

VACCA LGBTQIA+ Community Survey 2020



VACCA
Connected by culture

VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL
CHILD CARE AGENCY

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1. Background

In July 2020, VACCA disseminated a community survey for LGBTQIA+ service users, their allies and community to understand the experience of LGBTQIA+ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service users when accessing VACCA services. The purpose of the Survey was to gain an indication of how inclusive the experience was for LGBTQIA+ service users and where VACCA could improve its inclusive practice.

As part of VACCA's Rainbow Tick Accreditation process, understanding the needs and capturing the voice of the LGBTQIA+ service users and community is a requirement that helps determine where LGBTQIA+ inclusive practice initiatives need to be implemented, strengthened and where the organisation is doing well with LGBTQIA+ inclusion.

The survey consisted of sixteen questions, with a variety of question types and open text boxes for text responses and comments. The questions in the survey can be categorized into two areas:

1. What has the experience of LGBTQIA+ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their allies and support networks been like when accessing Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO's)?
2. What has the experience of LGBTQIA+ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their allies and support networks been like when accessing VACCA services and how can this be improved?

2. Summary of Respondents

16 PEOPLE COMPLETED THE
LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY SURVEY

35.72% OF PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED
AS EITHER ABORIGINAL OR
TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER

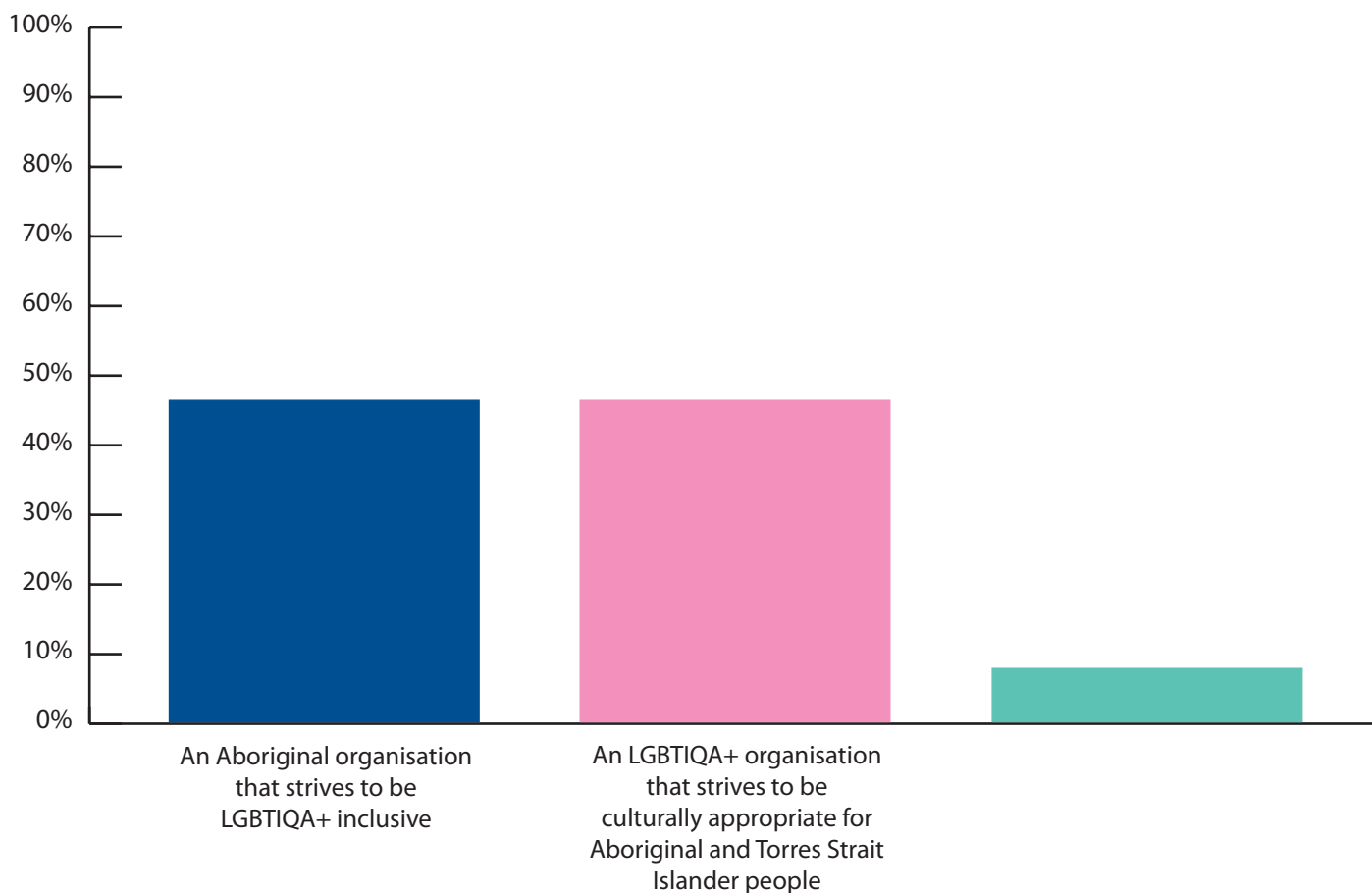
42.86% OF PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED AS PART
OF THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

