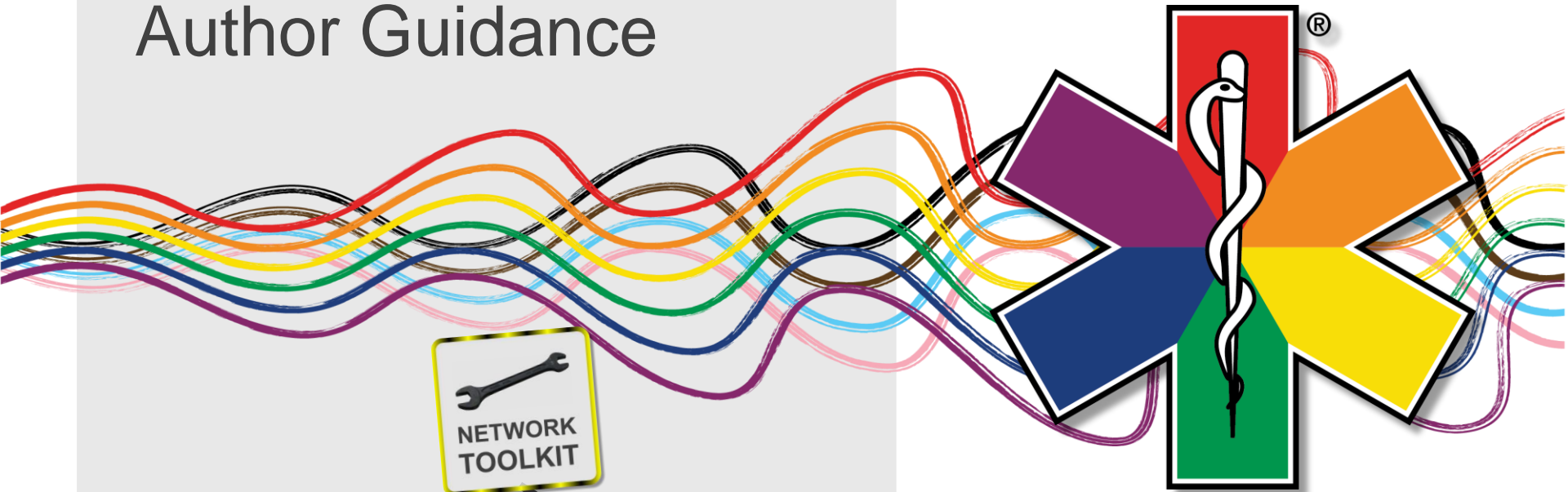


# Producing a 15 Minute Read Author Guidance

**National Ambulance  
LGBT+ Network**



Alistair Gunn and  
Rachael Boucher  
August 2022



**Celebrating the sexual orientations  
and gender identities of all our  
patients, staff and communities**

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# Introduction



The 15 Minute Read concept was created in May 2019 in an attempt to increase interaction between LGBT people across the UK ambulance services and the National Ambulance LGBT Network. The aims are:

- To provide a regular communication to LGBT staff.
- To provide regular messaging and keep people in touch with events (for example the network conference and national events such as LGBT History Month or Trans Day of Visibility).
- To challenge how staff deal with people and clinical presentations by providing useful information (such as out work to better support trans patients and those living with HIV).
- To raise the profile of the National Ambulance LGBT Network.

We will aim to issue one 15 Minute Read each month, nominally around the 15<sup>th</sup> unless the event the issue is linked to falls on another date.

Each issue should follow a magazine style format which is easy to read and adopting our 'message on a page' format. It should be visually stimulating with photographs and graphics where these are appropriate.

The 15 Minute Read documents are located on the National Ambulance LGBT Network website in a dedicated resource area. This can be found at [www.ambulanceLGBT.org/resources/15-Minute-Read/](http://www.ambulanceLGBT.org/resources/15-Minute-Read/).

Over time we hope that this initiative will result in more people visiting our website and accessing information. In 2019 we saw a steady increase in the number of 'hits' to our website.



