

# **1 Personal Relationships, Sexuality, Gender & Intersex**

## **1.1 Purpose.**

This policy explains 360 Health + Community's (360) commitment and approach to supporting people in developing and maintaining personal relationships, including exploring and understanding their own sexuality, gender identity, or intersex status.

## **1.2 Policy Statement**

360 believes that all people have the right to develop and maintain personal relationships and explore their own sexuality, gender identity or intersex status. 360 is committed to developing a sensitive and consistent approach towards our responsibilities in the area of friendships, relationships, sexuality, gender, and intersex.

Personal relationships are not only about sexuality and sexual relationships, they are the interaction of personal, social and sexual development that influences a person's relationships with themselves and others.

Sexuality is much more than sex or reproduction, it is part of who we are, what we think and feel about ourselves and our bodies and how we act towards others. A person's sexuality is unique and individual to them. It can be shaped by culture environment, gender characteristics, life experiences, family background, personal beliefs and much more. It is the sum of a person's inherited make up, knowledge, experiences, values, attitudes, feelings and behaviours as they relate to being a person. It includes those ways of behaving which enrich the personality and enhance the relationships between people.

Gender has long been thought as either male or female, masculine or feminine, based solely on the sex assigned at birth. However, overtime, gender has come to be viewed as a spectrum and is far more inclusive than just male or female. A person's gender identity is their unique understanding of who they are, and they have the right to have their identity acknowledged, and their name and/or pronouns used.

Intersex is a term that relates to a broad range of congenital physical traits or variations that lie in between the stereotypical ideas of masculinity and femininity. Intersex people may be born with physical, hormonal, or genetic traits that are neither wholly male nor female, or a combination of traits. Intersex is not always associated with diverse gender, and can be challenging to have their voices heard and feel understood by the society around them. Intersex persons have the right to inclusion, bodily integrity, and factual, positive information.

## **1.3 The Role of 360 Health + Community**

The role of 360 in relation to personal relationships, sexuality, gender, and intersex is to support consumers to identify their needs in these areas, develop appropriate options and responses and to assist them with their goals. Depending on the wishes of the consumer, this may include support from family, friends, carers and other community organisations.

360 has a responsibility to:

- Assist all people to develop self-esteem and a positive image by informally encouraging and supporting personal development and social skills in all environments;
- Actively encourage and assist the people we support to access community services that provide:

- Information about sexual development, contraception, menstruation, sexual orientation, gender, intersex status, expression of sexuality, rights and responsibilities and how to exercise these;
- Encouragement and support to develop positive self-image and self-esteem through personal development and the acquisition of appropriate social skills;
- Encouragement and support to develop sound decision making skills;
- Knowledge and skills in the creation, maintenance and ending of relationships;
- Assistance in understanding what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual assault and how to safeguard themselves where necessary;
- Refer to appropriate and qualified professionals to determine capacity for consent for people that we support with a decision-making disability if required;
- Balance duty of care with dignity of risk, reducing potential for duty of care breaches by:
  - Providing knowledge and experiences which empower the people we support to make their own decisions and be as personally responsible as possible;
  - Supporting people to take informed risks where measures have been taken to minimise harm;
  - Consulting with senior workers and significant others for advice and support if unsure;
  - Documenting decisions and reasons for actions;
- Ensure that workers have a clear understanding of their own values, beliefs and be conscious of not imposing these onto the people we support;
- Ensure that its workforce and consumer group reflects the diversity within the communities it serves to provide better insight into policy and program development and the achievement of improved service outcomes for the community;
- Deliver services that improve inclusion and healthcare access for LGBTQIA persons and communities to improve their health and wellbeing outcomes;
- Create a culture of confidence in LGBTQIA issues for all employees, including creating a culture where staff and people we support are happy to express themselves without worry;
- Ensure that workers have the skills appropriate to the level of support they provide through the provision of training, particularly in the area of personal relationships, sexuality and gender.

360 will assist clients, families, friends and carers to find relevant sexologists, sexual health workers and other relevant supports to assist clients as required.

All staff and people receiving support from 360 have the right to be addressed with the name and/or pronouns that they identify with. 360 staff and clients should be asked how they would like to be addressed and use those names and pronouns even when not in the person's presence. While mistakes can occur, it is important for everyone to make real attempts to use true names and correct pronouns and acknowledge and correct mistakes if they are made in a professional and discreet manner.

#### 1.4 Policy Connections.

National Standards for Disability Services Standard 1 Rights. Disability Services Act 1986 (Commonwealth), and Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth), Australian Privacy Principles, Guardianship and Administration Act 1995 (Commonwealth), Health and Disability Services (Complaints) Act 1995, Sex Industry Offences Act 2005 (Commonwealth), Criminal Code Act 1995 (Commonwealth).

#### 1.5 Review.

<b>Personal Relationships and Sexuality Policy Endorsement</b>			
<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Ratified</b>	<b>Next Review</b>
Every 3 years	Executive Manager Clinical Development		April 2022