21.43% OF PARTICIPANTS CHOSE NOT TO SAY
WHETHER THEY IDENTIFIED AS PART OF THE
LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

3. Survey Results

The experience of LGBTIQ+ Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander for ACCO service

We asked participants if **they would prefer to access an Aboriginal Organisation that strives to be LGBTIQ+ inclusive or an LGBTIQ+ organisation that strives to be culturally appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people**. In response, 46.15% of participants responded advising they would prefer to access an Aboriginal Organisation that strives to be LGBTIQ+ inclusive, 46.15% of participants advised they would prefer to access an LGBTIQ+ service that is culturally appropriate and 7.69% of participants advised they were unsure.



What kind of things make LGBTIQ+ people feel welcome and supported at a service?

Themes that were identified from these responses included visible representation of LGBTIQ+ community and inclusive language as well as creating a welcoming culture that was diverse and equal.

Some examples of comments:

Having a statement or banner at entrance that makes people feel welcome- flags, rainbow cushions, staff who wear rainbow badges

Use of non-gendered language (i.e. they/them not he/she, people not men and women)
Visibility of queer people in adverts, posters, information Gender neutral toilets

Acceptance behaviour towards them, including inclusion and treating them no different to others. Kindness

Being treated the same as anyone else

Participants who identified as brotherboys, sistergirls and/or transgender were asked to describe what their experience has been like accessing services through ACCOs.

Responses indicated a range of experiences and some participants advised that they hadn't accessed services through an ACCO but wanted to.

Some examples of comments:

Need a Sisterhood for
Torres Strait Islander family

Good. People are friendly.
Open minded and engaging

Mostly indifferent but a few instances of
homophobic behaviour

Have had none

Participants were asked *what an Aboriginal organisation could do to be more inclusive of LGBTIQ+ community members.*

Themes identified in responses included increasing awareness and knowledge, having LGBTIQ+ representation visible and spaces where LGBTIQ+ can be listened to as well as creating a culture where diversity and equality are valued.

Be open minded - workers need to have this
attitude about them

Educate Aboriginal community members to be
inclusive and not discriminate

More visibility of queer Aboriginal
community in 'mainstream' work
(i.e. not LGBTIQ specific programs)

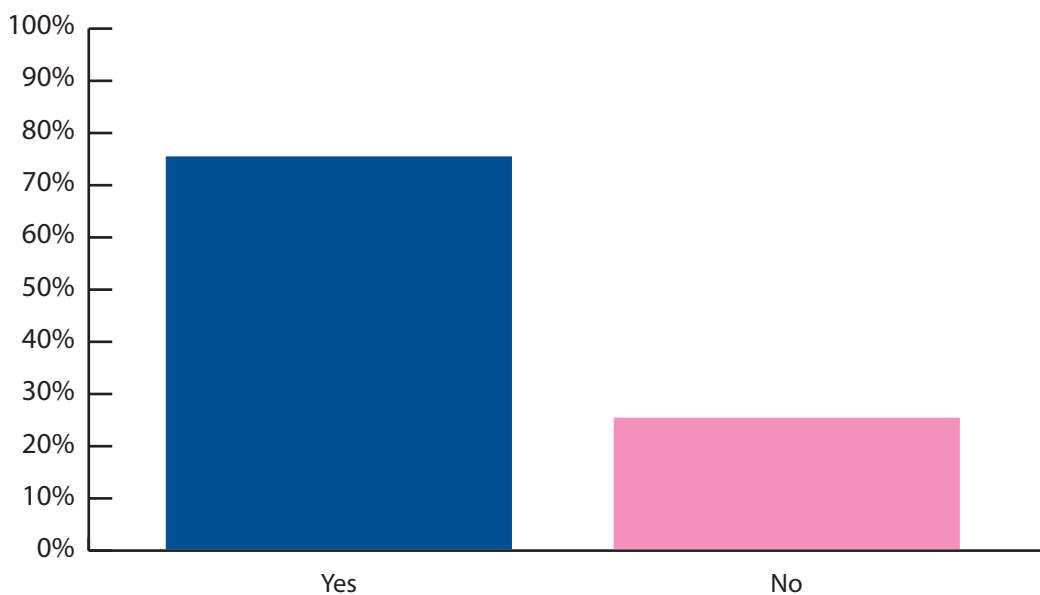
Increase in awareness and understanding
of the LGBTIQ through internal workshops
for new and existing staff Explore options of
encouragement with recruiting- perhaps
have a LGBTIQ specific role

