HSE RAINBOW BADGE IMPLEMENTATION TOOLKIT

The Rainbow Badge initiative gives healthcare staff a way to show that their place of work offers open, non-judgemental and inclusive care for all who identify as LGBTI+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex; the + simply means inclusive of all identities, regardless of how people define themselves).

The initiative originated at Evelina London Children’s Hospital in the UK. It was adapted for the HSE by Linn Dara Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services in Dublin. Its simple objective is to make a positive difference by promoting a message of inclusion.

This toolkit provides information about the initiative and some tools to facilitate adoption across other HSE organisations. It may also be a useful resource for organisations outside of the HSE, with small adaptations to the badge and materials.

This toolkit includes the following:

1. Key principles of the HSE Rainbow Badge initiative
2. Why does it matter?
3. Tips for implementing the HSE rainbow Badge
4. Funding advice
5. Production
6. Template / Designs / Information
7. Roll-out case study – Linn Dara CAMHS
8. Organisations supporting the project

Version 2.0_2021
This project has the support of the Health Service Executive, Royal College of Physicians in Ireland, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Irish Association of Emergency Medicine, Mental Health Nurse Managers, Irish Institute of Mental Health Nursing, Nursing & Midwifery Planning and Development Unit, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health and Children’s Health Ireland. We would like to thank BelongTo (Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Trans young people in Ireland), LGBTIreland and TENI for their advice and support in developing this project.

Key principles

The HSE Rainbow Badge initiative is a way for HSE staff to demonstrate that they are aware of the issues that LGBTI+ people can face when accessing healthcare.

The badge itself is intended to be a simple visual symbol identifying its wearer as someone an LGBTI+ person can feel comfortable talking to about issues relating to sexuality or gender identity. It shows that the wearer is there to listen without judgement and signpost to further support if needed.

Our model emphasises that wearing a badge is a responsibility. We provide basic education and access to resources for staff who want to sign up to the project. The information we provide outlines the challenges that LGBTI+ people can face in relation to accessing healthcare and the degree of negative attitudes which are still found. When an individual signs up to wear a badge, they acknowledge why the project is needed and what their responsibility entails.

Committing to the project emphasises that you promote an environment that is open, tolerant and inclusive. The aim of this initiative is to actively break down barriers which LGBTI+ people may face within the HSE.
We want the badge to mean something and have worked to build a model that emphasises the substance behind the symbol. We are very keen to see the badges, and what they represent, spread across the HSE – but we want the emphasis on education, responsibility and support to be the focus.

If you would like to launch Rainbow Badges in your organisation, we would ask that you commit to the whole project model, not just the symbol of the badge itself. This toolkit should give you everything you need to do that as quickly and simply as possible; you just need to add commitment, funding and the will to make a difference to your place of work.

Best of luck rolling out HSE Rainbow Badges and LGBTI+ Awareness Training in your organisation.

This toolkit was developed by:

Mike Healy (Assistant Director of Nursing, Linn Dara CAMHS)
Dani Hall (Consultant in Paediatric Emergency Medicine, Children’s Health Ireland)
Dee Shanahan (CHI Rainbow Badge Operations Lead)
Patrick Hayes (Graphic Designer)

**Why does it matter?**

Mental health issues such as depression and anxiety are significantly more common in people who identify as LGBTI+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex; + denoting inclusion of all identities). Many people still feel afraid to disclose their sexual or gender identity - being unable to do so often increases their risk of physical and mental health problems.

Research has shown that, tragically, negative attitudes towards LGBTI+ people remain prevalent within the HSE; as a result, LGBTI+ people can be reluctant to disclose their sexual and / or gender identity to healthcare workers, affecting the quality of the care they receive. These barriers lead to marked inequalities in healthcare for this extremely vulnerable group of people.