# A New Look for 2022!



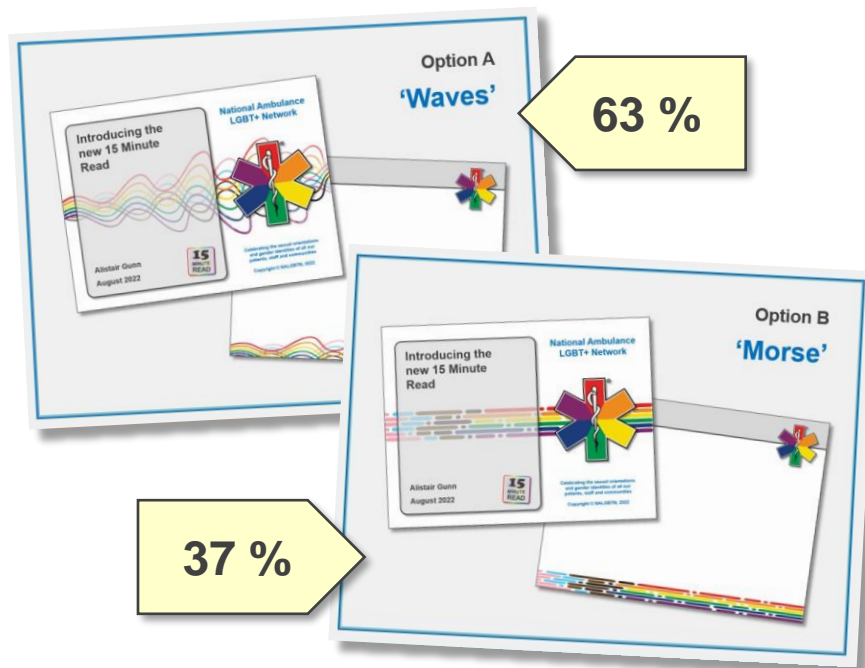
Post-pandemic, the world has moved forward and so have we. When we relaunch the 15 Minute Reads in 2022 we want a bespoke new design that embraces new ideas.

We have now added the + to LGBT+ to reflect a wider spectrum of sexual orientations and gender identities. Hand in hand with this is adopting the new 'progress flag' to represent our LGBT+ communities. We have decided to leave our rainbow star of life symbol alone – the six prongs and six colours works too well – but our new design includes people of colour and trans elements.



*The LGBT+ Progress Flag*

The waves graphic device was chosen from three designs in a social media poll in July 2022. Many people commented that the 'waves' emphasises the idea of fluidity which is especially relevant to sexual orientation and gender identity.



# Part One



## Guidance and Ideas



# From Idea to Article



Putting an article together can seem daunting to start with, but if you map out your ideas you will find things soon fit in to place.

The best articles are usually those where you feel passionately about the subject and have something you want to convey; a 'take-home message'. Wherever possible try and link an LGBT+ theme with an ambulance context. Maybe something that impacts on how we treat patients, or is of value to our staff. It's not always possible to do this so don't worry if this is not possible.

Once you have your idea, do some research. Be careful here though. Wikipedia is an excellent place to look for ideas and *actual* research, but it isn't something we should be citing in our publications. If the article you are putting together involves anything clinical, or change of practice, we may need to seek approval from a clinical governance body before it can be published.

For complex ideas it can be very useful to think about turning your idea into a graphic. This makes it more interesting to read and potentially easier to understand. If your theme is historical, timelines can be a useful tool to present your information.

Try and avoid themes that are very contentious, political or likely to divide opinion. Remember the core function of the National Ambulance LGBT+ Network is to support people and bring people together. Where a topic does border on anything political or emotive, try and balance the argument by presenting different perspectives.

Some things we must avoid, are:

- Being critical of our ambulance services.
- Promoting a political leaning.
- Anything that brings the network, or any individuals, into disrepute.





# The Process



Final dates included here are a guide only. Remember, if the date falls at a weekend, this may have an impact.

