



April 9th – Day of Silence 2021

LGBT+ session guide

It is important to provide safe spaces for LGBT+ people to spend time with partners, friends and chosen family. Here we offer some suggestions, that we hope will help you to plan a session, group or event to engage LGBT+ residents or to raise awareness of LGBT+ issues in your setting.



Preparation and collaboration:

Person centred engagement is easier to achieve if we plan and work together:

- + Are there people who would be interested in getting involved?
- + Explore your ideas together and decide on the purpose of the session
- + What is considered best practice in leading groups?
- + Do you need to develop protocols for confidentiality, managing conflict, recruiting volunteers etc?
- + How often will it take place? Where are you thinking of holding it?
- + How long will group meetings last?
- + Is there anyone you can approach for technical support?



Environment

Think about the space you will need and where the session will be held:

- + Is the space private and welcoming?
- + Can people leave if they wish or take time out?
- + Do you have visual objects which demonstrate LGBTQ+ inclusivity?
- + Is there a kettle? A nice cuppa and a few biscuits can help to make people feel welcome!

Content

The next step is to plan the content of the group and to consider possible topics for discussion:

- + How will the session begin?
- + What areas are you wanting to explore?
- + What are some good questions that might start the session and get people chatting?
- + How will the session end?

Wellbeing

Take some time to consider how people might be feeling or what they might be thinking – check in:

- + Give people time to share their thoughts and feelings
- + What assumptions might group members be making?
- + It is ok to ask questions!

Information

We never have all the answers, and when holding a session, you may be asked a question you do not know or come across terminology you are not familiar with.

It may help to have resources to hand, many LGBT+ organisations have resource sections:

- + Best practice, toolkits and resources | **Stonewall**
- + Who we are | **Opening Doors London**
- + LGBT+ groups and staying connected | **Age UK**
- + Images and information representing LGBT+ inclusivity can be found via a google search and printed off for 1-2-1 or small group discussions.



Reflection

Take time to reflect on the session:

- + Remember that group size does not matter, the first step is to provide opportunities for people to feel safe and chat
- + A care home is likely to have one 1-2 people who are LGBT+, holding 1-2-1 sessions is just as valid as a large group activity and some people may feel more comfortable in a small group or just chatting to one other person
- + Ask your manager for support and find what works well for your care setting and for the people you support
- + What support may be needed before, during and after the next session? For you and for the group members?