2018 saw the publication of Stonewall’s Unhealthy Attitudes, highlighting shocking inequalities in healthcare for LGBTI+ patients in the NHS, with an appalling statistic of 1 in 7 patients avoiding treatment for fear of discrimination. These statistics are mirrored in Ireland: three-quarters of Irish LGBTI+ people feel healthcare providers lack knowledge and sensitivity to LGBTI+ issues, with almost 50% seeking LGBTI+ friendly clinicians because of bad experiences (Maycock et al, 2009). LGBTI+ people identify specific barriers to accessing health services: fear, lack of understanding of LGBTI+ issues and lack of appropriate language (Maycock et al, 2009).

It’s a real problem for children and young people: more than half of Irish LGBTI+ young people self-harm; 2 in 3 seriously consider suicide; and tragically 1 in 3 have attempted suicide. The average age of first attempt is just 15. The statistics are similar for older LGBTI+ people in Ireland, with levels of attempted suicide three times the national average (LGBTIreland Report, 2016).
Young people who identify as LGBTI+ experience additional emotional and psychological stresses when compared to non-LGBTI+ youth. This can be attributed to having to manage a stigmatised identity, being faced with heteronormative and gender norms within society, and also experiencing victimisation, bullying and discrimination due to their LGBTI+ identity (Acevedo-Polakovich et al. 2013, Rodgers, 2017, Price-Feeney et al. 2020, Higgins et al. 2020).

A recent Irish study has demonstrated that LGBTI+ young people held negative perceptions regarding mental health services ability to help with high levels of fear regarding encountering stigmatising reactions and inappropriate treatments. Young LGBTI+ young people also indicated a lack of culturally competent practitioners as a barrier to accessing mental health services (Higgins et al., 2020).

In Ireland, older LGBTI+ people grew up in a time when homosexuality was considered a mental illness and when sexual relationships between same-sex couples was considered a criminal act, immoral and sinful (LGBT Ireland, 2018). One in 10 older LGBTI+ people have seriously considered ending their life and 5% have self-harmed. Heterosexuality was seen as the only legitimate sexual orientation and LGBTI+ people were marginalised, rendered invisible and socially excluded.

The report ‘Visible Lives’ (2011) details stigma, marginalisation and discrimination that older LGBTI+ people have faced in their lives and the social and emotional impacts this adversity had on their lives and indeed continues to have for some. This includes, rejection by family/friends, isolation/loneliness, loss, grief including disenfranchised grief and high levels of substance misuse and emotional struggles as a means to cope with adversity. Older people who identify as LGBTI+ also encounter difficulties in healthcare, with only 1 in 3 believing that their healthcare provider has sufficient knowledge about LGBTI+ issues and only 43% of older LGBTI+ people feel respected as an LGBTI+ person by their healthcare professional. Older people have experienced high levels of poor-quality service from healthcare professionals with 40% considering these poor experiences as a result of their LGBTI+ identity (Higgins et al. 2011).

As part of the HSE’s Peoples Strategy 2019-2024 there are focussed goals on diversity and inclusion, with one in particular to make the HSE LGBTI+ aware and inclusive. The other goal is to make the HSE an employer of choice for individuals who identify as LGBTI+. The HSE’s Intercultural Health Strategy (2018-2023) includes several goals which aim to address LGBTI+ patients. One of these goals is “Address
health inequalities relevant to LGBTI+ service users” in relation to migrant population, sexual health, mental health and access to services.

The awareness and active sign up to the HSE Rainbow Badge initiative clearly demonstrates our commitment to all areas of the HSE’s values and strategies. Supporting patients who will feel more confident and comfortable in approaching a member of staff wearing a badge, as well as supporting and respecting our staff who feel empowered to be themselves. The active sign up will incorporate the information and understanding of wearing the badge and its commitment, we will also be providing awareness and information sessions for staff on how best to support patients who raise concerns or challenges regarding their sexual orientation in addition to health inequalities that already exist.

To begin to increase awareness of these issues, and to help improve the experiences of healthcare for LGBTI+ people, we would like to roll out the HSE Rainbow Badges initiative.

The Rainbow Badge is an opt-in initiative: healthcare staff sign-up to the badge and its values, receiving education about LGBTI+ health needs and ways in which they, the wearer, can overcome heteronormative barriers and use inclusive language, to be an LGBTI+ ally in health. This is key; although the badges aren’t designed as a symbol intended to prompt disclosures, they may prompt a person to disclose information about their own sexuality or gender identity, perhaps for the first time.