**5<sup>th</sup> of month**

Create your  
initial draft

Producing your draft may take some time so start early, and ensure you provide time for the review and proof stages.

**10<sup>th</sup> of month**

Formatting  
and Review

Send your draft to the main editor who will review your draft and provide any final formatting changes.

**12<sup>th</sup> of month**

Proof  
Reading

Before being released to public domain the document must be proof read by at least two people.

**15<sup>th</sup> of month**

Launch and  
Promotion

Your 15 Minute Read is ready to be added to the website and shouted about on social media and through network contacts!



# Style Guidance



Some general points of guidance are provided below and we suggest you think about the format of normal magazines when you read this. Magazines usually aim to be informative, light, fun and at the same time provide a different way of thinking about things. To increase representation many will canvass opinions of a range of people and to generate interest, will use quizzes and checklists.

## Length of Pack

The thinking behind the pack format that is used across most documentation by the National Ambulance LGBT Network, is that it is easy to construct. It is also very easy to vary the length of documents without creating any formatting issues.

An ideal length for the 15 Minute Read is between 10 and 12 slides of information. This is based on an average slide taking around 90 seconds to read. This is not set in stone and you are free to change this if required.

## Style Guide

The Network has a well-developed style and branding guidance document which should be followed. If you use the template slides most of the branding guidance is covered. In addition:

- An average slide of this design usually contains between 250 and 300 words depending on whether visual elements are used.
- The minimum font size should be 14pt and we recommend you maintain this throughout. The font used throughout documents is Arial.
- Avoid using acronyms and local terms. Whilst some may understand them, others may not.
- Wherever possible aim to include photographs, pictures or graphics on every slide. We recognise this may not always be possible.



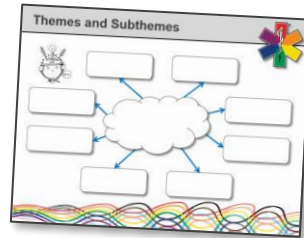
# Structuring Your Document



We have included some slides later in this pack to help you plan the content and structure. Thinking this through early will help you put your document together at pace.

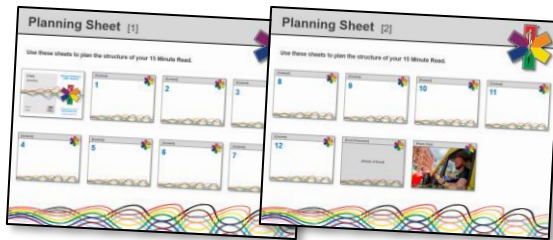
## Themes and Sub-Themes

Use this slide to mind-map your ideas....



## Planning Sheets

These sheets will help you decide what to include where...



## Message on a Page

Try to adopt the idea of the key point on each page. This helps people to link with the information you are presenting, and may force you to be concise so your point fits in the space available.

## Struggling for Content

If you are struggling to develop enough content here are a couple of ideas:

- Think about including checklists, summary information or quizzes.
- Ask other people what would interest them. This often generates new ideas or ways of thinking about things.
- Include the views of other members of the National Ambulance LGBT Network committee. See the next slide for more on this.



# 'Ask the Committee'



Feedback from our readership indicates people really like hearing different voices and opinions. In fact, this very personal approach is a very good way of connecting with people.

Have a look back at previous 15 Minute Reads and you will identify these sections because they usually have a yellow background. Three examples are included to the right.

This is usually achieved by sending out a message to all committee members asking a very specific question. Ensure you include 'Flash Response' in the email subject. This will generate two or three extra slides of content and you should try and include a representative sample in your pack.

Alternatively you can do a similar activity within your own Trust. If you do this you must ask people's permission to be included, especially if you are including the person's name.

**Ask the Committee [1]**

We asked the National Ambulance LGBT Network committee what their first Pride was and what it was like...

**My first Pride event was Brighton TransPride in 2016...** For the first time I felt that my existence was valid and that I was truly accepted with out prejudice.

Steph Meech, South East Coast Ambulance Service

**My first Pride event was London in 1985...** I was working for the Greater London Council and we congregated in Jubilee Gardens, it truly felt like a jubilation and a stand against the system!

