

# Josh

## VincentCare Victoria Staff Member

### LGBTIQ Case Vignette



I have been with VincentCare almost 9 years – in many roles. I have seen huge change and been lucky to help drive some of it. I can say with certainty that VincentCare of 2021 is a much more open, diverse and effective place than it used to be. It is a better, more reflective and mature organisation. Our LGBTIQ+ clients and residents say it is safer, and our queer staff often express a personal pride in working for an organisation that not only accepts but also embraces their identity.

As a queer person working for a faith-based organisation, I came into this work 9-or-so years ago knowing there may be times I would need to suspend my ideals or hide my identity. I rationalised this by saying the ends justified the means and that good work could be done within difficult or problematic systems. At times, this proved correct; of course, vulnerable people were always assisted with critical support services. However, there were often underlying assumptions and judgements from many staff that meant people from the LGBTIQ+ community did not receive a safe service.

Ask any queer person and they'll tell you, despite your better judgement, you will find yourself accepting the occasional casually homophobic comment, or overlooking some covert discrimination, because you are stuck in a culture that permits it and you feel you don't have the authority to stop it.

However, as I progressed into different roles within VincentCare, I learnt quickly that any team, anywhere, can drive cultural change with a clear plan and persistence. Nowhere was this more evident than working with the Gender and Sexuality Committee to achieve Rainbow Tick accreditation. In this process, and in working purposefully with our staff, volunteers, clients and residents to change our systems, we embedded sustainable cultural change. VincentCare's journey with Rainbow Tick is evidence that faith-based organisations can adapt, change and do better by our community.

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