



Queensland



LGBTQIA+ ALLIANCE

The Inaugural Far North Queensland LGBTQIA+ Sector Forum Report

*Themes, priorities and recommendations for Australian and
Queensland governments and stakeholders*

Released June 2026

About the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance

The Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance is Queensland's statewide LGBTQIA+ peak body. The Alliance strengthens community-led leadership, sector coordination, regional capacity and access to safe, inclusive and culturally secure support for LGBTQIA+ peoples, families and communities across Queensland.

The Alliance works with community-led organisations, grassroots groups, lived experience leaders, First Nations knowledge holders, regional communities and service partners to improve access, strengthen system responsiveness and support the social and emotional wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ Queenslanders.

The Alliance's purpose includes advancing LGBTQIA+ community-led and culturally governed leadership; supporting cultural, social and emotional wellbeing; promoting equity and access; strengthening the LGBTQIA+ community-led sector; investing in regional, rural and remote community capacity; and creating partnerships that build long-term resilience across communities and organisations.

Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands, oceans, skies and waterways now known as Queensland. We acknowledge and pay respect to Elders past and present. The sovereignty of these lands was never ceded. For us to do the work with integrity, respect and purposeful reconciliation, we acknowledge the oldest continuous culture in the world.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQIA+ people, including Sistergirl and Brotherboy communities throughout Queensland, and recognise their continued contributions to culture, community and advocacy.

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1. Executive summary

Purpose

The LGBTQIA+ Sector Forum was held in Far North Queensland to strengthen relationships, amplify the voices of people with lived and living experience, share knowledge, centre regional leadership, and identify practical opportunities to improve access, inclusion, visibility, safety, and wellbeing across Queensland.

The Forum brought emerging and established leaders into a shared space with government representatives, commissioners, service providers and community members. It created an opportunity for diverse perspectives to be heard together and demonstrated sector capacity building in practice.

The program deliberately centred First Nations, Sistergirl, Brotherboy, intersex, regional, lived, and living-experience voices before moving to government- and systems-focused discussions. The Forum also coincided with the formal announcement of the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance's five-year funding agreement, prompting discussion about how this investment can best strengthen the sector over the next five years and beyond.



Image 1: Inaugural Far North Queensland LGBTQIA+ Sector Forum. Pictured from left to right: Victims' Commissioner Kate Connor; Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance Chief Executive Officer Rebecca Johnson

OAM; Natasha Fuji Torres Health Indigenous Corporation Youth AOD Case Manager and SEWB Cultural Officer; Queensland Mental Health Commissioner Ivan Frkovic; Uncle Mario Soki from the Thabu and Dhoeybaw Clans of the top western Torres Strait and Queensland Council for LGBTI Health Chief Executive Officer Rebecca Reynolds.

What the Forum highlighted

The Forum articulated a clear vision for Queensland: a state where LGBTQIA+, Sistergirl, Brotherboy and Rainbow communities can live safely, visibly and with dignity wherever they live, supported by culturally secure, peer-led, locally shaped and human rights-based systems.

Participants highlighted the need for sustained leadership and investment to build the infrastructure required to realise this vision. This includes long-term sector capacity building, local leadership development, stronger community-led responses, and practical investment in the people, relationships, skills, governance, peer pathways, and local initiatives that support safety, belonging, and wellbeing.

Several consistent themes emerged from the Forum:

- First Nations leadership and cultural protocols must come first.
- Regional, rural, remote and discrete communities are not service gaps to be fixed from Brisbane; they must be supported to shape solutions that reflect their own local contexts.
- Local leadership requires practical development, not consultation alone.
- A small, flexible investment can drive significant growth in community infrastructure, connection and confidence.
- Safety is built through relationships, visibility, belonging, culture, continuity of care and trusted referral pathways.
- Responses to domestic, family and sexual violence must reflect the realities of queer, trans, Sistergirl, Brotherboy, intersex and regional communities.
- Intersex human rights require stronger legal, clinical and psychosocial protections.
- Peer-led, lived and living experience work must be recognised, resourced and sustained.
- The Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance must remain independent and community-led while working constructively with the government.
- The Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance's five-year funding agreement creates an opportunity to support more coordinated, sustainable and community-led sector development across Queensland.
- Government partnerships are essential to the success of any recommendations and ways of working.

What is needed now

Forum participants made clear that achieving lasting change will require sustained, community-led sector development across Queensland. Local and sector-wide capacity building is needed to make change durable, particularly in regional, rural, remote and discrete communities. An effective peak body cannot only speak on behalf of communities; it must also help create the conditions in which communities can organise, lead, partner, evaluate and advocate for themselves.