Pam Brown, West Midlands Ambulance Service

**My first Pride event was Brighton Pride in 2016...** Eye opening, humbling and completely amazing. As an ally it left me buzzing for days so how must it feel for our LGBT staff I can't imagine!

Asmina Chowdhury, South East Coast

**July 2019:**  
Committee asked about their first Pride event

**Our Favourite Films [2]**

We asked our committee what their favourite LGBT film is and why...

**Ben Barber from North East Ambulance Service writes:**  
**Beautiful Thing** After watching this I realised I was normal. Section 28 meant I never heard any discussion about sexuality and this film changed that.

**Jim Graves from East of England Ambulance Service writes:**  
**Love, Simon** Beautiful Thing is always a favourite but this updated version is a great film too. This was released in 2018 so twenty plus years later, and things are a little different in terms of technology and how we communicate.

**Dom Gaffney from North West Ambulance Service writes:**  
**The Birdcage** This film, from 1996, is based on the stage play La Cage aux Folles and follows the fortunes of Armand and Albert. Hiding their true identity proves harder than planned, however you can't help but be amused at Robin Williams and Nathan Lane as a family visit unfolds.

**December 2019:**  
Committee asked about their favourite LGBT film

**Ask the Committee [1]**

**I visited Auschwitz Concentration in 2018...** It was smaller than I thought, haunting, exceptionally quiet and a very heavy atmosphere. Seeing the memorabilia and locations of execution was very upsetting and stayed with me. The disregard for human life of all ages is very upsetting. Although I can say I am glad I went, it is not by any means an enjoyable experience. The section on homosexuality was particularly harrowing.

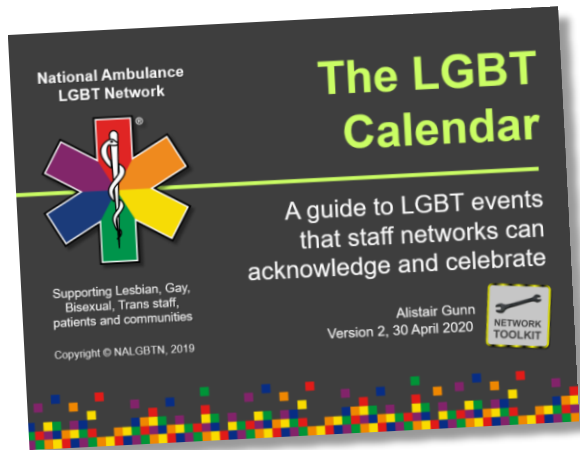
Lee Hyett-Powell, London Ambulance Service

**I visited the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam many years ago...** It still stays with me the depths people went to, to protect Jews from the Nazi's and what conditions the Jewish community lived in to survive. I felt great sadness about the suffering they must've gone through and great pride that we did win the war and the ones who survived were freed but all the time knowing that emotionally and psychologically they will never be freed from the trauma of the war.

Val Nash, South Western Ambulance Service

**January 2020:**  
Committee asked if they had visited a concentration camp

# The LGBT+ Calendar



Throughout the year there are a number of days and weeks which are dedicated to an LGBT+ theme. Some of them are listed here and more details can be found in the Network Toolkit document, *The LGBT Calendar*. If you are struggling for ideas, you could choose one of these events to celebrate.

January	Holocaust Memorial Day
February	LGBT History Month
March	International Women's Day
	Transgender Day of Visibility
April	Lesbian Visibility Week
May	IDAHOBIT Day
June / July / August	Pride Season
September	Bisexuality Day
October	National Coming Out Day
November	Anti-Bullying Week
	Transgender Day of Remembrance
December	World AIDS Day



# Ideas

Here are some examples of things that have gone down very well with our readers. We have included a few examples slides which may generate some ideas. You can find all previous 15 Minute Reads on the National Ambulance LGBT Network website.



**November 2019:**  
Recent events may be worth talking about and debating

## Strictly Makes History



This November the BBC television programme *Strictly Come Dancing* made history by including the first same-sex dance on the results show.