Have a regular support group



The experience of LGBTIQ+ Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, allies and community when accessing VACCA services.

Out of all participants who completed the LGBTIQ+ Community Survey, 75% of participants had received support or been engaged with a program at VACCA.



Participants who had been or are currently involved in a VACCA program, were asked to describe their experience as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community/ally/parent or carer of a LGBTIQ+ young person when accessing VACCA services.

Overall, responses were quite positive, however, there was one instance in which a participant advised there wasn't much support.

It's been fine. When we became carers, there was a bit of uncertainty about us I think because we were told that we were the first gay male carers. But since then, no problems at all

Positive Rewarding Inclusive Understanding
Awareness Advocacy

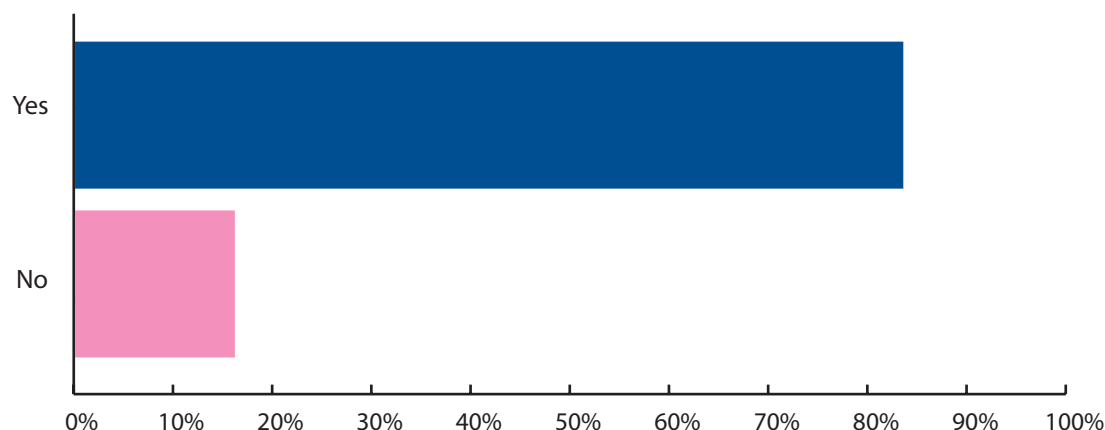
I have engaged with a few workers, and they come across very hospitable, caring and they have amazing ethics

