

## Gender Minorities Aotearoa

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# Community Feedback

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## Overview

GMA created an anonymous feedback form in March 2021, to gather feedback from our service users. We asked 5 optional demographics questions (age, region, ethnicity, identity in relation to being trans or supporting a trans person, and a free text field to tell us more). We then asked 5 questions about our service provision (how they had interacted with GMA, what kinds of information they received, what kind of impact GMA had on their life, the strength of that impact, and a free text field to tell us more). We also asked for consent to share the free-text field responses. There were 28 responses over a 1 month period.

## Impression

GMA is very effective at supporting trans people and their communities with a broad range of issues. This support has substantial impacts on material wellbeing, stress reduction and mental health, support networks, families, and provision of services to trans people.

### 1. How support was accessed

GMA's website and social media were accessed by almost all respondents, while just over a third connected with GMA in person, and just over a third contacted GMA by phone or email for one to one support.

## 2. Types of support

GMA assisted with health navigation or information for two thirds of respondents, and with connecting to transgender peers for two thirds of respondents. Changing identity documents was supported for over half of all respondents. Social supports were also important; including with family, parenting, and whānau (over a third of respondents), and with relationships and sex (over a third of respondents). Employment and workplace support, legal and justice system support, policy advocacy support, housing support, and school, university, and educational support were each accessed by a quarter to a third of respondents.

## 3. Impact

Almost all respondents found GMA to be extremely impactful, particularly in the areas of providing peer support, giving information and tools for self-advocacy, assisting them to know and understand their options, and reducing their stress levels.

## Summaries

### 1. Demographics information

**Age:** Eight respondents were youth 25 or under, seventeen were adults 26 - 44, and three were aged 45 or over.

**Region:** Sixteen were based in Wellington, with five in Canterbury and seven in Auckland. One was also partly based in Nelson/Tasman.

**Ethnicity:** Many respondents held multiple ethnic identities, particularly in combination with Pākehā/European. 6 respondents selected Māori or Cook Island Māori, 3 selected Asian, 1 selected Non-Māori Pacific Islander, and 22 selected Pākehā/European.

**Transgender respondents:** 19 respondents identified themselves as transgender. Of the transgender respondents, additionally selected were the responses:

I'm intersex (2)

I'm a parent, family, or whānau member of a transgender person (3)

I am or have been the partner of a transgender person (3)

I am a friend of a transgender person (9)

I work in a service used by transgender people (eg healthcare clinic, school, community

organisation) (2).

**Respondents who did not identify themselves as transgender:** non-trans (cisgender) respondents selected the following identities:

I'm a parent, family, or whānau member of a transgender person (5)

I am or have been the partner of a transgender person (4)

I am a friend of a transgender person (9)

I work in a service used by transgender people (eg healthcare clinic, school, community organisation) (7).

**Additional information:** When telling us more about themselves, respondents also identified themselves as irahuri (genderfluid), takatāpui, cisgender guy, bisexual, trans woman, trans man, and non-binary. Of those who selected "I'm intersex"; 100% also selected "I'm transgender", and 100% also identified themselves as Māori.

## 2. Engaging with GMA

We asked "**Please tell us how you have interacted with GMA**". Respondents selected:

I have used GMA's website to find information (28)

I have used GMA's Facebook page, Transgender and Intersex NZ group, or Rainbow Housing NZ group (27)

I have emailed or called GMA for support or information (11)

I have been to GMA's drop in centre or community events (11)

I have been to a GMA lecture, workshop, or training (5)

I have volunteered for, fund raised for, or worked with GMA (8)

We asked "**If you have received information from GMA, please tell us which kinds of information you have received?**". Respondents answered:

Health care, medical, surgical (21)

Community support, connecting with transgender peers (19)

Identity documents (eg, name and gender marker change) (16)

Human rights, discrimination (11)

Family, parenting, whānau (10)

Relationships, sex (9)

Employment, workplace (9)

Legal, justice system (8)

Policy advocacy (eg writing to Government or having a say in systems) (7)

Housing (7)

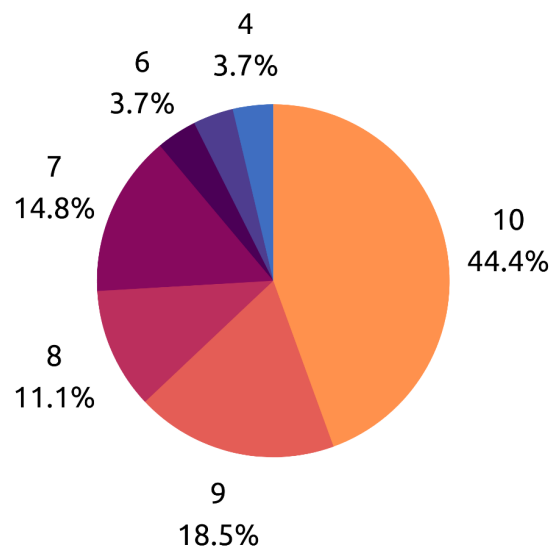
School, university, education (5)

Respondents said they got support (15), got tools to help them advocate for their rights (17), could access practical things they needed (10), understood their options (15), felt less stressed (12), and their mental health improved (6). 11 respondents said it was good to talk to someone.

We asked how strong GMA's impact (in the above question) was for them personally on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 representing "no positive impact at all" and 10 representing "extremely positive impact". Twelve respondents selected 10, and another twelve selected 7, 8, or 9. Three respondents selected 4, 5, and 6 respectively. One did not answer this question.