Now in its seventeenth series the dance featured openly gay Johannes Radebe partnering with Graziano Di Prima in a contemporary number that completely broke the normal ballroom format.

Just after the dance professional dancer Graziano posted on Twitter how it had been a privilege to dance with his friend. He wrote 'REPRESENTATION always matters!' Johannes also spoke of his pride at performing in a country where 'these things are accepted', referring to the difficulties he experienced being accepted in his birth land.

## Photo View



**November 2019:**  
Everyone likes a good photograph!

## A Visit to Remember [1]

Before I visited Auschwitz back in 1997 I remember people telling me things about the place. Someone mentioned that birds won't fly over the site and another that flowers don't grow there. Nothing could have been further from the truth on the day I went. As this was part of an inter-rail trip around Europe and it was quite symbolic that we traveled by train to the town of Oświęcim (the Polish name for Auschwitz) on a baking hot August day. Any thoughts of complaining about the heat rapidly disappear when you consider how thousands, if not millions, of people were packed into cattle wagons for the journey to death camps.

Birds were merely chirping away and flowers were in full bloom when we got there but you soon lose all sense of this when you come face to face with the famous gates, surrounded by electric fencing and the words 'Arbeit macht frei' (German for 'work sets you free') across the top.

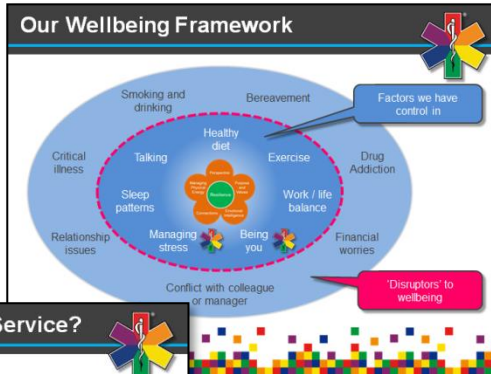


The famous gates at the Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland

In the years since then I have compared visits with many friends and colleagues who have also been to Auschwitz. I am always fascinated to know what they really impacted on people. I have heard people talk about the room full of human hair in which you can see little pig tails that must have come from a child. Some mention the suitcases on which chalk marks state the name of the owner.

**January 2020:**  
People seem to really like reading personal stories

**August 2019:**  
Graphics make people think



## LGBT Friendly Ambulance Service?

'I arrived at a job where everything about the two women in the house indicated they were a couple. When I asked, one stepped back and fiercely denied it. I just wanted them to feel okay telling me because they were denying themselves the compassion I wanted to show.'

Extract from email to National Ambulance LGBT Network Chair in May 2019

So how do we let people know that we are an LGBT friendly service?



**September 2019:**  
Poignant quotes really make people think about their role





# Part Two



## Planning



# Planning Checklist



Let's be really clear here, there is no definitive checklist for what your article should look like.

There are, however, features of a good article, and to help you we have provided a list of ideas here.

As a general rule the more boxes you can tick here, the more readable your article is likely to be.

You should aim to tick at least four boxes from this checklist.