Not much support

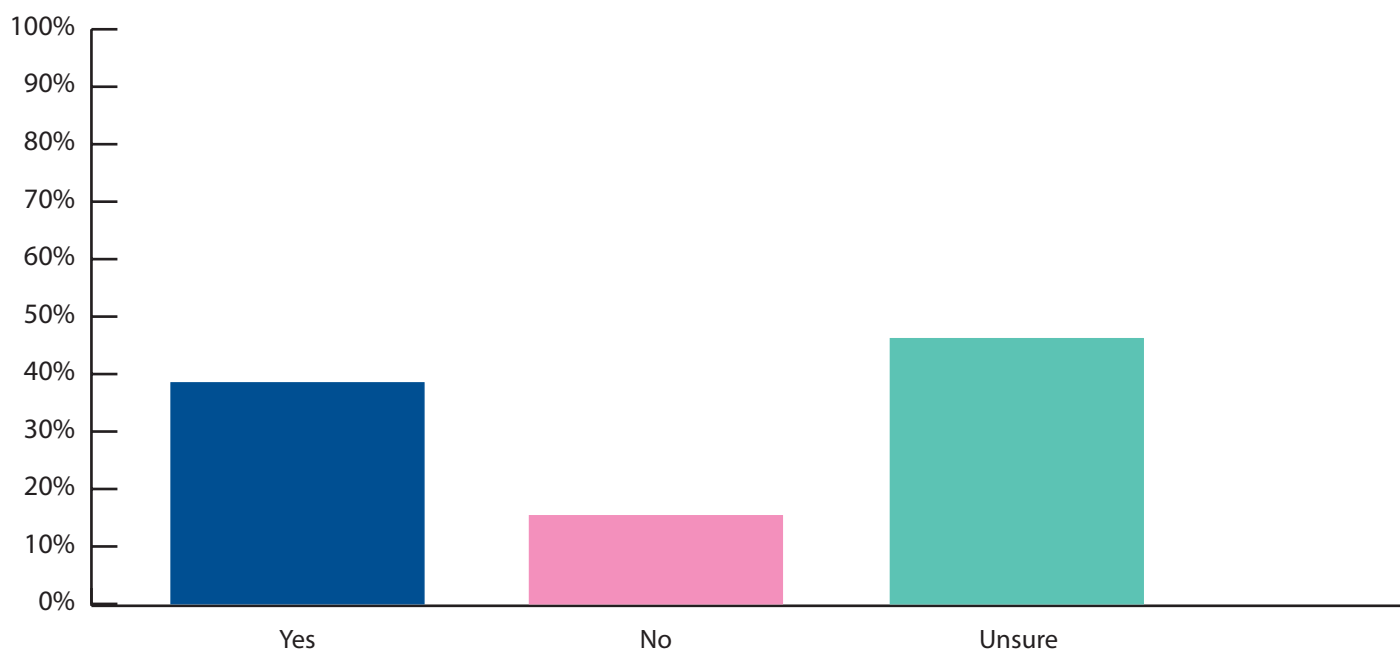


Attendance at community events

Out of the survey 83.33% of participants had attended a VACCA community event (eg. NAIDOC Children's Day etc.)



Of those who attended a VACCA community event, 38.46% of participants advised that VACCA community events are inclusive for the LGBTIQ+ community, 15.38% of participants advised that VACCA community events were not inclusive and 46.15% advised they were unsure.



Participants were asked if they were a carer or parent of a young person who identifies as part of the LGBTIQ+ community, do they feel that they have the knowledge or know how to access support and information to support them?

Understanding where to access support services for young people who identify as part of the LGBTIQ+ community is crucial to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young LGBTIQ+ people and community.

Responses indicated that most participants had the knowledge or knew how to access support and information to support a young LGBTIQ+ person, however, one response indicated that there was a lack of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander specific services.

Not specifically for Aboriginal kids. But know of some LGBTIQ+ specific services

Yes and no. I need to familiarise myself with this service as a worker here at VACCA

Yes I would

To determine the effectiveness of inclusive practices initiatives that were being implemented at the time the community survey was disseminated, participants were asked in what ways they think VACCA is effective in making LGBTIQ+ members feel safe and included.

Responses to this question varied with some participants indicating this is the first time VACCA has made them feel safe and included whilst other responses indicated that VACCA was demonstrating its efforts around LGBTIQ+ inclusion to service users.

Doing the Rainbow Tick is great

By having a team of members that sit on the panel for LGBTIQ+ VACCA

Awareness and inclusivity connectivity and non-judgmental

This survey is the first time

To understand where VACCA needed to strengthen inclusive practice initiatives, participants were asked what areas they think VACCA needs to be further strengthened in meeting the needs of the LGBTIQ+ community.

Examples of responses to this question were provided and included pronoun use, staff training, worker skills and knowledge, and visible support of community.

Training was identified as a key area that could be strengthened to meet the needs of the LGBTIQ+ community as well as creating spaces for workshops, forums and community engagement and creating a culture of respect, diversity, and equality.