Healthcare providers wearing the badge may be the first person someone has ever felt confident enough to open up to about how they feel. For them, it may be one of the most important moments of their life. The way a healthcare provider responds may be remembered for the rest of their life. And yet existing resources are extremely limited, particularly with limited visual acknowledgement for this vulnerable group of service users. We know that simple acts of visual representation and basic frontline training are something which members of the LGBTI+ community value and it is noted that this simple act can improve access to healthcare and address fear for service users.

We only need to look to other similar innovative and yet incredibly simple projects to see how a simple visual symbol can have such an impact. Like the rainbow laces campaign which has been a hugely successful drive to promote equality in sport to make it more inclusive and accessible for LGBTI+ people in the UK, this relatively low cost project can have a tremendous impact on the experience and lives of our LGBTI+ community. Just looking at the social movement and response from the NHS Rainbow Badge it is hoped that similar cultural and organisational responses will occur in Ireland.

Increased awareness of the issues surrounding LGBTI+ people when accessing healthcare on the part of HSE staff can make significant differences to LGBTI+ people’s experience, and, in turn on their physical and mental health.
Simple symbols, such as the rainbow, are an effective way to signal to LGBTI+ people that they are in a positive, inclusive, safe environment, and encourage them to talk about things they may otherwise have felt unsure or uncomfortable disclosing. They also encourage conversations amongst staff themselves about the importance of being aware of issues of equality, diversity and inclusion, and help to reinforce the shared responsibility that HSE staff have in this regard.

**Tips for Implementing HSE Rainbow Badge**

We suggest a planned roll out of a whole department or whole service approach to the initiative:

1. **Agree funding** for a number of badges, available to any staff member who signs up on an opt-in basis (take a look at the fundraising section below).

2. **Agree and formalise a communication strategy**, including supporting materials such as leaflets and posters and awareness raising initiatives, such as promotional material on your intranet.

3. **Agree and formalise a designated lead person or team**, to both oversee and drive the rainbow badge project and act as point of contact for staff to seek further information.

4. **Agree further resources** for staff and patients. This may be as simple as signposting staff to support organisations and the HSE Rainbow Badge Practice Guide.

5. **Adopt the principle that staff must actively sign up** for a badge after reading core information and completing the HSELand e-learning module “LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion Training: the basics.” They must accept that it carries a responsibility by completing a **pledge** to cover the principles of what staff need to be aware of and how to support people (example pledges – paper and electronic – are in the templates section below).

6. **Consider education sessions** such as a lecture or an information sharing session exploring awareness, inclusion and LGBTI+ basics. These can be live sessions or pre-recorded videos (a short list of suggested resources and training material is at the end of this pack).
Funding

Our pilot project at Linn Dara Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services was funded by innovation funding from the Nursing and Midwifery Practice Development Unit for Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow. Funding for the role out of the HSE Rainbow Badge across Children’s Health Ireland was supported by the organisation.

Individual Community Healthcare Organisations, Acute Hospital Groups or HSE funded organisations could explore funding from equality, diversity and inclusion budgets, quality improvement budgets, internal management funding or via an application for charitable funding from affiliated charities.

Below is an excerpt from the applications for Linn Dara CAMHS which you may find helpful in building your own case for support, whether that’s in an organisation reaching young people, adults or both.

| Name of Initiative for which funding is sought: | Rainbow Badge (LGBTI Inclusion Initiative) |
| Proposed Start Date: | April 2019 |
| Proposed Time Frame: | 12 months – Annual Rolling |
| Primary Aim of the Initiative: |

The Rainbow badge initiative gives nurses a way to show a way that their place of work offers open, non-judgemental care for all who identify as LGBTI+. It’s simply objective to make a positive difference by promoting a message of inclusion. It involves development of a resource pack on each unit, training calendar and design materials.