The Forum should be treated as a foundation for ongoing accountability, with continued focus on whether LGBTQIA+ Queenslanders - particularly those outside metropolitan centres - are becoming safer, more connected, better supported and more visible in policy, services and community life over time.

Participants also identified several principles to guide implementation of the report's recommendations:

- First Nations leadership must shape decision-making, relationships and accountability.
- LGBTQIA+ health, safety and wellbeing must be understood in the context of cultural load, code-shifting, minority stress, racism, homophobia, transphobia, colonial harm and institutional mistrust.
- Capacity building must be grounded in cultural authority, reciprocity, respect, relationships and accountability.
- Regional communities should be recognised for their leadership, resilience, creativity and cultural knowledge.
- Visible, local and community-led initiatives can create important pathways to safety, connection and belonging.
- Peer workforce development should be central to both service access and leadership development.
- Intersex-led capacity building should be embedded in the broader sector plan.
- Investment in community-led evidence and research is essential, and that evidence must remain connected to the lived context and community story.

Priority recommendations

The Forum identified 12 priority recommendations:

1. Establish the Far North Queensland Forum as an annual accountability mechanism.
2. Develop a five-year sector capacity-building plan.
3. Fund regional and discrete community-led safe spaces.
4. Invest in a statewide LGBTQIA+ peer workforce and leadership pathway.
5. Embed First Nations protocols and cultural governance across Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance and government partnership work.
6. Continue and strengthen the local capacity microgrants program.
7. Develop a Queensland Rainbow Health and Safety Navigation Map.
8. Ensure LGBTQIA+ domestic, family and sexual violence responses are included in state and national prevention work.
9. Advance intersex human rights protections in Queensland.
10. Protect LGBTQIA+ communities from policy erasure.
11. Create a community-led evidence and research program.
12. Establish a regional leadership development stream.

2. About the Forum

Purpose of the Forum

The inaugural LGBTQIA+ Sector Forum was held in Cairns, Far North Queensland, to strengthen relationships, amplify the voices of people with the voices of people living and experiencing LGBTQIA+ lives, share knowledge, centre regional leadership, and identify practical opportunities to improve access, inclusion, visibility, safety, and wellbeing across Queensland.

Convened by the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance, the Forum created a shared space for community members, sector leaders, service providers, commissioners, and government representatives to reflect on the current challenges and opportunities facing LGBTQIA+ communities, particularly in regional, rural, and remote settings.

The Forum was also intended to support a stronger, more connected and community-led sector by bringing emerging and established leaders together in conversation. In this way, the event was both a listening and engagement process and a practical demonstration of sector capacity building in action.

Who participated

The Forum brought together First Nations leaders, Sistergirl and Brotherboy community members, intersex advocates, regional and remote participants, service providers, allies, community organisations, commissioners and government representatives.

The program deliberately centred First Nations, Sistergirl, Brotherboy, intersex, regional, lived, and living-experience voices before moving to government- and systems-focused discussions. This sequencing reflected a core principle of the Forum: community voices should shape the conversation before institutional responses are considered.

How this report was developed

This report has been developed from the transcript extracted from the live stream of the event. The report synthesises key themes, priorities, and recommendations that emerged throughout the day and presents them in a concise, publication-ready format. The report is intended for distribution to Australian and Queensland governments, commissioners, sector stakeholders and community audiences. Its purpose is not to reproduce the full proceedings of the Forum, but to synthesise the major issues raised and set out the implications for policy, partnership and future sector development.

3. Forum vision

Shared vision

The Forum articulated a clear vision for Queensland: a state where LGBTQIA+, Sistergirl, Brotherboy and Rainbow communities can live safely, visibly and with dignity wherever they live, supported by culturally secure, peer-led, locally shaped and human rights-based systems. This vision reflects a call for structural change across the sector, including stronger local leadership, greater community control, more responsive services, and sustained investment in the systems and relationships that support safety, belonging and wellbeing.

Forum participants described a future in which regional and remote communities are not treated as an afterthought, but are recognised as places of leadership, knowledge and innovation. They also envisaged a sector in which First Nations leadership is embedded in decision-making, peer-led responses are properly recognised and resourced, and communities can see themselves reflected in the services, policies and institutions that affect their lives.

Why this matters in Far North Queensland and across Queensland

The Forum made clear that achieving this vision will require more than short-term responses or symbolic inclusion. It will require long-term investment in community-led infrastructure, leadership development, cultural governance, peer pathways, evidence-building and regional capacity. This matters because LGBTQIA+ communities across Queensland, particularly in regional, rural and remote areas, continue to face barriers to safety, visibility, connection and support. Participants emphasised that these challenges cannot be addressed solely through metropolitan solutions. Effective responses must be shaped by local knowledge, cultural authority and the lived realities of the communities they are intended to support.