Workshops, forums, training, and community engagement

Having staff members to educate that are from LGBTIQ+ [community] to share and educate VACCA staff

Education is the key – it needs to be in ALL induction training

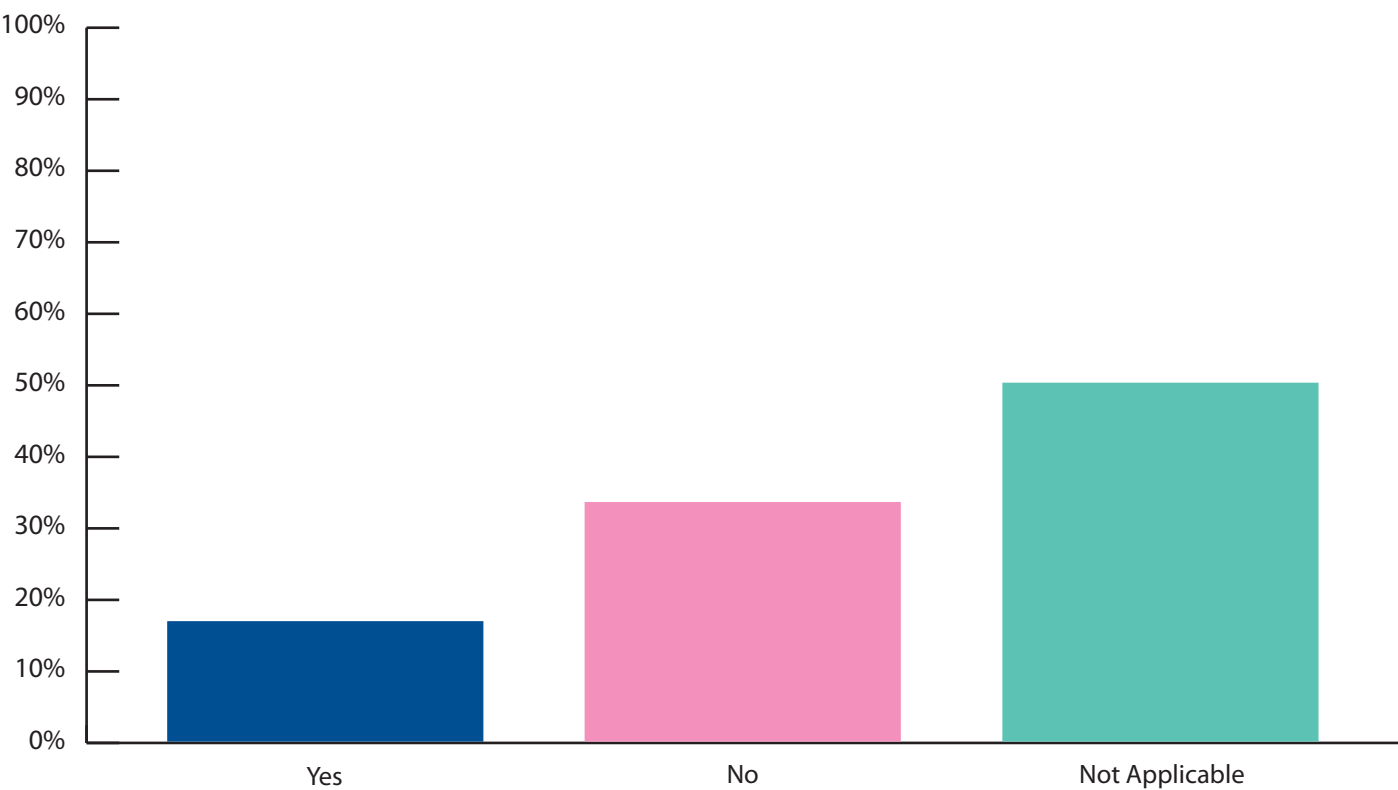




Family Violence in the LGBTIQ+ Community and Service Access for Family Violence

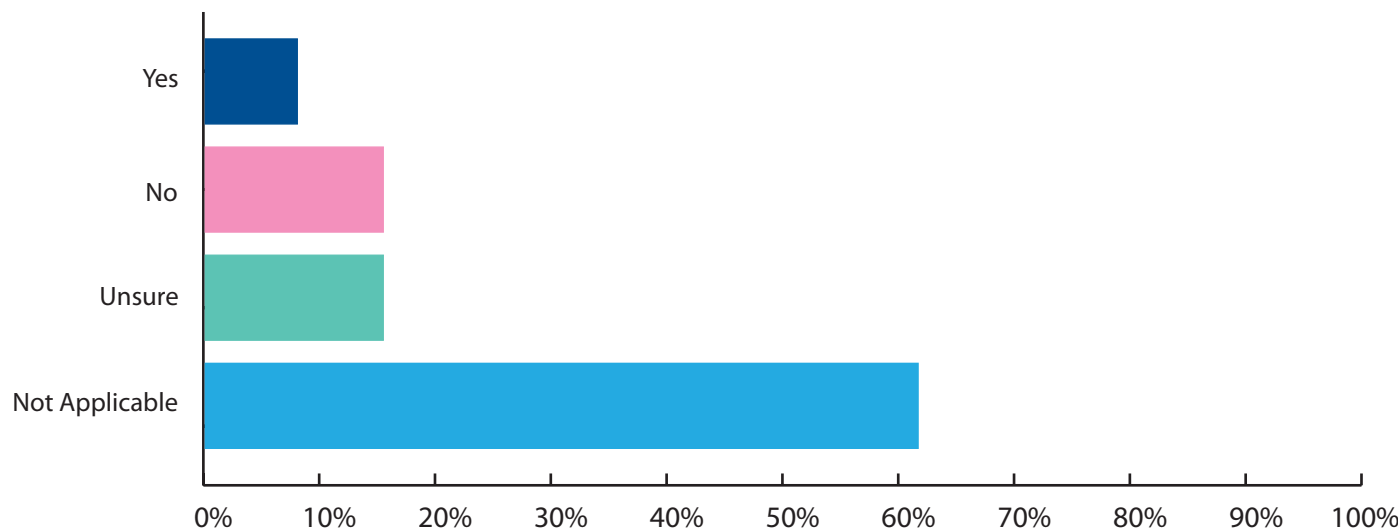
At the time, in 2020, all DFFH funded Family Violence programs in Victoria were required to have Rainbow Tick Accreditation (this requirement has since ceased).

Considering this, participants were asked **if they were a LGBTIQ+ community member who is experiencing or using family violence, would they access a VACCA family violence program**. 16.67% of participants responded saying they would access VACCA services, 33.33% of participants advised they wouldn't and 50% of participants indicated that this wasn't applicable to them.



Participants who had engaged with a VACCA family violence program, were asked if the program was inclusive for the LGBTIQ+ community.

Responses indicated the 7.96% of participants advised that the program was inclusive, 15.38% of participants advised that it wasn't, 15.38% of participants advised they were unsure and 61.54% of participants advised that this wasn't applicable to them.



Finally, participants were asked *if there was anything else they would like VACCA to know.*

43.75% of participants responded to this question and the most common themes (except for participants advising they had nothing to add) were participants being thankful for VACCA's services and asking for more information and a contact person at VACCA.

Just thank you for what you do for the children and carers

Possibly provide a contact person at VACCA for more information and place on a VACCA brochure

4. Moving Forward

The results of the VACCA LGBTIQ+ Community Survey will help to develop the tools, resources, policies and procedures to ensure that VACCA service users feel safe and included when accessing VACCA services and ultimately support VACCA with its journey to obtain Rainbow Tick Accreditation.