Does this initiative align with one or more of the ONMSD and HSE National projects & workstreams for 2019

| Improving population health | ✓ |
| Delivering care closer to home | □ |
| Developing specialist hospital care networks | □ |
| Improving quality, safety and value | ✓ |
| Enabling our strategic objectives | ✓ |

4 Key Objectives (SMART, (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timebound) and aligned to National and Local service need and the health reform agenda)

National LGBTI+ Strategy outlines a requirement that health services are more supportive and inclusive environment for LGBTI young people and provide capacity building measures among service providers to improve their understanding of and ability to engage with, LGBTI+ young people. LGBT Ireland report 2016 reported barriers to mental health services and fear of stigma. The report viewed mental health services as not LGBTI Friendly and young people had a fear of ‘stigma’. A significant number of young people in the LGBTI Ireland report were concerned that mental health practitioners were lacking in knowledge about the issues and challenges that young people identifying as LGBTI encountered in their daily lives.
Many of the participants in the LGBTI Ireland Study felt that in order to provide responsive, sensitive and quality mental health care to LGBTI people, mental health professionals needed education to address what was considered to be the pervasive lack of awareness and understanding about LGBTI people, and the challenges and issues which may impact on their mental health. A change at a systemic level and in individual professionals’ attitudes was cited as being needed in order to improve mental health services for LGBTI people. It was also felt that the preconceptions of LGBTI identity held by professionals contributed to non-LGBTI friendly service provision. It was felt that eradication of these negative aspects of some professionals’ attitudes would improve the services.

S – Focused campaign at raising awareness of LGBTI young people and the challenges and issues they face. Increased confidence with staff training in dealing with young people who present as LGBTI. Resources for nursing staff to use with YP and Families in order to break down any fears or misconception held by professionals or exploring / early identification of young people

M – Staff will be asked for feedback. YP will be asked for feedback on services.

A – Training available. Management Team committed. Project plan agreed with HSE inclusion office / senior management team and support will be given by them.

R – Realistic and achievable.

T – 2019 but the programme can be rolling.

Expected Outcomes of the initiative’s implementation and success: including patient/service user experience and impact, sustainability, cost savings, time saving and resource utilisation implications (as applicable):

Outcomes for the Patient/Service user:

Meet healthcare needs. Prevent stigma and heteronormative environment. Trained staff who are welcoming and able to support YP who are exploring sexuality / gender or who identify as LGBTI+

Outcomes for the service/organisation:

National LGBT Irish Strategy (2019-2024) (outlines a requirement that services are required to respond to the needs of LGBTI young people and this includes, training, information and inclusiveness.

HSE Diversity, Inclusion and Equality Strategy (2019-2024) identifies a goal of increased staff awareness and inclusivity measures for all employees. An overall goal of having diversity champions throughout the health service. This project does just that.
### Outcomes for Staff:

- Training in LGBTI issues. Increased awareness of LGBTI+ issues. Sign posting.
- Improved confidence working with YP who are exploring or who identify as LGBTI
- Resources locally for young people, families and staff.

### Other predicted outcomes:

- Improved service provision
- Improved staff skill set

### Project Plan (e.g. Timelines, scope, project steps, Gantt chart if available, project governance)

- 12-month plan for rolling workshops
- Development of resource packs on each unit / area
- Development of Rainbow Badge initiative – Where staff will attend brief training and sign up to be a safe and open member of staff that LGBTI YP can approach and speak about issues affecting them. Similar to the Hello My Name is Initiative – But for LGBTI+.

### How will the initiative be evaluated?

- YP feedback
- Staff feedback
  - (Could aim to formalise through research / qual / quant feedback)

### Total amount of funding sought

| Estimated Costs | € |

### Breakdown of costs (e.g. pay / non pay costs)

| Materials / Workshops / Promotional |
|-------------------------------------|---|
|                                     |   |
Production

The original design of the HSE Rainbow Badge was developed by Mike at Linn Dara CAMHS based on the NHS Rainbow Badge, rolled out in the UK. It was manufactured and graphically designed by Made By Cooper in the UK. If you wish to order this specific badge you can get in touch with Made By Cooper and state that you wish to order this design of badges. They are aware that they may receive enquiries / orders for the design.

Website: www.madebycooper.co.uk
Design Reference: 26001 HSE RAINBOW BADGE

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Free delivery on all orders over £75
Prices as of January 2021

There is a significant unit cost saving from 5,000 badges upwards, meaning this is probably the optimal amount for larger organisations to aim for.

The smallest order the company will accept is 50 badges. Production time is typically of the order of 2-4 weeks. Costs will need to be individually confirmed with Made by Cooper at the point an order is made.

There are Irish and other production companies that can similarly supply these badges.
Children’s Health Ireland have sourced an Irish Supplier, Codex

Details: Codex, 89 Lagan Road, Dublin industrial Estate, Glasnevin, Dublin 11, D11 Ny94

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One off set up charge for new pin............€195.00 (this cost does not apply to repeat orders).

The above quotation is subject to V.A.T. at the relevant rate.

Delivery Schedule: 4-5 weeks from approval of final artwork

There are other Irish production companies that can similarly supply these badges.
**Template / Designs / Information**

Funding for our initiative allowed us to work with a professional designer to create materials to give a ‘look and feel’ for design materials to promote Rainbow Badges. Local communication teams have also assisting in design and creation of materials. We have created generic versions of these materials for use by other services/organisations, available on the HSE website.

You may also wish to commission your own design or adapt these materials. The original design and Chalk statistics were created by **Pad Creative** who would be happy to discuss working on materials with other organisations. Cost and time would need to be agreed directly.

[www.padcreative.co.uk](http://www.padcreative.co.uk) (+44 208 662 6030)

*Please adhere to your organisations GDPR guidance and policies when collecting staff information via sign up to receive a HSE Rainbow Badge.*

**Pin Card**

Badges are pinned to an A5 pin card to be given out to staff who sign up to the initiative.
Wearing a rainbow badge is a way for our staff to show that this is an open, non-judgemental and inclusive place for children, young people and their families that identify as LGBTI+.

By choosing to wear this badge, you are sending a message that “you can talk to me”. You aren’t expected to have the answers to all issues and concerns, but you are a friendly ear, and will know how to signpost to the support available.

These badges carry both a responsibility and an opportunity to send a positive message of inclusion.

By wearing a badge, you can play a valuable part in reducing stigma and inequality.

Wearing a badge says to LGBTI+ young people and families:

- You can talk to me freely and without worry about who you are and how you feel
- I will do my best to get support for you if you need it
- This is a place of inclusion; you are not alone

Supported by:
Posters in patient-facing areas

Have you spotted our Rainbow Badges?

The badges are just one way to show that this is an open, non-judgemental and inclusive place for people that identify as LGBTI+*

If you see someone wearing one you can ask them about it.

*Lesbian, gay bisexual, transgender, intersex and the + simply means that we are inclusive of all identities, regardless of how people define themselves.

The Rainbow Badge initiative originated at Evelina London Children’s Hospital to make a positive difference by promoting a message of inclusion.
Rainbow Badges

The Rainbow Badge initiative gives staff a way to show that Children’s Health Ireland offers open, non-judgmental and inclusive care for children, young people and their families who identify as LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender; the + simply means that we are inclusive of all identities, regardless of how people identify themselves). The initiative aims to make a positive difference by promoting a message of inclusion.

Sounds good - what do I need to do?

1. Read all of the information in this leaflet which gives an overview of these issues and why it’s important for all healthcare staff to be aware of them.
2. We recommend you complete the HSEland ‘LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion: the basics’ module at www.hseland.ie.
3. If you want to take part, sign up to receive an HSE Rainbow Badge to wear at work, the form is available on the Intranet or email your contact overleaf.

Why wear a badge?

LGBT+ young people are often exploring their own sense of self and identity. Despite improving social attitudes in general towards LGBT+ people in Ireland, negative attitudes (such as homophobia, biphobia, transphobia) are still widely prevalent.

Mental health issues such as depression and anxiety are more common in young people who identify as LGBT+. Many young people still feel afraid to disclose their sexual or gender identity and to ‘come out’ - being unable to do so often increases their risk of physical and mental health problems.

Research has shown that negative attitudes towards LGBT+ people are still common within a healthcare setting. This means that LGBT+ young people can be reluctant to disclose their sexual and/or gender identity to healthcare workers, which in turn can affect the quality of the care they receive.

For an overview of the challenges young people in Ireland can face in relation to sexuality and gender take a, look at the following two publications:

Higgins et al. The LGBTIreland Report: National study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland, 2016. GLEN and BeLonGTo


Simple visible symbols, such as the Rainbow Badge can make a big difference for those unsure of both themselves and the reception they may receive if they disclose their sexuality and/or gender identity.

Many young LGBT+ people say they do not have an adult they can turn to or confide in. As advocates, people who work in healthcare can play a key role in making things better.

What else can I do?

It’s not just about wearing a badge, there are simple things we can all do to promote inclusion.

✔️ Use inclusive language in all discussions.
✔️ Affirm the identity that a young person chooses to use
✔️ Assure confidentiality
You may be the first person a young person has ever felt confident enough to open up to about how they feel. For them, it may be one of the most important moments of their life, and how you respond to this is something they will remember.

Have a look at the Don’t Forget The Bubbles blog post on how to be an LGBT+ young person’s ally:

https://dontforgetthebubbles.com/lgbtqia-young-persons-ally/

To find out more about ways you can promote inclusion have a look at the following articles:


What to do if a young person discloses to you

The badges aren’t designed as a symbol intended to prompt disclosures, but they may prompt a young person to disclose information about their own sexuality or gender identity, perhaps for the first time. Wearing a Rainbow Badge doesn’t mean you’ll have all the answers but most importantly you should be prepared to listen and provide a signpost to relevant information.

What to do if you feel you need to escalate a conversation

Occasionally you may feel that a person’s disclosure means that they need more immediate support or they are at risk. There’s always someone to ask for advice and we recommend contacting the young person’s consultant, or consultant on-call for guidance.

BeLong To Youth Services can also offer advice for staff on how to best support LGBT+ young people.

Ph: (01) 670 6223       Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm
http://www.belongto.org/youngpeople/help/

Where can I signpost people to for support?

Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Trans Young People in Ireland

www.belongto.org
Tel: (01) 670 6223

Transgender Equality Network Ireland

www.teni.ie
Tel: (01) 873 3575
Trans peer support groups:
www.teni.ie/support

Leaflet for young people: BeLong To - Coming Out as You
http://www.belongto.org/coay/

Leaflet for parents: BeLong To - Coming Out – A Guide For Parents
http://www.belongto.org/coagfp/

Peer support groups: BeLong To
http://www.belongto.org/youngpeople/youth-groups

Juno Dawson’s This Book is Gay is a guide to sexuality and gender for young people, written by a young adult author.

Got a question about this project?
Contact Us At:

CHI at Crumlin - rainbowbadge@olchc.ie
CHI at Temple Street - rainbowbadge@cuh.ie
CHI at Connolly - rainbowbadge@nchc.ie
CHI at Tallaght - rainbowbadge@tuh.ie

Supported by:
HSE Rainbow Badge Pledge

HSE Rainbow Badge pledge

By choosing to wear this badge, you are sending a message that “you can talk to me” about issues of gender and sexuality.

You aren’t expected to solve all their issues and concerns, but you are a friendly ear and will know how to signpost to support available.

I confirm that:

I understand wearing a badge gives a positive message of inclusion and means I have responsibility to be someone who is a friendly ear for LGBTI+ people and families.

I am aware of the support information and resources available to support a young person / family.

I am aware to seek additional support if a situation requires escalation.

Name: ______________________
Job Title: ____________________
Signature: ___________________
Date: _______________________

Linn Dara Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services

I pledge to wear the HSE Rainbow Badge because....
Intranet sign up information

This is the intranet page designed for Children’s Health Ireland. Clicking “apply here for your Rainbow Badge” brings staff at CHI to an electronic sign-up form with a downloadable copy of the leaflet. The pledge is included in the sign-up form. Once the form is submitted an email is automatically sent to a CHI Rainbow Badge email address which is monitored by a team of Rainbow Badge volunteers.

