



Lesson learned from Online Mental Health Supports for LGBTIQ

The Share-Net Netherlands' [Community of Practice \(CoP\) on LGBTI health](#) aims to improve the health and rights of LGBTI people and communities by strengthening the knowledge and capacities of professionals. One of the activities to achieve this goal is through a thematic meeting on Lesson learned of online mental health support for LGBTIQ which comes as a follow up activity after [last year's virtual meeting](#) on mental health and LGBTI.

The high prevalence of mental disorders has posed a challenge around the globe. However, many people with mental health concerns continue to encounter many barriers to accessing care with less than half of them receiving treatment (Whaibeh, 2019; Alonso et al., 2007). This situation is even more challenging for LGBTIQ individuals, who experience higher rates of some mental health concerns due to widespread violence, societal stigma and criminalising contexts, among others. LGBTIQ individuals are more likely to report barriers, at the individual level, clinician level, and systemic level, to mental health services access (Ferlatte et al., 2019).

Online support and services have been seen by mental health care providers as an option that can help overcome the barriers faced by LGBTIQ individuals in accessing mental health services, especially LGBTIQ youth who are often driven online to look for a supportive, validating community and relevant, accurate information (Steinke et al., 2016). Internet is identified as a valuable resource for LGBTIQ youth, especially those who had limited access to other supports (Wilson & Cariola, 2019). For years, LGBTIQ community-based organizations (CBOs) have been using hotline, email and messaging platforms to reach their communities and to provide psychological support for those who need.

On the basis of the above, it is thus important to further explore how these online mental health support and services have been provided, what are the advantages and the challenges of the services provided by CBOs, and how the services accommodate the different needs within the LGBTI community. Furthermore, it is also important to explore the opportunities to adopt the approach in other settings in order to improve the mental health status of LGBTIQ people, especially in the today's digital era.

What does the thematic meeting want to achieve?

At the end of the meeting, the participants will:

- have more knowledge on the existing online mental health supports for LGBTIQ individuals;
- be triggered to look for opportunities in providing and/or conducting research on online mental health supports for LGBTIQ individuals.

Who are the target audiences?

- Mental health professionals and service providers
- NGOs concerned with LGBTIQ and/or mental health
- LGBTIQ individuals
- Share-Net members and others interested to participate



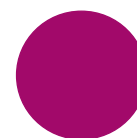
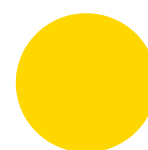
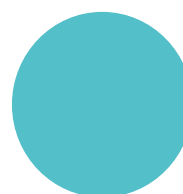
Invitation and Programme

21 September 2021

13.00 – 14.30 CET

Online via Zoom

Please RSVP via the following [link](#).



Programme

13.00 - 13.10

Welcome and Introduction

By Dennis van Wanrooij (KIT Royal Tropical Institute, LGBTI health CoP member)

13.10 - 14.10

Moderated group interview

Dennis van Wanrooij (KIT Royal Tropical Institute, LGBTI health CoP member) will be speaking with:

Leow Yangfa (Executive Director at Oogachaga): Singapore's only LGBTQ-affirming counselling organisation

Jennifer de Lange (PhD candidate at University of Groningen): Online treatment for LGBT+ youth in the Netherlands with suicidal thoughts

Mathijs Lucassen (Senior lecturer in the School of Health, Wellbeing and Social Care at the Open University): Rainbow SPARX, a computerized cognitive behavioral therapy (CCBT) program addressing depression in sexual minority youth

Freya Terpstra (Coordinator for the online platform Genderpraatjes at Transgender Netwerk Nederland TNN): Online support about gender for youth in the Netherlands

14.10 – 14.25

Q&A

14.25 – 14.30

Main conclusions and closing