



Northern Australian Regional Digital  
Health Collaborative

### Seed Funded Project

## An engaging digital front door for LGBTQ+ individuals in regional Queensland

People in regional and remote Australia experience inequity in health service access and disparity in health outcomes, compared to those living in metropolitan areas. Priority populations (those that need to be prioritised by the system due to historical inequity) such as LGBTQ+ people are more likely to smoke, use illicit drugs, have mental health concerns and be unable to access queer friendly services than their non-LGBTQ+ counterparts.

To address this disparity and inequity, the Rainbow Health Finder pilot project was co-designed, developed and trialed in Townsville, a regional community in Queensland.

Focus groups with queer health seekers and 1-on-1's with queer clinicians confirmed a lack of appropriate health services Townsville, and the lack of awareness of services beyond Townsville. By applying the principals for digital development, engagement with end users explored website design, usability and safety, avatar features and the categorisation of relevant health services for LGBTQ+ consumers.

The result was the pilot trial of a digital front door experience with a conversational 3D queer-friendly avatar interface able to provide health education and service recommendations to users with any level of health literacy.

During the pilot period 115 sessions were recorded by the platform, of which 48 users provided feedback to survey questions. The majority (71%) of users rated the accuracy of advice as either good or very good, with 74% of users rating the conversation flow as either good or very good. Further 65% of users rated the appropriateness of the health services recommendations (based on likelihood of contacting) as good or very good.

These results indicate the digital front door provided awareness and access to queer-friendly services for people in Townsville, had high user acceptance and generated good user satisfaction with 65% of users rating their overall experience with the platform as good or very good. With the success of this minimal viable iteration, the [Rainbow Health Finder platform](#) will be



reformulated, expanded and scaled to pilot in multiple regional areas of Queensland with the following changes:

- Reformatting of the avatars to include Australian accents
- User testing with LGBTQ+ First Nations consumers
- Expansion of the service provider referral database

Improved integration with existing services by having clickable links or integration into an existing service referral platform such as 'HotDoc'.

Project leads: Dr Kara Burns and Dr Conor Cusack

## Key Messages

The Rainbow Health Finder pilot project aimed to improve access to LGBTQ+ health services in regional areas, starting with Townsville, Queensland, where such services are limited or unknown.

A digital platform with a 3D queer-friendly avatar was tested to provide health education and service recommendations. The pilot received positive feedback, with most users rating the platform highly for advice accuracy, conversation flow, and service recommendations.

Following its initial success, the platform will be expanded to other regional areas in Queensland, with improvements including Australian-accented avatars, testing with LGBTQ+ First Nations consumers, a larger referral database, and better integration with existing services.

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NARDHC