HSELand LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion: the basics e-learning at HSEland.ie

HSELand foundation trans training is due to be launched in August 2021
Chalk Statistics – created by Pad Creative for Ireland.

- 2 in 3 Irish LGBTI people do not feel respected by their health care professionals. Mayock et al., GLEN and BeLonGTo (2009).
- 3 in 4 Irish LGBTI people feel that Irish healthcare professionals lack knowledge and sensitivity to LGBTI issues. Mayock et al., GLEN and BeLonGTo (2009).
- Almost 1 in 2 Irish LGBTI people seek out LGBTI-friendly healthcare professionals because of previous bad experiences. Mayock et al., GLEN and BeLonGTo (2009).
- LGBTI young people have 4 times higher levels of severe stress, anxiety, and depression than their peers. My World Survey: National Study of Youth Mental Health in Ireland (2015).
- 2 in 3 Irish LGBTI young people have seriously considered ending their life. The LGBTIreland Report (2016).
- 15 years old is the most common age for an LGBTI person to attempt to take their life. The LGBTIreland Report (2016).
- 1 in 3 Irish LGBTI young people have attempted suicide. The LGBTIreland Report (2016).
- Almost two-thirds of Irish LGBTI people have seriously thought of ending their life. The LGBTIreland Report (2016).
- 1 in 3 Irish LGBTI people have self-harmed. The LGBTIreland Report (2016).
- Levels of self-harm are twice as high in Irish LGBTI people compared to their peers. The LGBTIreland Report (2016).
- Levels of attempted suicide are 3 times higher in Irish LGBTI people compared to their peers. The LGBTIreland Report (2016).
- 1 in 5 Irish LGBTI people have attempted to end their life. The LGBTIreland Report (2016).
Education and training resources

The HSE badge model is underpinned by educating and empowering staff to become LGBTI+ allies. The following are resources you may find helpful, but there are many others available both within Ireland and internationally.

Training packages

**LGBTIreland** have developed a training programme for healthcare professionals who work with LGBTI+ older people, The LGBT Champions Programme, but also tailor their training to healthcare professionals working with LGBTI+ people of all ages. [www.lgbt.ie/champions-programme](http://www.lgbt.ie/champions-programme), [promotional video here](http://www.lgbt.ie/champions-programme), [training@lgbt.ie](mailto:training@lgbt.ie). Their podcast, Invisible Threads, can be accessed [here](http://www.lgbt.ie/champions-programme).

**BeLonGTo** have partnered with Jigsaw to provide training for people who work with young people on the topic of supporting LGBTI+ young people’s mental health. [www.belongto.org/professionals/training](http://www.belongto.org/professionals/training). BeLonGTo also have some relevant [free e-learning modules for schools](http://www.belongto.org/professionals/training). They are also planning online webinars for healthcare professionals in 2021 – please check their website for more information.

**Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI)** have developed a suite of training aimed at healthcare professionals. Transgender Awareness Training is 6-hour training program that provides foundational information for healthcare professionals who work in all areas of healthcare. Gender Identity Skills Training (GIST), is an extensive training programme that was developed in partnership with HSE, and national/international experts in the field of transgender healthcare. Both of these trainings can be accessed by contacting [office@teni.ie](mailto:office@teni.ie).

**HSELand** LGBT+ Awareness and Inclusion: the basics training is live. HSELand foundation trans training is due to be launched in August 2021. Both available from [www.hseland.ie](http://www.hseland.ie)

Blog posts and videos

The **Genderbread Person** is an international resource that explains gender and sexual attraction in an easy to understand way. [www.genderbread.org](http://www.genderbread.org)

**Don’t Forget The Bubbles** has a series of blog posts on LGBTI+ children and young people’s health needs [here](http://www.genderbread.org).

The **Royal College of Physicians of Ireland** have published a talk Dani did for the faculty of paediatrics 2020 meeting about the health needs of LGBTI+ children and young people which you can find [here](http://www.genderbread.org).

