This leaflet is part of a series written by nurses, doctors and experts with experience in aged care. The series aims to make your journey into residential aged care easier. Look for other leaflets on questions to ask about specific care needs. These can be downloaded at: **www.10questions.org.au**

You may find these leaflets useful when:

- Searching for a high quality residential aged care facility
- Reviewing the quality of your current residential aged care facility
- Deciding between two residential aged care facilities that appear similar.

By law, residential aged care facilities are not required to have registered nurses so it's important to ask the right questions if you need nursing care.

Many staff wear similar uniforms. Just because someone looks like a nurse does not mean they are. Here are the differences:

A **Registered Nurse (RN)** has undertaken a minimum three-year Bachelor of Nursing course. They can undertake nursing procedures, manage pain medication and help prevent unnecessary hospital admissions.

An **Enrolled Nurse (EN)** works under the direction of an RN. Both are licensed by a regulatory body. Licensing ensures professional standards are maintained and protects the public.

Assistants in Nursing (AIN)/Care Workers/ Care Service Employees (CSE) are unlicensed. They provide most of the care in residential facilities and community but their level of training is variable.

IT'S YOUR RIGHT TO ASK

The best way to find a residential aged care facility that suits you is to visit a few. To find your local ones, or for more information about aged care services contact: **My Aged Care**
1800 200 422
myagedcare.gov.au

If you require advocacy or specialist advice about any matter not covered in this leaflet:
Seniors Rights Service
1800 424 079

This leaflet has been developed and endorsed by:

For a full list of supporting organisations please visit
www.10questions.org.au

If you have concerns about a residential aged care facility contact:

Australian Government
Aged Care Complaints Commissioner

1800 550 552
NSW@agedcarecomplaints.gov.au

10 Questions to Ask

ABOUT Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex needs in Residential Aged Care

www.10questions.org.au

This brochure is designed to help you when deciding which residential aged care facilities to visit. You can check their website or ask for documents to see if they include information on LGBTI* inclusion.

Some providers have achieved the Rainbow Tick (LGBTI accreditation). For more information on these providers go to qip.com.au. It is unlawful for any service to discriminate against LGBTI people.

1 Is there a LGBTI inclusion or diversity policy that addresses each of L,G,B,T and I?

Just having a policy in place may not mean your individual circumstances are covered. Check issues that matter to you are included.

2 Is there an inclusive policy around employing staff who are LGBTI?

Having staff you can relate to and that understand your individual needs is important. Check if the residential aged care facility has a policy in place for positive inclusion of LGBTI within the staff group.

3 Is there a code of conduct for staff and residents that states discrimination and harassment of LGBTI elders or their families and friends will not be tolerated?

There are laws protecting you against discrimination on basis of sexuality, gender identity or intersex status. These laws also apply to faith based aged care providers.

4 Are LGBTI events like IDAHOBIT**, Mardi Gras, Midsumma, World AIDS Day, Intersex Awareness Day or other LGBTI events celebrated?

Your rights to enjoy your lifestyle should not be compromised just because of where you are living. Ask what LGBTI activities have taken place in the past and which are planned. As you walk around, check if there are visual displays that indicate involvement and representation at past events and LGBTI content in the activity program.

5 Have staff received LGBTI inclusivity training and/or is there ongoing training regarding the experiences and needs of LGBTI people?

Check training is part of the induction of new staff and existing staff get regular updates. Staff turnover can be high so check all staff are trained.

6 Are there any LGBTI people accessing the facility, or family members/children who are LGBTI that I can talk to?

It is often helpful to speak to people who understand LGBTI issues from the perspective of personal experience. Asking them directly about their experiences may help with your decision. Check if there are links to a LGBTI community visitors program.

7 If I am trans or gender diverse – is there a policy on supporting me in maintaining my affirmed gender or identity?

One of the ways you can test this is to check if the forms you have to complete recognise your gender identity. For example, if they have gender identity options such as male/female/non-binary. Ask if staff have supported someone to medically and/or socially transition in the past and if they know where to access support if someone was to transition while in the service. Do they have GP's who are trans-inclusive and can prescribe hormones?

8 Is there a policy on supporting my relationship with my partner and family of choice?

There should be policies covering sexual expression and communication with your family of choice. Check what arrangements there are to provide private rooms/space for intimacy or time alone with partners.

9 If I am intersex, is there a policy about maintaining my privacy and confidentiality and do staff have an understanding of how to provide care that is respectful of my bodily autonomy?

There should be policies on maintaining privacy and confidentiality. Staff should be aware of the specific experiences of intersex people, including possible historic trauma experiences.

10 Do you have brochures or other information from LGBTI services available?

Check what arrangements are in place for receiving external services and if you will have to pay extra for these. If extra charges are payable, make sure these are clearly stated in your contract with the residential aged care provider.

You may have other questions – make sure you ask them.

*Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI)
**International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia