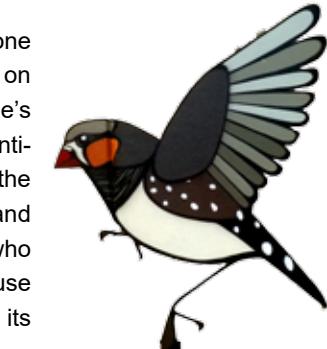
I made my way down to Melbourne, thinking that, because my parents lived here, I would have some support. By now I had isolated myself from all of my friends through shame. I was still struggling with lapses of using and getting severe paranoia and anti-social behaviour. Within 3 months of being in Melbourne, my parents announced they have sold their house and are moving interstate. And so, my only social network disappeared in one bang.

I got a mental health support worker and 10 visits to a psychologist. Through my discussions with these men I realised that I had an interest in developing an understanding as to why, what, where and how this had happened to me and how I am going to cause positive change.

A determination began to swell within me that I can't have gone through this challenge that took 4 years of my life wasted on using a drug that provides no enjoyment, exacerbates one's depressed state, causes immense paranoia and leads to anti-social and sometimes psychotic behaviour, without using the experience for good. I decided to enrol at RMIT University and undertake the Cert IV in AOD. I had an amazing lecturer who challenged me to learn and to think deeply about AOD use and the policies and procedures used to address use and its issues.

Upon completion I chose to continue learning whilst taking up a role within the sector, proving that none of this has been a waste and hopefully I can help others in despair through to a place of self-belief and rediscovery.

R.E. Discovery



In the grey

For as long as I could remember I was convinced that I was born into the wrong body. When I was younger I hated "becoming a woman". I didn't feel like my body belonged to me. I felt constantly uncomfortable in my own skin. In some ways I was relieved when I realised I was a lesbian. However, there was still part of me that didn't identify with being a "lesbian", as a woman attracted to other women. I remember telling people I was a straight male trapped in a woman's body. I had no acceptance of myself or any self-love. I truly believed that there was something "wrong" with me.

The pain of existing lead to me trying to kill myself a couple of times when I was a teenager because I thought that maybe I would be reborn into the right body.

I have told many people and strongly believe that when I found alcohol in my teenage years it saved my life. It gave me peace from myself. It dulled the pain and took the edge off living.



'You can't erase us' by Sophie Ruolle

Pretty soon it was the only thing that kept me going. I felt like if I didn't have a drink in my body the pain would take over and consume me.

When I was about 19 I started to go out to gay clubs. This led to me trying "party drugs". The gay scene seemed full of them and I was more than happy to take part. For a while at least I think I felt at home there.

Eventually I met my ex-partner who introduced me to ice. Pretty soon there wasn't a day that went by that ice and alcohol weren't part of. My life was no longer my own but controlled entirely by substance.

While I was in my worst years of active addiction I still had identity issues and self-hatred that fuelled my using but had suppressed it being related to gender. I had no identity at all during this time. It was easier to call myself so-and-so's girlfriend then embrace the fact that I didn't know who I was.

After finally accepting that I needed help I went to rehab and started my recovery journey.

When I first stopped using drugs everything that I had ever suppressed came rushing to the surface. I remember drowning in all my "found-again" self-hatred.

One of those issues that surfaced was my gender identity. I felt like I did when I was young. Uncomfortable in my own skin and like my body did not belong to me.

As part of my recovery I attended Narcotics Anonymous where it was suggested to me to get a sponsor and work the steps. This was a very confusing time for me when I was first around. They suggested that females should seek a female sponsor and males should seek a male sponsor. I wasn't sure I felt comfortable with either in the beginning. In the end I was lucky enough for my first sponsor to be a gay woman. She helped me a lot with self-acceptance especially around my gender.

In early recovery I decided to attend and make the women's meeting my home group. This allowed me to meet a beautiful bunch of women who helped me find my feet. They are still in my life today and have shown me how to be a strong, independent woman.

I also met my wife in recovery who helped me immensely with my gender identity. She helped me to understand that I didn't need a label, that we could live in the grey and be happy as I am.

Five years into recovery and today I am proud to call myself a woman in recovery and a proud member of the rainbow community. There are days that I still struggle with my gender, but recovery has taught me how to love myself and finally feel like my body belongs to me.

R.D.

Leaving the dark days behind

I am a 45 year old gay father of 2 awesome kids and this is my story.

I always knew I was different. When I was around 11-12 years old I didn't look at the girls. I always found myself looking at the boys in the change room or while walking down the street. I was far too scared to openly come out as same sex attracted, so I simply decided to live two separate lives: the one my parents thought I had as a straight male, and then the second life of being gay. I had girlfriends to hide the true me from my family, but the alter ego was actively having same sex relationships with a variety of people.

At 14 I decided that the best way to hide from accepting who I truly was was to smoke pot with my older friends to help ease the confusion and in turn hide from reality.

The pot smoke led to using speed, and that led to using most other drugs available in the 80's, to the point that by the age of 18 I was running drugs to support my somewhat expensive habit. I continued to use drugs throughout my wife's pregnancies and up until I was around the age of 28, when I was arrested on a charge of wilful damage and threat with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. I decided then and there this was my first turning point.

I utilised a drug and alcohol detox service and stayed there for approximately 14 days. After that I went on to a sober living house, which was a blessing, but shortly after leaving the sober house I needed that crutch to survive, and turned to alcohol. It all went downhill from there again.

At the age of 30 I was drunk every day, which affected my work, my kids and my family to the point that everyone except my parents turned their back on me. Those were dark days indeed.

At this point in my life I was in an abusive relationship and sought refuge with the bottle, until I finally left my first openly gay relationship and headed for Melbourne again. In 2013 I met the most amazing man who I could easily hide the true me from, but that didn't last. By 2014 I was an aggressive and nasty drunk. I verbally assaulted my partner on far too many occasions, until he finally had enough and packed my bags and threw me out of the home we were living in.

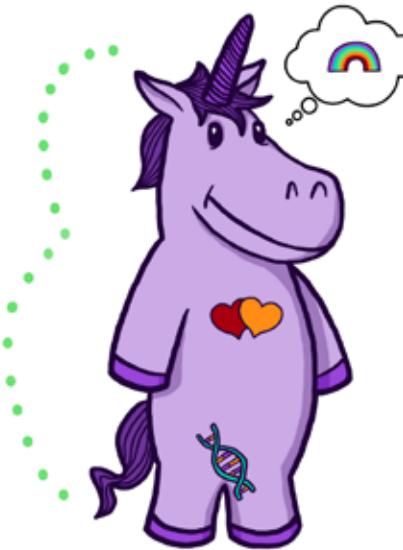
I continued to drink for a few months after that because I had hurt the one person who truly loved me. Then, in August of 2014, I was admitted to hospital. After that I was transferred to ReGen drug and alcohol centre in Heidelberg, where I started my last and final journey to become clean and sober again.

I have now been clean since the 1st of August 2014. I run my own business in photography and enjoy being a personal carer for a sick family member. I joined APSU shortly after becoming clean so I could share my story with others in a hope it may just save one life from the hell I endured at my own hands.

Anonymous

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

Definitions

Gender identity: One's internal sense of being male, female, neither of these, both, or another gender(s). Everyone has a gender identity, including you. For transgender people, their sex assigned at birth and their own internal sense of gender identity are not the same. Female, woman, and girl and male, man, and boy are also NOT necessarily linked to each other but are just six common gender identities.

Gender expression: The physical manifestation of one's gender identity through clothing, hairstyle, voice, body shape, etc. Most transgender people seek to make their gender expression (how they look) match their gender identity (who they are), rather than their sex assigned at birth.

Sex assigned at birth: The assignment and classification of people as male, female, intersex, or another sex based on a combination of anatomy, hormones, chromosomes. It is important we don't simply use "sex" because of the vagueness of the definition of sex and its place in transphobia. Chromosomes are frequently used to determine sex from prenatal karyotyping (although not as often as genitalia). Chromosomes do not determine genitalia.

Physically attracted to: Sexual orientation. It is important to note that sexual and romantic/emotional attraction can be from a variety of factors including but not limited to gender identity, gender expression/presentation, and sex assigned at birth.