☐

An LGBT+ theme

☐

An ambulance service context

☐

Personal reflections

☐

Different points of view

☐

Research / An explanation of need

☐

Good practice guidance

☐

A take-home message

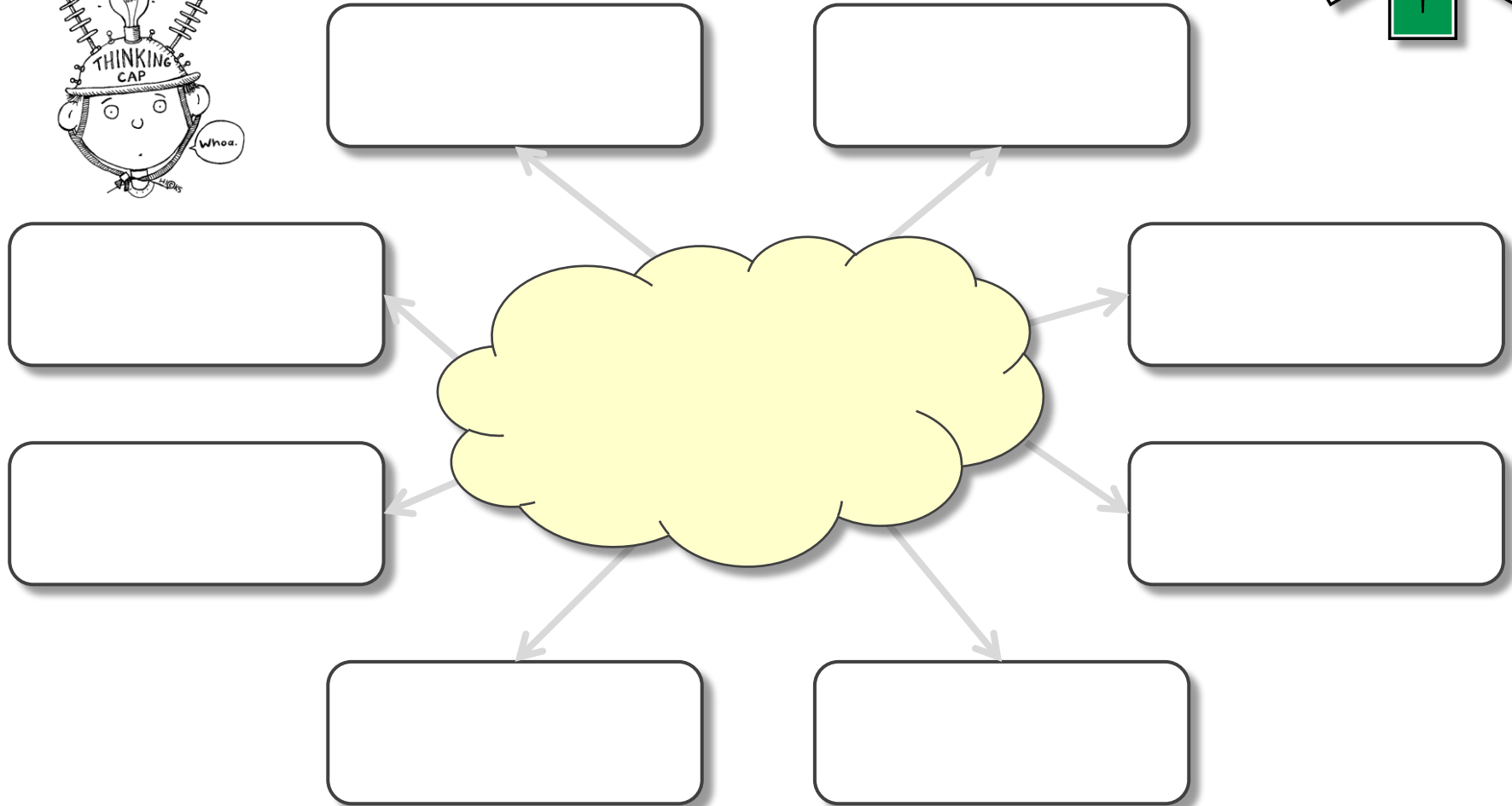
☐

Photographs





# Themes and Subthemes



# Planning Sheet [1]



Use these sheets to plan the structure of your 15 Minute Read.

[Title]  
[Subtitle]

National Ambulance  
LGBT+ Network

[Name]  
[Date]

15  
MINUTE  
READ

Celebrating the sexual orientations  
and gender identities of all our  
patients, staff and communities  
Copyright © NALGBTN, 2022

[Content]

1

[Content]

2

[Content]

3

[Content]

4

[Content]

5

[Content]

6

[Content]

7



# Planning Sheet [2]



Use these sheets to plan the structure of your 15 Minute Read.

[Content]

8

[Content]

9

[Content]

10

[Content]

11

[Content]

12

[Event Promotion]

[Details of Event]