Articles


_Ireland specific publications_


Higgins et al. The LGBTIreland Report: National study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland. 2016. GLEN and BeLonGTo


Higgins et al. LGBT+ young people’s perceptions of barriers to accessing mental health services in Ireland. Journal of Nurse Management (2020): 00,1-10.

Maycock P et al. Supporting LGBT Lives: A study of the mental health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. 2009. GLEN and BeLonGTo

Quilty, A., Norris, M. A Qualitative Study of LGBTI+ Youth Homelessness in Ireland. 2020. Focus Ireland and BelongTo.

_Book_

Linn Dara CAMHS – Case Study

Linn Dara CAMHS Approved Centre staff noted an increase in young people presenting who identify as LGBTI+ and a corresponding deficit in staff knowledge in working with this cohort of young people. Staff felt they required additional knowledge and information in order to be culturally component.

To mark LGBTQ Pride Dublin Festival in 2019, HSE Linn Dara Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service launched an initiative to promote a positive message of inclusion for LGBTI+ young people, families and colleagues. 2019 was a huge year for the LGBT+ movement as we celebrated 50 years since the historic Stonewall Riots, an important point in history, considered by many to be the birth of the modern LGBTI+ rights movement.

Staff from Linn Dara CAMHS have been signing up to wear a specially designed HSE Rainbow badge to show support for those that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/trans+, intersex or who do not identify as heterosexual or male/female.

“Simple visual symbols such as the HSE Rainbow Badge, can make a real difference to young people exploring their sexuality or questioning their assigned gender. These badges are a visual commitment to young people and families, who may be worried about the reaction they may receive if they were to disclose their sexuality or gender identity when in contact with our services; that they are valued and respected” said Mike Healy who is driving the initiative as Assistant Director of Nursing for Linn Dara CAMHS Approved Centre.

When staff sign up to the initiative, they are provided with information about the challenges LGBTI+ people and families can face and are given details on how they can offer support or how they can seek additional support should that be required.

The negative effects of stigmatisation, harassment and discrimination on LGBTI+ people which is termed ‘Minority Stress’ is well known (Supporting LGBT Lives, 2009) and Linn Dara CAMHS is committed to improving the health of LGBTI+ young people by cultivating an environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive for all those that use or work in its services including those that identify as LGBTI+.

Goal one of the national LGBTI Youth Strategy (2018) is to ‘Create a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for LGBTI+ young people, Rainbow Badges are the first step in the process for Linn Dara CAMHS in addressing the needs of LGBTI+ young people and families who access its services.

Young people, staff and Peer Reviews have all reported on the need for Linn Dara CAMHS to reach out, support and include LGBTI+ people in our day to day workings. The HSE Rainbow Badge symbolises the recognition that, as people who work in healthcare, we can play a key role in making things better. LGBT Ireland Report (2016) acknowledges LGBTI specific barriers to accessing mental health services including a

- lack of understanding: mental health practitioners were not sufficiently aware and understanding of LGBTI identities and the appropriate language and terminology to use.
- fear of misunderstanding: The person’s LGBTI identity would be seen as the problem.
Chief Officer Ann O’Shea commended staff on the introduction of HSE Rainbow badges and their dedication to equality, diversity and inclusion.

“Young people and their families are the cornerstone of the services we provide in Linn Dara CAMHS and this initiative which has been championed by the staff working on the frontline, sends a very clear message that Linn Dara CAMHS is an open healthcare service that will ensure that if you use its services, you will be free from exclusion, judgement and discrimination.”

## Supporters of the HSE Rainbow Badge

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| ![BelongTo](https://www.belongto.org) | BelongTo – Supporting Lesbian, Gay & Trans young people in Ireland  
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[https://twitter.com/BeLonG_To](https://twitter.com/BeLonG_To) |
| ![TENI](https://www.teni.ie) | TENI – Transgender Equality Network Ireland  
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Health Service Executive  
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@NCH Tallaght [https://www.tuh.ie/CHI-at-Tallaght/](https://www.tuh.ie/CHI-at-Tallaght/)  
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