

# 5TH LGBTI AGEING AND AGED CARE CONFERENCE COMMUNIQUE - APRIL 2021

**Noting the wide-ranging discussions of issues affecting older LGBTI people,** including human rights, Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, palliative care, community resilience, ageism and elder abuse, and planning for growing old and older;

## THIS CONFERENCE ACKNOWLEDGES:

### DIVERSE NEEDS OF OLDER PEOPLE

- LGBTI communities have demonstrated resilience, innovation and creativity in the face of many challenges, and this continues to shape their story and experiences later in life.
- Older LGBTI people are likely to have experienced a history of exclusion, stigma, isolation, trauma, criminalisation or pathologisation of their sexuality, gender identity and/or sex characteristics during much of their lifetime.
- Older LGBTI people have a diversity of characteristics, life experience and will have specific social, cultural, linguistic, religious, spiritual, psychological, medical and care needs.
- Older LGBTI people face significant issues not just in accessing safe and inclusive aged care services, but also for many broader issues later in life that require support and services.
- Older LGBTI people in many countries globally are experiencing great human rights challenges.

### A WATERSHED OPPORTUNITY

- Older LGBTI people are already creatively planning for ageing with the support and reliance on friendship networks and within the LGBTI community.
- There is passionate commitment by many to deliver support and services that are person centred, culturally safe and respond to the needs of diverse and marginalised older people.
- The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety and the COVID-19 pandemic have acutely exposed the fragility and frequent violation of human rights for older LGBTI people.
- The Royal Commission is a watershed moment for aged care in Australia that needs to transform policy, funding, strategy and practice for coming generations of older LGBTI people.
- Current work for a United Nations Convention on the Human Rights of Older People is a unique opportunity to enable older LGBTI people globally to claim their rights.

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## THIS CONFERENCE THEREFORE CALLS FOR:

### EFFECTIVE DATA, RESEARCH AND POLICY

- Explicit recognition of older LGBTI people in research, policy and service delivery to overcome invisibility and enable the development of appropriate, safe and inclusive services.
- Dramatic escalation of research funding to understand health and wellbeing issues faced by older LGBTI people and develop evidence-based, best-practice responses
- Urgent, widespread implementation of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) standard variables for sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics and sexual orientation to deliver base-line data and to develop credible targets
- Inclusion of the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 Standard on Sex, Gender, Variations in Sex Characteristics, and Sexual Orientation Variables in the 2026 Census

### ROYAL COMMISSION IMPLEMENTATION

- Full implementation of Royal Commission recommendations in a way that integrates LGBTIQ+ communities, representatives and needs, including through governance structures, advisory groups, Council of Elders, complaints mechanisms and the review of the diversity framework.
- The Federal Government to dramatically accelerate the Royal Commission's 2022 to 2024 timetable for improving aged care design for diversity, difference, complexity and individuality.
- Effective collaboration between government, peak bodies and LGBTIQ+ organisations to ensure that the new Aged Care Act is truly human rights based and delivers tangible outcomes.

### PRACTICAL, EFFECTIVE, INNOVATIVE RESPONSES

- Action beyond equitable access to deliver equitable outcomes for older LGBTI people, including ageing support, aged care services and end of life care that is respectful, trauma-informed, sensitive and culturally appropriate
- Increased and continued funding for LGBTI community-controlled organisations to deliver culturally sensitive support and services and to provide training for mainstream service providers
- Increased adoption of innovative models of ageing being developed by LGBTI people to ensure mainstream services and policies relating to aged care interface with community-driven models
- The removal of legislative exemptions that allow discrimination against individuals based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity in the provision of aged care..

### INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

- The Australian Government and peak bodies to actively participate in the Open Ended Working Group on Ageing process and support and participate in processes considering the need for a new international instrument, such as a United Nations Convention on the Rights of Older People, including collaboration with LGBTI people and their national peak organisations .globally.