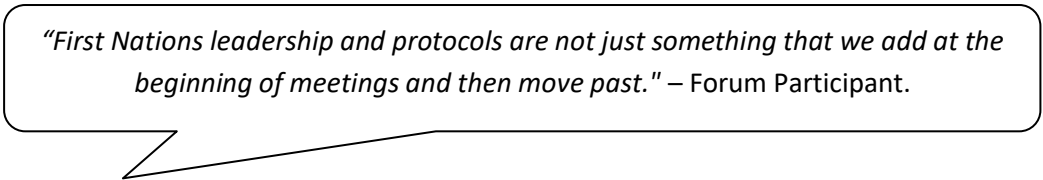
The Forum also highlighted the importance of a strong and independent peak body that can do more than advocate on behalf of communities. It must also help build the conditions for communities to organise, lead, partner, evaluate and advocate for themselves. In this context, the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance's five-year funding agreement presents a significant opportunity to convert the Forum's vision into sustained, community-led sector development across Queensland.

4. Key themes

The Forum highlighted a set of consistent themes relating to leadership, safety, visibility, service access, sector development and government partnership. Together, these themes point to the need for sustained, community-led investment in the systems, relationships and local capacity required to improve outcomes for LGBTQIA+ communities across Queensland.

4.1 First Nations leadership, cultural governance and self-determination

Forum participants consistently emphasised that First Nations leadership must be embedded across the sector's work, not treated as a symbolic or procedural step. Cultural governance, local authority and self-determination must shape how decisions are made, how relationships are built, and how accountability is understood.



"First Nations leadership and protocols are not just something that we add at the beginning of meetings and then move past." – Forum Participant.

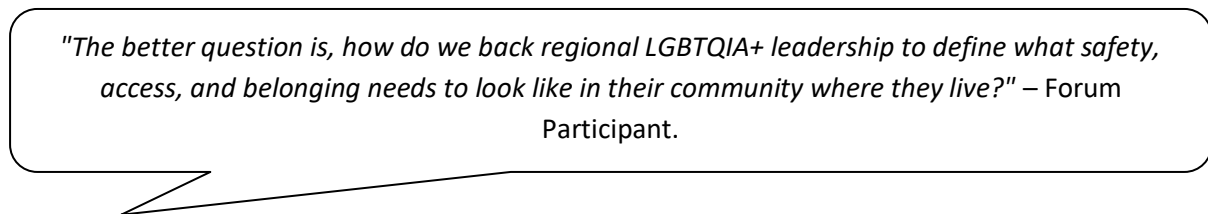
Participants also stressed that Queensland is not a single community or context. Work in Far North Queensland, the Torres Strait, Yarrabah, and other regional, rural, and remote settings must be grounded in place, culture, and local authority. A one-size-fits-all approach will not meet community needs.

This has clear implications for sector development. Capacity building, funding decisions, governance support, engagement processes and evaluation approaches must all be informed by cultural authority, reciprocity, respect and accountability. The Forum made clear that First Nations leadership must be foundational to future work across the sector.

4.2 Regional, rural, remote and discrete community leadership

The Forum challenged deficit-based assumptions about regional, rural, remote and discrete communities. While participants identified serious barriers, including limited services, workforce shortages, a lack of visible support, transport challenges, and stigma, they also described these communities as places of deep leadership, resilience, creativity, and cultural knowledge.

A key message was that responses cannot simply be designed in metropolitan centres and extended outward. Regional communities must be supported in defining what safety, access, and belonging look like in their own contexts.

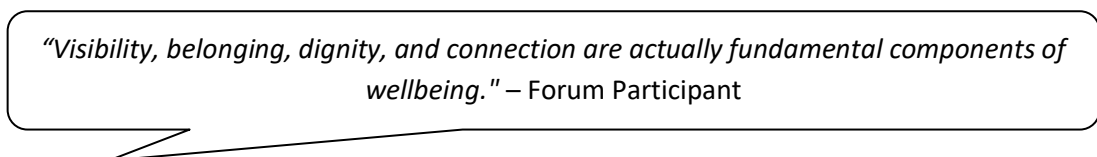


"The better question is, how do we back regional LGBTQIA+ leadership to define what safety, access, and belonging needs to look like in their community where they live?" – Forum Participant.

This means local leadership development must be a core part of the sector's future direction. Regional leaders need practical support, including mentoring, governance development, funding opportunities, peer networks, travel support and access to decision-making spaces. The Forum showed that when regional communities are supported to speak for themselves, they contribute not only their experience but also leadership and solutions.

4.3 Visibility, belonging and safe community spaces

Participants repeatedly returned to the importance of visibility, belonging and safe spaces. In many communities, small signs of inclusion, such as affirming resources, posters, rainbow symbols or visible community activities, can make a meaningful difference for people who have rarely seen themselves reflected safely in local settings.



