

Ripplegrams and Later Life Transition, Kathy Mansfield

Fellowship with the Elder Leadership Academy

Title: Ripplegrams and later life Transition

Fellow: Kathy Mansfield

Date: 2019 – 2023

Context

With increasing numbers of people transitioning in their later years, Kathy's interest is in how her experiences and insights could assist other Trans and Gender Diverse (TGD) people and their families navigate this significant change.

The Fellowship involved developing a Ripplegram and other resources for the Kinfolk Project, a project improving older TGD people's choice and control over gender expression. The focus was largely on building more TGD inclusive aged care services – and how to work with families of older people transitioning. Over the course of the project, Kathy recognised the need for older TGD people to combat internalised transphobia – particularly those experiencing transphobia from services and families.

Aim and objectives

The aim of the Fellowship is to promote the health and wellbeing of older people who transition gender by:

- Identifying the intended and unintended consequences of later life transition and encouraging older people to prepare
- Educating their families and communities about later life transition
- Developing resources for aged care service providers on the importance of choice and control for TGD people's gender expression
- Highlighting the ways in which older TGD people experience elder abuse, particularly related to restrictions imposed by families on gender expression
- Developing resources for counsellors supporting older people who transition and their families
- Exploring internalised transphobia as a legacy of transphobia
- Identifying strategies to counteract internalised transphobia and affirms gender diversity.

Activities

1. Co-researcher for the Kinfolk Project ([link here](#)) funded by the Department of Health to improve older TGD people's choice and control over their gender expression.

Responsibilities included

- a. Developing project proposal
- b. Facilitating workshops for service providers

- c. Assist in producing a film for service provider education, [link here](#)
 - d. Documenting a RippleGram for service providers and counsellors, [link here](#) to assisting in understanding the intended and unintended consequences of transition
 - e. Documenting a project report, [link here](#)
2. Ambassador for TGD people with Elder Rights Advocacy, Victoria
 3. Co-Chair of the National Older Persons Reference Group (NOPRG), a committee working for the Older Person's Advocacy Network (OPAN)
 4. Working with the National LGBTI Health Alliance on their Round Table on Older LGBTI people's issues, on a separate occasion providing insight for training materials and Video presentations
 5. Wrote and performed My House of Changes (a TGD adaptation of the poem by Jeni Couzyn) for TheatreWorks emerging writers festival
 6. Worked with Bouverie Family Therapy Centre to integrate the Ripplegram into their education for health practitioners
 7. Developed a short film for the Turbulence series shown at Midsumma Festival 2023 on the stages of transition and hope.
 8. Wrote and performed a 10 minute film for Royal Melbourne Hospital to be shown on the Transgender Day of Visibility and for their Elder Abuse Learning Hub

Outputs

- A Ripplegram template and examples
- A film for aged care practitioners
- A project report
- An Ambassador/Rep role at state and national level
- Meetings with state and national educators
- One live theatre performance
- One film for LGBTIQ+ community
- One film for The Royal Melbourne Hospital
- Published an article developing further the Ripplegram concepts with Dreambreaker extension in Bent Street 5.1

Outcomes (at March, 2023)

- The Ripplegram has been incorporated into training by a state wide family therapy service
- The film for aged care service providers has had almost 600 views
- The turbulence film has had 100+ views

Partnerships and acknowledgements

- Kinfolk was funded by Australian Government Department of Health
- Turbulence was supported by Midsumma Festival and Victorian Government

Links:

- <https://alicesgarage.net/kinfolk/>
- celebrateageing.com/turbulence