VACCA will use the data collected in this survey to inform training opportunities for VACCA staff, embed inclusive practices in service delivery and assess potential to develop a client facing LGBTIQ+ program should the need for this be identified.

Some of the main areas that data from this survey has informed us to focus on are:

- Ensuring that VACCA offices visually represent the LGBTIQ+ community and inclusive language is being used throughout VACCA offices.
- Learning and development opportunities & staff training.
- Celebration of the LGBTIQ+ community.

Some of the ways we will see this happen as VACCA progresses along its Rainbow Tick journey include:

- LGBTIQ+ Materials being displayed throughout VACCA offices to ensure that the LGBTIQ+ community are visually represented and feel seen when accessing VACCA services.
- New training packages to be developed and existing training packages updated to ensure they are inclusive and provide specific guidance on working with and alongside Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+ people.
- VACCA celebrating alongside the LGBTIQ+ community for important events and milestones.
- Policy, procedure, program manuals and operations to be reviewed to ensure LGBTIQ+ inclusion.

Thank You

The CQI Team would like to formally thank in this report all the participants who participated in this survey. The results will inform not only VACCA's learning and development needs, opportunities for LGBTIQ+ Inclusiveness initiatives to be developed, implemented or strengthened, our Rainbow Tick Improvement plans and our presentations to the regions on the Rainbow Tick work we are progressing, but also, provide a baseline for future surveys to track that VACCA is a safe and inclusive organisation for our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+ service users, staff, carers, young people, and community.