"Visibility, belonging, dignity, and connection are actually fundamental components of wellbeing." – Forum Participant

The Forum highlighted that safe spaces are not abstract concepts; they are practical, relational and locally shaped. They may be places to connect, seek information, build confidence, access peer support, involve family and elders, or find pathways into services without shame or repeated retelling. Participants also highlighted that visibility work should not be dismissed as secondary or symbolic. Local gatherings, Pride activities, storytelling, arts-based initiatives, Queer Book Clubs, and peer-led connection activities can all help reduce isolation, strengthen belonging, and create the conditions for local leadership to emerge.

4.4 Sector capacity building and local leadership development

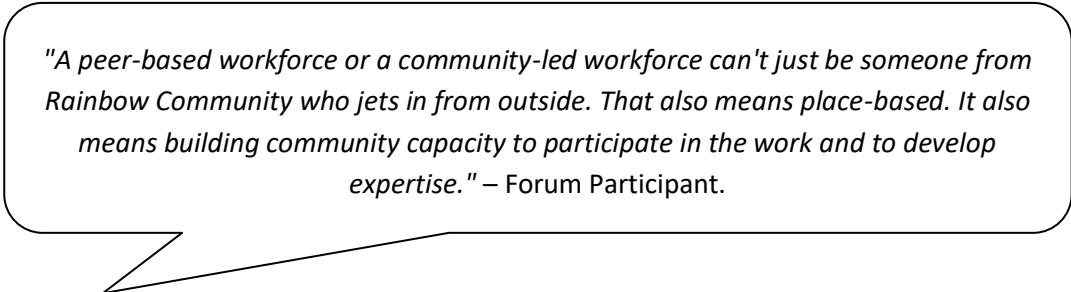
A major theme of the Forum was the need to strengthen the LGBTQIA+ sector as a whole, rather than focusing on individual programs or services. Participants made clear that sector capacity building is not a back-office function, but a core mechanism through which communities become safer, more visible, better connected and better able to shape the systems that affect them. They highlighted the need for a stronger community-led ecosystem of organisations, groups, peer workers, advocates, volunteers, researchers, local organisers and cultural knowledge holders across Queensland.

Sector capacity building was understood in practical terms. It includes governance support, local leadership development, training, mentoring, project support, research and evaluation capability, policy and advocacy skills, financial and administrative support, regional networking, and access to small-scale community funding.

Participants also emphasised that small, flexible investments can have a significant impact. Community-led initiatives such as local social connection activities, Pride events and grassroots organising were described as important infrastructure for building confidence, visibility, connection and leadership over time. The Forum highlighted the need to recognise and sustain this work as a core part of long-term sector development.

4.5 Health, wellbeing and peer-led care

The Forum highlighted the importance of culturally grounded, peer-led and relationship-based approaches to health and wellbeing. Participants emphasised that people are often supported not only through formal referral systems but also through trusted relationships, warm introductions, and community-connected care.



"A peer-based workforce or a community-led workforce can't just be someone from Rainbow Community who jets in from outside. That also means place-based. It also means building community capacity to participate in the work and to develop expertise." – Forum Participant.

The Gayawur Rainbow Model was presented as a practical example of this approach. It demonstrated the value of peer-informed, culturally responsive and locally adaptable support that helps people navigate health, mental health, housing and other systems in ways that feel safe and accessible.

The Forum also highlighted the load carried by peer workers and lived and living experience workers. Peer work must not be treated as informal or low-cost labour. It requires supervision, care, training, career pathways and appropriate resourcing. For this reason, peer workforce development emerged as a central priority. Participants saw it as both a service access strategy and a leadership development strategy, particularly for First Nations, Sistergirl, Brotherboy, trans, intersex, regional and remote community members.

4.6 LGBTQIA+ domestic, family and sexual violence

The Forum drew clear connections between LGBTQIA+ wellbeing, community safety and domestic, family and sexual violence prevention. Participants described violence as complex and overlapping, including intimate partner violence, sexual violence, family rejection, threats of outing, control over access to gender-affirming care, community stigma, and homophobic or transphobic abuse.

Participants from regional and discrete communities also highlighted the added complexity of violence occurring in environments where privacy is limited, support options are few, and there may be no clear or safe place to go. These discussions reinforced the idea that prevention and response cannot be separated from housing, health, mental health, peer support, local safe spaces, family relationships, and community education.