Emotionally attracted to: Romantic/emotional orientation. It is important to note that sexual and romantic/emotional attraction can be from a variety of factors including but not limited to gender identity, gender expression/presentation, and sex assigned at birth.

Drug and alcohol support services for LGBTIQ+ community

Alcoholics Anonymous

Tuesday 8:00pm – Fitzroy Library, 128 Moor St, Fitzroy

Friday 6:30pm – Level 1/36 Church Street, Richmond

Friday 8:00pm – St Joseph's Hall, 30 Fitzgerald Street, South Yarra

Sunday 7:00pm – St Peter's Eastern Hill, Cnr Albert & Gisborne Streets, East Melbourne – meeting for gay men

Drummond Street Services / Queerspace (03) 9663 6733 www.queerspace.org.au

9AM-5PM, a variety of counselling options for the LGBTIQ+ community.

Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria – www.glhv.org.au

MindOUT - lgbtqihealth.org.au/mindout/

National LGBTI Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Project.

Narcotics Anonymous

Monday 7pm – 506 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne 3011

Saturday 6pm – Star Health, 240 Malvern Road, Prahran 3181 – ‘Rainbow Recovery’

Sunday 5.30pm – St Mark’s Anglican Church, 250 George Street, Fitzroy 3065 – meeting for gay men

Safesteps – www.safesteps.org.au – 1800 015 188

24/7 helpline for LGBTIQA victims of relationship or family violence.

SMART Recovery - 03 9865 6700 - www.smartrecoveryaustralia.com.au

Closed support group for gay methamphetamine use:

Tuesday, 6.30-8pm, 6 Claremont St, South Yarra, VIC 3141

Switchboard/ QLife – 1800 184 527

Also offering webchat 3PM-12AM everyday at www.switchboard.org.au

Switchboard is staffed by volunteer counsellors and peers who can direct you to the right supports.

Trans Gender Victoria – (03) 9020 4642

Information about appropriate supports for trans and gender diverse communities.

Victoria Police Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Liaison Officers

03 9247 6944 or Melbourne.glio@police.vic.gov.au

Victorian AIDS Council (VAC)

<http://vac.org.au/lgbti-health/alcohol-and-other-drug-services-aod>

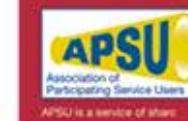
VAC AOD Services: 9865 6700 or aod@vac.org.au

VAC AOD intake and assessment line: 1800 906 669

Therapeutic groups at VAC:

Re-wired - Six week program for men who have sex with men (MSM) addressing methamphetamine use and mental health.

Drink Limits - Eight week group for lesbian and bisexual women who are concerned about their drinking.



140 Grange Road, Carnegie VIC 3163
Ph: 03 9573 1736. Fax: 03 9572 3498
Email: apsu@sharc.org.au
www.apsuonline.org.au



APSU believes that people who use alcohol and other drug treatment services are the reason the system exists; their needs, strengths and expertise should drive the system. APSU is run by service users for service users and has an active member base. We invite you to join us in having a say. APSU membership is free, confidential and open to anyone interested in voicing their opinions and ideas on the issues facing AOD service users today. We need your help to give us all a fair go. To become a member please fill out the form below and post to: 140 Grange Road, Carnegie VIC 3163 or fax to: 03 9572 3498 or go to: www.apsuonline.org.au to register online.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I wish to become a member of APSU. I understand that by becoming a member of APSU I will:

- ♦ Receive the quarterly APSU FLIPSIDE magazine
- ♦ Be sent information on how to become involved

I am a: Service user Service provider Family member Other

How did you find out about APSU? _____

Language spoken at home: _____

Cultural identity: _____

Age: 16-25 25-35 36-45 46-65 over 65

Other issues: Physical disability Mental health Visual Hearing
 Speech Acquired brain injury

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Suburb: _____ Postcode: _____

Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT: All personal details obtained by APSU will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purposes outlined above.



140 Grange Road, Carnegie VIC 3163
Ph: 03 9573 1736 Fax: 03 9572 3498
Email: apsu@sharc.org.au
www.apsuonline.org.au



APSU is a service of sharc



Self Help Addiction Resource Centre