

QUEENSLAND AIDS COUNCIL
YEAR IN REVIEW 2018-19

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

From the President and CEO

For many of the individuals and organisations from within our LGBTI communities, 2018-2019 was a bit of a roller-coaster ride. Coming out of the highs of public affirmation for Marriage Equality, we equally have had our collective strength tested by public debate around our bodies, our relationships and our lives that seems in many ways to be relentless.

We consider ourselves fortunate here at QuAC, because the “highs” have outweighed the “lows” leaving us with much to reflect on with satisfaction, and with much to feel proud of. This doesn’t come without the passion, dedication and commitment to hard work, and to continuously striving to achieve the best for our communities. With this, we’d like to thank everyone who has contributed towards those successes - particularly the staff here at QuAC, who have put in an amazing amount of work that more often than not is away from the limelight. Despite some loss in staff capacity, our teams have pulled together and worked hard to make sure that all of our programs have continued to be delivered on time and with a continual focus on improving what we do so that our communities are better served.

This commitment has also been echoed by our Board and we thank them for the time and energy they have given to the organisation over the past 12 months. They have brought passion, thought, energy and focus to an organisation that was tasked with reimagining itself early in this financial year. This commitment has been echoed by our members, supporters and hard-working volunteers, community members and community groups who have worked alongside us on many projects and activities. We thank you for your willingness and support and we commit to continuing to work alongside you in this way into the future.

Collectively, we’ve achieved wonderful outcomes for those members of our communities that we are here to serve by creating solid ground which will support our work to make a real difference over the years to come.

There are many challenges that we will continue to face over the year ahead, particularly as we embark on the transition to working in a new frame which names far better what we have been doing over many years. We’re looking forward to meeting those challenges and to continuing to build better ways to change the future for the Queenslanders for whom we work.

Highlights from the Year

Statement of Commitment from QuAC to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTI Sistergirl and Brotherboy communities.

Increasing Mental Health Services for our communities through participation in the National Suicide Prevention Trial (NSPT) and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Partnership agreements in place with mainstream sexual and reproductive health service providers in multiple locations around the state.

Established a Community Advisory Group for Transgender and Gender Diverse Health.

Partnered with Diverse Voices to co-deliver the Community Visitors Scheme for older members of our communities.

Provided expertise and supported those with a Lived Experience to actively have their voices heard in a number of public hearings, commissions, consultations and submissions.

Delivered state-wide training to over 1000 professions within each of the Primary Health Network (PHN) regions.

Recruited 1826 individuals to participate in the Gay Community Periodic Survey.

Distributed 35,335 Wrapped'N'Ready Safe Sex packs across Queensland which were packed by our weekly volunteers.

Social media presence that is growing to include over 1.6million impressions to over 10,974 fans resulting in over 100,000 engagements.

Benefited from the support and generosity of countless companies, venues, organisations and individuals who have raised funds or donated money to the organisation; or those given their time through Workplace volunteering programs.

BOARD AS OF 30 JUNE 2019

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2SPIRITS PROGRAMS

QuAC's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sistergirl and Brotherboy program, 2Spirits, has been actively working on aligning the service with our organisational focus to incorporate diverse areas of LGBTI health along with STI and HIV prevention and education to all bodies, diverse genders, relationships and sexualities within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy communities of Queensland.

As part of this, we've conducted face to face consultations to engage communities across Queensland to promote our service and inform them that we are establishing a 2Spirits Executive Advisory in 2020. Social media is an important platform to connect and promote peer based support and information, particularly in remote and rural regions. 2Spirits has also conducted outreach at numerous community events and connected with peer based network groups across Cairns, Townsville, Hervey Bay, Sunshine Coast and SEQ.

2Spirits is continually working towards establishing and re-establishing relationships and networks with external agencies and community groups to advocate for greater inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy populations relevant to their health and wellbeing.

2Spirits has been presented with valuable opportunities to deliver workforce development to Qaihc SEWB/AOD annual workforce conference, Open Doors Youth Symposium and Education Queensland school staff on how to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who identify as LGBTIQ+ Sistergirl or Brotherboy. We continue to distribute male condoms and womens safe sex packs and 2Spirits service resources to various locations and coordinate super heroes Condoman and Lubelicious presence at community events and conferences to promote safe sex messages.

CLINICAL HEALTH SERVICES

Supporting health and wellbeing through our clinical services

QuAC's clinical services continued to play a pivotal role in breaking down barriers such as stigma and discrimination, which can prevent our communities from accessing health and wellbeing services. At Clinic 30, we are proud to support the diverse health needs of our communities through sexual health checks, treating sexually transmissible infections (STIs), addressing mental health needs, and functioning as a general practice. In this period, we saw 78 new PrEP clients (an effective biomedical form of HIV prevention), while on average the clinic sees three new clients per week and is responding to increases in STI treatments, which has nearly doubled since 2018.

Clinic 30 has also focused on efforts to enhance Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander Sistergirl and Brother Boy engagement with services such as our Hervey Bay satellite clinic. This clinic continues to see new clients for sexual health checks as well as monitoring PrEP use. We have also established local partnerships to support vaccine provision to those Hervey Bay, in response to poor immunisation health awareness in the area.

We are also proud to collaborate with Cairns Sexual Health Service on a community based clinic trial, which we will continue to explore further.

QuAC was a participant in the QPrEPd trial, aiming to learn more about the provision of HIV PrEP across a diverse range of clinical settings in Queensland. Following the closure of the trial, we expected a decline in client numbers however Clinic 30 has seen an increase in clients, indicating the continual need for growth and expansion.

ALLIED HEALTH SERVICES

Supporting mental health and social and emotional wellbeing

Clinic 30's Mental Health Services have grown exponentially, with services diversifying and demand increasing. Within Clinic 30, community members are able to access focussed psychological supports through a range of referral and funding options, and we are seeing more clients accessing more regular supports through their NDIS plan. Clinic 30 also supports people in the Brisbane South region through the Wesley Mission Queensland Psychological Therapies program, which offers both suicide prevention and mainstream mental health services.

The National Suicide Prevention Trial (NSPT) continues to support collaboration among existing LGBTI service providers. We have increased access to support for LGBTI people impacted by suicidal ideation and loss through suicide, offering practical assistance in working through the barriers to mental health and wellbeing with the support of a dedicated Mental Health Clinician working alongside our Case Worker. QuAC also partnered with the Brisbane North PHN to develop the Talking Heals LGBTI campaign as part of the National Suicide Prevention Trial. Developed with the voices of LGBTI Sistergirl and Brotherboy people affected by suicide, as well as community services, the campaign uses the powerful artwork of artists to challenge us to think about new ways to have useful conversations about suicide and support access to services and support.

The past 12 months also saw the roll out of LGBTIQ specific B-MIND services for people residing in the Brisbane North region, providing more mental health sessions. We are in the process of expanding our panel of inclusive mental health clinicians, with QuAC as the central point of intake and service connection.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES PROGRAMS

Supporting empowered and healthy communities

QuAC is proud of the many ways we support communities to respond to the issues they prioritise.

In particular, it has been an extremely busy time for Transgender, Gender Diverse and Non-Binary health with many people seeking out information, including finding affordable and affirming care, and binders and information about safe binding. There has also been increasing health professionals from across Queensland seeking information on giving affirmative care for their trans, gender diverse and non-binary clients. We are also proud to have supported the creation of the first Transgender and Gender Diverse community health advisory group at QuAC, comprised of 12 trans and gender diverse people from across Queensland.

The LGBTI Seniors Community Visiting Service (CVS) has also achieved another year of vital work supporting social connection for isolated older LGBTI people in aged residential care or living at home, supported by almost 30 volunteers from the Sunshine Coast to Gold Coast, Ipswich West Moreton and across Brisbane. From January 2019, QuAC was pleased to begin program co-delivery between QuAC and Diverse Voices, enabling visits to continue while increasing our promotional opportunities. We acknowledge the many individuals whose support for this program enables it to make such a profound and positive impact on the health and wellbeing of those who seek us out.

In this period we also proudly supported communities in North Queensland, auspicing and supporting the Cairns Pride Festival and working to see IDAHOBIT marked in Cairns with the Regional Council flying the rainbow flag.

WORLD AIDS DAY 2018

Remembering our communities on World AIDS Day

World AIDS Day is a significant event for LGBTI Sistergirl and Brotherboy people. The red ribbon has become the symbol for World AIDS Day and on the 1st of December each year we as affected communities, reflect on how far we have come in the fight against HIV, remember those we have lost over the years, and celebrate those still living with HIV today. It is also a time to reflect on our progress towards the goal of reaching zero HIV transmissions. People wear the ribbon to remember those who have died and to show their concern and support for people living with HIV along with their commitment to preventing the transmission of HIV. Across Queensland red ribbons are worn by many showing their support for the event. In Brisbane and Cairns, buildings and public places are lit up in red to mark the event.

In 2018, in Brisbane the Queensland AIDS Council hosted a Candlelight Vigil on December 1st in the Brisbane CBD, and in Cairns a Vigil was organised by the local World AIDS Day committee, of which QuAC is a member. These vigils create a space that allows communities to come together and reflect.

Alongside these vigils, QuAC implemented a number of activities with specific communities, including a Transgender and Gender Diverse BBQ and a Seniors Dinner. QuAC also helped to support a range of statewide initiatives in the community to raise awareness of the ongoing impact of HIV, including stalls, public events, and local lunches and service events.

HEALTH ACTION GROUPS

Supporting Impact Through Health Action Groups

One of the important ways that QuAC delivers services to LGBTI Queenslanders is through our support to Health Action Groups, in which volunteers initiate and facilitate peer education and health promotion to particular key areas of need in the community.

Supporting Communities Through Health Action Groups

It was another busy year for the Many Genders One Voice (MGOV) Action Group with Trans Fair day held in June and attended by approximately 200 people. The group also delivered the Trans Awards, where MGOV were voted Trans group of the year and Trans Fair day won event of the year for the 3rd year running. These kinds of welcoming and affirming events are crucial for the transgender, gender diverse and non-binary communities to interact with each other and build stronger and more engaged communities. QuAC appreciates everyone who attended an event, or volunteered their time, and the members of MGOV.

QuAC also pays tribute to the very dedicated workers in aged care provider organisations, related support services, and older LGBTI community members who have committed to involvement with the challenging, largely unfunded yet burgeoning need for the ageing and aged care sectors to embark upon or further develop the journey towards culturally competent and safe service delivery and care for older LGBTI people. The Sunshine Coast LGBTI Community Ageing Network and the Brisbane Ageing in Diversity Action Group (AIDAG) have provided focussed spaces for meeting, discussion and learning around this topic, as well as providing important channels for input into significant processes such as the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

RAINBOW PRIDE @ WORK TRAINING SUPPORTING INCLUSIVE SERVICES

An integral part of QuAC's work is supporting organisations to reflect on their knowledge and practices, and supporting them to take action to ensure their services are knowledgeable, inclusive and affirming. The QLD AIDS Council's Training and Development Program, Rainbow Pride @ Work has been providing practical support to health and community services to build an open and inclusive rapport with LGBTI clients in Queensland since 2005, including training, consultancy services, and collaboration on reviewing processes and systems.

In this period, the Rainbow Pride @ Work program delivered 79 training sessions across Queensland. This included a variety of sessions in Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast, up to Bundaberg, Rockhampton, Airlie beach, Townsville, and as far north as Port Douglas. The program also delivered training to services in Cunnamulla and Barcaldine, demonstrating the recognition by services across the entire state, of the need for inclusive service delivery.

These sessions were delivered to a variety of government, non-government and corporate professionals, covering topics such as LGBTI aging, domestic and family violence, mental health, youth and young people, culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse communities, inclusive practice, awareness and ally training. These sessions were delivered to over 1,000 professionals at training sessions that covered each of the seven Primary Health Network areas. The Rainbow Pride @ Work

program also commenced consultancy projects for a legal service, an aged care facility and a tertiary institution, with the projects ranging from support around bathroom signage through to policies, procedures and workforce development.

RESEARCH

QuAC Builds The Evidence Base

QuAC continues to collaborate with a range of communities, partners and services to implement and support research across Queensland, which will make a real difference on the ground for people.

All of QuAC's work is informed by the evidence, and community consultation, focus groups and community based research are a key component of this robust evidence base. This year, this included research and consultation to inform our campaigns like the Let's Treat Syphilis and #ComePrEPd campaigns. In this period, QuAC also continued to support partnership research into PrEP use through the Comeprepd to Dine project and a predictors of PrEP use academic research study.

QuAC Supports Essential Research

QuAC was also proud to again partner with the Centre for Social Research in Health at UNSW to deliver the 2018 Gay Community Periodic Survey in Queensland. This research is an important part of Australia's understanding of and response to HIV, monitoring sexual practices, drug use and HIV and other STI testing patterns. QuAC again drew on its extensive partnerships with social venues, community groups, and clinical services, and grassroots community reach, to recruit 1,826 men for the survey. QuAC also continues to advocate for the inclusion of Transgender and Gender Diverse people in important research such as this, with almost three per cent of the 2018 sample identifying as transgender or non-binary.

SEXUAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

QuAC's work to support gay men and other men who have sex with men with skills and knowledge continued in this period. The #comePrEPd campaign continues to be the leading platform within Queensland to increase awareness of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), an effective biomedical form of HIV prevention. Through six months of consultation and focus testing, QUAC developed 17 new posters and engaged with community to share eight online PrEP stories to connect to priority populations. Posters have been distributed across the state at LGBTI venues, sex on premises venues, adult stores, sexual health centers and LGBTI Resorts. To learn more about PrEP please visit www.comprepd.info

QuAC and QPP (supported by Queensland Health) also recently collaborated on a state-wide syphilis awareness campaign in response to increasing syphilis within Queensland. This campaign, featured at www.letstreatsyphilis.info focused on condom reinforcement, knowledge of syphilis prevalence, and transmission and treatment. The QuAC outreach program also made a significant impact this year, with 40 volunteer team members achieving record levels of condoms distribution and outreach conversations across the state at multiple LGBT venues, sex on premises venues (SOPV) and at community events.

Another major initiative, the www.quac.org.au/wrapped-n-ready safe sex supplies distribution campaign, also had significant reach this year. In total, 35,335 Wrapped’N Ready orders were distributed across Queensland in this period of time. Demonstrating the importance of making these supplies available to services and communities, very little campaign promotion has been required before order capacity was met, with word of mouth a major way people learn about campaign.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media continues to change and inform at a relentless rate. Our social footprint continues to grow with 1.6 million impressions delivered to 10,974 fans, resulting in over 104,000 engagements including likes, shares, comments and 8,433 link clicks.

As a medium that’s both private and public, it remains an essential tool for our health promotion and education campaigns. New features and channels keep coming and a small change to a platform can make a lot of difference. This means we are constantly walking a censorship tightrope with messages and campaigns that communicate important sexual, mental and public health messages.

A lot of the hype behind new features and alerts is exciting, yet it also keeps people glued to a 24hr communication cycle, so filtering out the noise is an equally important challenge for us and the communities we serve.

Many of the people who make up our diverse LGBTI Sistergirl and Brotherboy communities use social media as a critical way to stay informed and communicate with us, whether direct messaging us personally at 3am or posting a thoughtful reply to a public group post at lunchtime. These interactions keep us connected with a lot of real time thinking and powerful insights.

Through a combination of organic and paid boosts we use over ten main social media feeds to keep our digital footprint meaningful. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn remain our key channels with a bit of Snapchat for a joyous public event. We keep our eye on new channels and features, and continue to highlight the many special days that our communities observe. Here’s to more discussion, informed dissent and self-moderation all existing hand in hand.

FUNDRAISING, DONATIONS AND COMMUNITIES

QuAC is very lucky to have a number of passionate supporters and fundraisers in the community. The Balls OUT Bingo (BOB) event celebrated its 8th year in October 2018, and host Candy Surprise has helped raise over \$80,000 for QuAC over 4 years, with \$29,000 profit in 2018-2019. We are very proud that Bingo was awarded a 2019 Queens Ball award for Regular Event of the Year. QuAC sincerely thanks all our sponsors and players. Sportsman Hotel, Club 29, Shades of Play Adult Store, Gay & Lesbian Matchmaker, John Bortolin for support with the BOB calendar, Sleazeball Australia, Brisbears, BootCo, and Brisbane Hustlers Rugby.

Thank you as well to all of the Boot Co guys that support Balls OUT Bingo and QuAC, with fundraising and Boot Co donations, and collaboration on the first round of the Annual Mr Qld Leather/Qld Leather Boy contest.

We are also grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with Brisbears, who sponsored the printing cost of Boys of Balls OUT Bingo Calendar with \$500, provided donations, and supported Balls OUT Bingo during 'Planet Bear' Northern Exposure, and Queensland Pups and Handlers who have been great supporters of Balls OUT Bingo.

Lastly, QuAC would like to say a BIG THANK YOU for the wonderful support of all of our donors who have sent us contributions during the last financial year. Your generosity is essential the work we do and impact that we have in the community.

CLICK LINK [HERE](#) FOR AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019