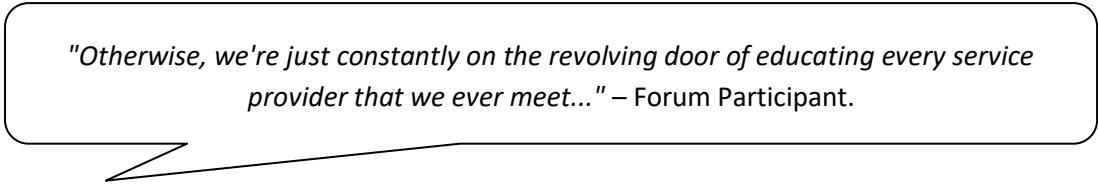
The Forum made clear that LGBTQIA+ domestic, family and sexual violence must be explicitly recognised in policy, prevention work and service design. This includes improving the capability of mainstream services while also resourcing community-led organisations and local leaders to develop prevention initiatives, referral pathways, education and healing responses that reflect community realities.

4.7 Intersex health, human rights and inclusion

The Forum made clear that intersex health and human rights require specific and visible attention. Participants highlighted the ongoing impacts of limited public and professional understanding of intersex variations, including shame, secrecy, inappropriate medicalisation and a lack of appropriate psychosocial support for individuals and families.

The discussion also pointed to broader structural concerns, including the lifelong consequences of medical decisions made before a child can consent, limited pathways beyond paediatric care, and the risks created by narrow legal or policy definitions of sex. Participants stressed the importance of keeping intersex issues visible within broader LGBTQIA+ health and wellbeing work.

The Forum highlighted the need for intersex-led capacity building across the sector. This includes peer support, workforce education, policy advocacy, clinical engagement, awareness of legal reform, and better pathways for families and individuals to access specialist information and support without having to repeatedly educate services themselves.



"Otherwise, we're just constantly on the revolving door of educating every service provider that we ever meet..." – Forum Participant.

Participants also warned against the erasure of policy and service. When intersex communities are omitted from language, planning or service design, they are more easily excluded from protection, resources and referral pathways.

4.8 Data, evidence and community-led research

Participants repeatedly identified the need for stronger data, evidence and research, while emphasising that evidence must remain connected to lived context, community story and place.

Better data are needed not only by the government but also by communities themselves to support advocacy, planning, evaluation, and accountability.

The Forum highlighted the need for investment in community-led approaches to data and research to map regional access gaps, identify safe and unsafe pathways, capture workforce and service capacity, evaluate peer-led initiatives, and support practical decision-making.

Participants also saw the Forum itself as a valuable source of community evidence. Its themes and recommendations point to the importance of building evidence in ways that are useful, accessible and accountable to the communities from which that evidence is drawn.

4.9 Government partnerships

The Forum highlighted the importance of strong, constructive partnerships between government, the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance, and regional communities. Participants welcomed collaboration with the government but emphasised that partnership must not come at the expense of community accountability or sector independence.

Participants emphasised that the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance has an important role as a community-led peak body: to connect communities, strengthen sector capability, advance evidence, advocate clearly, and identify practical pathways for reform. An effective partnership should therefore support the capacity of communities and the sector to lead, rather than drawing the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance into a purely consultative or administrative role.

Participants also identified a range of opportunities for the Australian and Queensland governments to work more effectively with the sector. These included strengthening prevention responses, supporting regional infrastructure, investing in peer workforce development, improving inclusion across policy and service systems, and recognising community-led initiatives as part of the state's broader social infrastructure.



Image 2: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attendees at the Inaugural LGBTQIA+ Sector Forum in Cairns, Far North Queensland.

5. Recommendations

The Forum identified a set of priority actions to strengthen safety, visibility, leadership, wellbeing and sector capacity for LGBTQIA+ communities across Queensland. Together, these recommendations reflect the need for sustained, community-led investment in regional leadership, peer workforce development, cultural governance, evidence building and practical local infrastructure.

These recommendations are intended to guide future action by Australian and Queensland governments, the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance, sector partners and community stakeholders.

Recommendation 1: Establish the Far North Queensland LGBTQIA+ Sector Forum as an annual accountability mechanism

Responsibility: Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance, sector partners and community stakeholders

The Forum should be established as an annual accountability mechanism to track progress on the issues raised in this report, with a particular focus on regional, rural, remote and discrete communities. It should provide a regular opportunity for communities, the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance, government and stakeholders to review what has changed, where progress has been made, and where further action is required.

Recommendation 2: Develop a five-year sector capacity-building plan

Responsibility: Queensland Government, Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance, sector partners and community stakeholders

The Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance should, with support from the Queensland Government, sector partners and community stakeholders, develop a five-year sector capacity-building plan to strengthen the community-led LGBTQIA+ sector across Queensland. This should include support for emerging groups, regional and remote leaders, peer workers, intersex-led advocacy, local visibility initiatives, community governance, and pathways into leadership, research and advocacy.