### How strong has GMA's impact been for you, on a scale of 1 to 10?

1 represents "no positive impact at all" and 10 represents "extremely positive impact".



## Representative Feedback Sample

### General feedback:

"I always think to check GMA's website when I need information about useful organisations or processes relating to trans rights and healthcare. The range of resources is really helpful, and I recommend GMA to trans and non-binary people I know, and also to cis allies who want to learn more. I have mentioned them to Community Mental Health, my GP, and a psychologist as a good community reference. It's good knowing I can contact people at GMA with questions or when needing support around human rights issues. I feel like GMA has people's backs."

"As a transgender migrant of colour, the safe, intersectional space that Gender Minorities Aotearoa offers as an indigenous-led organisation - along with its kaupapa of ensuring accessible, cost-free services and events - has given me a life-changing turnaround that has helped me become a fuller person. Thanks GMA, for all your mahi towards the rainbow and takatapu community!"

"I love the practical resources - posters, gender neutral signs, pamphlets. The in-depth research provided is also great. I use the trans 101 document to send my to friends and family regularly."

"GMA is the best place to get help. All of the things I have needed help with I could get some help from GMA. GMA couldn't fix everything, my healthcare still sucks, I still have housing problems, but it helped me know what I could do to make things better."

"GMA has contact with so many trans people all around the country. This gives them unique insights into the pressing needs and priorities of our communities."

"I've found GMA resources about law and policy useful in making my own submissions/advocating for govt change."

"Keep it up, without GMA our options for support are very limited."

"I'm so extremely grateful for your work. It's helpful to see overseas stuff too, to be part of a growing movement for visibility, but it's excellent, and so deeply reassuring to have such a reliable centre in nz. It's essential to me that it's not western focused, that it's inclusive, that it's not binary focused. Frankly, I'm appalled that the government doesn't already have a department doing what you do, but in the meantime, I'm so incredibly grateful for your visibility and advocacy, and public face, that helps me feel protected, from what often feels like a traumatic life. My life is inherently beautiful, but everyday aggressions, (I can't even say microaggressions) make functioning well and thriving challenging. I love being trans, I love the good things that the queer community bring to this world, but until the government recognises gender and gender expression as a protected human right, all of us are at risk of others aggressions, and having gma publicly poster, campaign, and post on social media helps me stay afloat, and less scared to be me. Thank you so much from the bottom of my heart."

"Even the existence of the GMA in itself is awesome to me as it shows there is a strong, solid support for trans and intersex people. There are so many helpful tools and statistics published by them that I can send to friends and whānau who want to learn."

"You're awesome, keep up the good work!"

### **Community drop-in and Aunty Dana's:**

"Working at aunt dana's has been impactful for me for helping me secure housing, and rainbow housing for helping me and my friends find somewhere safe to live, and finding safe flatmates for my friends. aunt dana's is the nicest work place i have ever had. [The volunteer coordinator] is incredibly understanding and supportive. gma has done a lot for me and also my friends. i have also made friendships through gma and feel extremely supported by them. the work that they do is extremely important and they foster community"

"I'm glad GMA exists as a physical space"

“Using GMA’s resources to be able to help others is great, having the database and Facebook groups are particular useful. The op shop and support upstairs is such an excellent model and it’s so good to have an all ages support like this available to the community! GMA have a strong presence and reputation both nationally and in Wellington and have been a life saver for many trans people.”

### Service providers:

“I have found gma resources useful for giving clients supportive and clear info about their options.”

“I have been able to use GMA’s services and information to support the gender diverse young folk I work with, as well as supporting their whanau and friends with Important information to support the gender diverse people in their lives. GMA has provided information useful in updating policies in the school I work in, and supporting systematic changes to go ahead, such as installing gender neutral bathrooms and changing spaces. The information and support they provide is invaluable”

“Puts my mind at ease to be able to refer friends and clients to GMA”

“I so appreciate being able to let people know about GMA when they are looking for more information or support for themselves or others. I also arranged for GMA to come and speak to the staff at our school and the response was overwhelmingly positive. Teachers were gently encouraged to look at things in a new way, to critique their practice, ask questions etc. I’m so so glad for all our trans NZers that we have GMA doing the incredible mahi that they do.”

### Families:

“I’ve found info from GMA about medical options useful in thinking about how I’ll best support my child and talk about things like puberty with them.”

“Thanks for providing such a comprehensive website. It’s great to have information about trans friendly medical providers, a place to send my parents to learn more,

information about changing name/gender on documents was invaluable. It's also a fantastic resource for helping trans and questioning people who call OUTLine."

"Gma's resources and direct support have been invaluable for myself (to learn from) and for my trans whānau and friends. A lot of my mates have come to me when they've found out their kid is trans, and I've always sent them right to Gma."

"You are helping young trans people and their whānau every day! Thank you!"

"Just keep doing what you're doing"

### Areas to work on:

"I love the work that GMA does and understand that it is mostly volunteer led but I would love to see better email communication response times. I would also love to see it flourish more by being more accessible for others to get involved, pass on anonymous feedback (like this survey which is awesome), help work on projects and development within GMA and in the wider community. Lots of love to you all and thank you for your work!"

We note that of the 28 respondents, none selected having received information and support with sports and recreation, and 2 mentioned that responding to emails could be faster.