Recommendation 3: Fund regional and discrete community-led safe spaces

Responsibility: Australian Government, Queensland Government, sector partners and community stakeholders.

Governments and stakeholders should invest in locally designed safe spaces in regional and discrete communities. Through Federal funding, the PHNs should play an active role in hosting regional and discrete community-led safe spaces. All governments - Australian, Queensland, and local – have an opportunity to convene roundtable discussions to trial partnerships in these regions, with Yarrabah and Mount Isa being prime examples of areas that would benefit greatly from these initiatives and can serve as a pilot. The safe spaces should be shaped by local people and may include peer-led drop-

in spaces, yarning circles, family and elder engagement, community education, local referral points, and other initiatives that strengthen safety, connection, visibility and leadership.

Recommendation 4: Invest in a statewide LGBTQIA+ peer workforce and leadership pathway

Responsibility: Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance

A statewide peer workforce and leadership pathway should be developed to support peer-led care, community connection and sector leadership. This should include paid roles, training, supervision, cultural support, mentoring and clear pathways into health, wellbeing, prevention, advocacy and community development roles, with priority access for First Nations, Sistergirl, Brotherboy, trans, intersex, regional and remote community members.

Recommendation 5: Embed First Nations protocols and cultural governance across all partnership and implementation work

Responsibility: Australian and Queensland Governments, Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance, sector partners and community stakeholders

A statewide peer workforce and leadership pathway should be developed to support peer-led care, community connection and sector leadership. This should include paid roles, training, supervision, cultural support, mentoring, and clear pathways into health, wellbeing, prevention, advocacy, and community development roles, with priority access for First Nations, Sistergirl, Brotherboy, trans, intersex, and regional and remote community members.

Recommendation 6: Continue and strengthen the local capacity microgrants program

Responsibility: Queensland Government and Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance

The Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance's local capacity microgrants approach should be continued and expanded to support regional, rural, remote and emerging community-led activity. Small, flexible investments can strengthen visibility, connection, social infrastructure and local leadership, particularly where communities may otherwise have limited access to formal support or funding.

To realise this, the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance requires funding as resources have been exhausted.

Recommendation 7: Develop a Queensland Rainbow Health and Safety Navigation Map

Responsibility: Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance, sector partners and community stakeholders

A practical Queensland Rainbow Health and Safety Navigation Map should be developed to improve access to inclusive services, supports and referral pathways. Beginning with Far North Queensland and other underserved regions, this resource should help communities identify inclusive health, mental health, peer, domestic and family violence, telehealth, youth, family and intersex-specific supports.

Recommendation 8: Ensure LGBTQIA+ domestic, family and sexual violence responses are included in state and national prevention work

Responsibility: Australian and Queensland Governments

State and national domestic, family and sexual violence strategies should explicitly include LGBTQIA+ experiences, including those of Sistergirl, Brotherboy, trans, intersex and regional communities. This should include prevention initiatives, workforce development, safe referral pathways, crisis and housing responses, and community-led healing and recovery approaches.

Recommendation 9: Advance intersex human rights protections and support pathways

Responsibility: Australian and Queensland Governments

Governments and stakeholders should work with intersex-led organisations to strengthen human rights protections, improve access to psychosocial and peer support, and build workforce capability across health, education, child safety and justice systems. This should include attention to clinical oversight, informed consent, family support and policy settings that affect people with innate variations of sex characteristics.

Recommendation 10: Protect LGBTQIA+ communities from policy erasure

Responsibility: Australian and Queensland Governments, Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance, sector partners and community stakeholders

Government departments, funded services and sector organisations should ensure LGBTQIA+ communities are not excluded from policy, program design, funding criteria, eligibility settings, language or data collection. Particular attention should be given to communities that are often less visible in formal systems, including Sistergirl, Brotherboy, intersex, bi+, asexual, regional, older and younger communities.

Where priority population groups are added as groups of interest without corresponding funding, the underlying problem remains broader population groups continue to dominate core business, investment and policy attention.

Recommendation 11: Invest in community-led evidence and research

Responsibility: Australian Government, Queensland Government, Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance, sector partners and community stakeholders

A community-led evidence and research program should be developed to support advocacy, planning, evaluation and accountability across the sector. This should include regional access mapping, local service and workforce snapshots, evaluation of peer-led initiatives, qualitative community evidence, and practical tools that help communities and governments make better-informed decisions.

Recommendation 12: Establish a regional leadership development stream

Responsibility: Queensland Government, Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance

A dedicated regional leadership development stream should be established to identify, support and sustain emerging leaders across regional, rural, remote and discrete communities. This should include mentoring, training, travel support, facilitation skills, governance development and pathways into community, sector and policy leadership.

The Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance has developed a training course for this matter, but will require additional support to mobilise and maintain it over the next five years.



Image 3: Inaugural Far North Queensland LGBTQIA+ Sector Forum. Pictured from left to right: Li-Min Lee, Multicultural Peer Coordinator of the World Wellness Group; Matilda Alexander, Chief Executive Officer of Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion; Rebecca Reynolds, Chief Executive Officer of the Queensland Council for LGBTI Health (QC); Billie Stimpson, Secretary of Queer and Trans Workers Against Violence (QTWAV).

6. Government partnerships

Effective government partnership was a consistent theme throughout the Forum. Participants emphasised that partnerships should strengthen the capacity of communities and the sector to lead, rather than focusing solely on the government's capacity to consult. They also stressed that collaboration with government must be grounded in community accountability, cultural authority, long-term investment and respect for the independence of the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance as a community-led peak body.

The opportunities outlined below reflect areas in which governments and agencies can work constructively with the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance, regional communities and sector partners to strengthen prevention, improve access, support leadership and build the infrastructure needed for LGBTQIA+ communities to thrive across Queensland.

6.1 Australian Government

The Forum identified several opportunities for the Australian Government to strengthen national policy, prevention, and investment responses for LGBTQIA+ communities, particularly in regional, rural, remote, and discrete settings.

These opportunities include using the Forum report to inform national policy and prevention work; supporting place-based initiatives in Far North Queensland and other regional communities; strengthening national data collection while recognising the value of community-led evidence; and investing in peer workforce, early intervention and service navigation approaches that improve access to support. This includes opportunities to support place-based prevention pilots, peer workforce development, safe community infrastructure and service navigation approaches that can inform broader national reform.

Participants also highlighted the importance of ensuring Sistergirl, Brotherboy and intersex experiences are explicitly reflected in national policy, program design and prevention frameworks. This includes opportunities to align community-led prevention, peer workforce development, and service navigation initiatives with broader national priorities in health, wellbeing, and domestic, family, and sexual violence prevention.

6.2 Queensland Government

The Forum identified a strong role for the Queensland Government in supporting practical sector development, regional leadership and ongoing accountability across the state.

This includes recognising the Far North Queensland Forum as a significant mechanism for regional LGBTQIA+ engagement and accountability; using the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance's five-year funding agreement to help build practical regional infrastructure as well as statewide coordination; supporting regular processes that track progress on the issues raised through the Forum; and working with the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance on establishing a Parliamentary Friends of LGBTQIA+ Group here in Queensland.

It also includes practical support for regional infrastructure, local visibility initiatives, community capability, and stronger inclusion across state-funded services and reform processes. The Forum reinforced the value of supporting visible local community initiatives, including Pride activities, Queer

Book Clubs and other place-based initiatives that strengthen connection, safety and belonging in regional communities.

Participants also highlighted the importance of embedding LGBTQIA+, Sistergirl and Brotherboy voices across relevant policy and service systems, including child safety, community services, disability, youth justice, domestic and family violence reform, and other areas that affect community safety and wellbeing.

6.3 Cross-government and agency opportunities

The Forum also highlighted the need for stronger coordination across governments, departments, agencies and service systems. Many of the issues raised - including safety, health, peer support, prevention, visibility and leadership development - cut across portfolio boundaries and cannot be addressed through a single program or department. Participants made clear that coordinated action is particularly important where issues span health and wellbeing, domestic and family violence, child safety, youth services, community services and regional development.

Cross-government and agency opportunities include establishing clearer implementation pathways for the issues raised through the Forum; strengthening referral and partnership pathways between mainstream services and LGBTQIA+ community-led organisations; improving recognition of peer work and lived expertise; and ensuring policy, funding and service design processes do not exclude communities through narrow language, eligibility settings or fragmented planning.

Priority areas for coordination include health and wellbeing, domestic and family violence, child safety, youth services, community services and regional development. Participants emphasised that effective partnership requires more than consultation. It requires practical mechanisms for collaboration, clearer accountability, sustained investment in community-led capacity, and a shared commitment to ensuring LGBTQIA+ communities across Queensland are visible in policy, recognised in service systems, and supported through locally relevant responses.

7. Immediate Priorities and Next Steps

Immediate priorities

Following the release of this report, the immediate priority is to use its findings to support coordinated engagement with the Australian Government, Queensland Government, commissioners, sector partners and community stakeholders.

A second priority is to use the Forum's findings to inform the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance's five-year sector capacity-building work, with particular attention to regional leadership, peer workforce development, community-led safe spaces, intersex inclusion, and First Nations cultural governance. Early action in these areas will help translate the Forum's outcomes into practical, visible sector development.

A third priority is to advance discussions with government and sector partners on place-based prevention, regional infrastructure, and the inclusion of LGBTQIA+ experiences in relevant policy, funding, and service reform processes. The Forum made clear that these priorities are practical steps toward safer, more visible and better-connected communities.

Next steps

The next phase of work should focus on translating the Forum's priorities into coordinated action. This includes developing a five-year sector capacity-building plan, advancing the report's recommendations through government and sector partnerships, and identifying early implementation opportunities in Far North Queensland and other regional communities.

The Queensland Government and Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance should also consider how the Forum can become an ongoing mechanism for accountability, evidence-building and community engagement. This includes practical ways to monitor progress, track emerging issues, and ensure that regional, rural, remote and discrete communities remain visible in policy and sector development over time. Taken together, these next steps would help position the Forum not as a one-off event, but as a recurring accountability point and a foundation for sustained community-led sector development across Queensland.

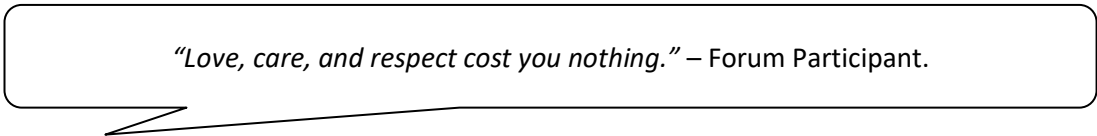
8. Conclusion

The inaugural Far North Queensland LGBTQIA+ Sector Forum marked an important moment for the Queensland LGBTQIA+ sector. It brought together community members, leaders, service providers, commissioners, and government representatives to identify the priorities, challenges, and opportunities shaping the lives of LGBTQIA+ communities, particularly in regional, rural, remote, and discrete settings.

The Forum highlighted a clear vision for the future: one in which LGBTQIA+, Sistergirl, Brotherboy and Rainbow communities can live safely, visibly and with dignity wherever they live, supported by culturally secure, peer-led, locally shaped and human rights-based systems. It also made clear that achieving this vision will require more than short-term responses. It will require sustained investment in leadership, community infrastructure, peer pathways, cultural governance, evidence-building and government partnership.

This report brings together the key themes, recommendations and partnership opportunities arising from the Forum. Its central message is that lasting change will depend on backing communities to lead, recognising the strengths that already exist in regional and remote Queensland, and building the long-term conditions for safety, belonging and equality to grow.

The opportunity now is to turn the Forum's insights into practical action. With sustained commitment from the government, the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance, sector partners and communities themselves, the Forum can serve as a foundation for stronger accountability, deeper partnership and meaningful long-term reform across Queensland.



"Love, care, and respect cost you nothing." – Forum Participant.



Image 4: Inaugural Far North Queensland LGBTQIA+ Sector Forum. Pictured from left to right: Ged Kearney MP, Assistant Minister for Social Services, Assistant Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, Jason Hurst, Executive Director of Diverse Voices, and Dr Kirstine Hand, Regional Committee Member of the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance.

9. Appendix

Appendix A: Forum program

- Welcome to Country
- Welcome from the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance
- State of Queensland Forum Address
- Deadly Voices, Strong Allies: Regional Leadership in Our Communities
- Gayawur Rainbow Model presentation
- Yarrabah Sistersgirls Panel
- Federal update
- Health and Wellbeing Panel
- Commissioners Panel
- Cultural Engagement and Allyship presentation
- Domestic and Family Violence and Victim Support Panel
- Communities and Allies: Strengthening Rainbow Access and Support Across the Regions
- Social Connection in North Queensland
- Visibly Queensland Mapping Project
- Queensland Connected Communities
- Closing remarks

Appendix B: Acknowledgements

The Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance acknowledges the First Nations custodians of the lands on which the Forum was held and pays respect to Elders past and present. The Alliance also acknowledges the

First Nations, Sistergirl, Brotherboy, intersex, regional and lived and living experience voices that shaped the Forum and informed this report.

The Queensland LGBTQIA+ Alliance thanks all speakers, panellists, participants, community members, service providers, commissioners, government representatives and partners who contributed their time, insight and leadership to the inaugural Far North Queensland LGBTQIA+ Sector Forum.

This report reflects the generosity, honesty and expertise of those who contributed to the Forum discussions.

Appendix C: Method notes

This report has been developed from the transcript prepared from the live stream of the inaugural Far North Queensland LGBTQIA+ Sector Forum.

It is not intended to reproduce the Forum proceedings in full. Instead, it synthesises the key themes, priorities, partnership opportunities and recommendations that emerged across the day, and presents them in a concise, publication-ready format for government, stakeholders and community audiences.

The report is designed to reflect the issues and perspectives raised through the Forum while improving clarity, structure and accessibility for publication and distribution.