

11TH HEALTH IN DIFFERENCE CONFERENCE COMMUNIQUE - APRIL 2021

Noting the wide-ranging discussions of issues affecting LGBTI people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, mental health, suicide prevention, alcohol and other drugs, disability and inclusion, policy and data collection;

THIS CONFERENCE ACKNOWLEDGES:

- LGBTIQ+ people demonstrate resilience in looking after themselves, their families, and communities, despite adversity.

- In spite of strong human rights protections, LGBTIQ+ people continue to experience major health disparities compared to non-LGBTIQ+ people, significantly due to minority stress.

- LGBTIQ+ people face discriminatory access barriers to culturally safe and inclusive health care.

- Significant data and research gaps regarding LGBTIQ+ health and wellbeing impede government policy responses to improve health outcomes.

- LGBTIQ+ people continue to be subject to hostile media reporting, public scrutiny, and prolonged national debates, which exacerbates already poorer health outcomes.

THIS CONFERENCE THEREFORE CALLS FOR:

EFFECTIVE DATA, RESEARCH AND POLICY

- An evidence-based approach to LGBTIQ+ health policy informed by people with lived experience, and sustained investment proportionate to need

- Greater coordination of LGBTIQ+ health research, with use of the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 Standard on Sex, Gender, Variations in Sex Characteristics, and Sexual Orientation Variables across government and non-government health and wellbeing sector datasets and all research

- Inclusion of the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 Standard on Sex, Gender, Variations in Sex Characteristics, and Sexual Orientation Variables in the 2026 Census

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THIS CONFERENCE THEREFORE CALLS FOR:

ACTION ON MAJOR HEALTH DISPARITIES

- Investment in culturally safe programs and services for LGBTIQ+ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Brotherboys and Sistergirls that close the gap in health and wellbeing
- A whole-of-government approach to LGBTIQ+ mental health and suicide prevention planning and service delivery, including education campaigns to reduce stigma, discrimination and violence
- National standards for the care and treatment of trans and gender diverse people across the lifespan, that are founded on evidence, human rights and community perspectives
- Prohibition of deferrable medical interventions that alter the sex characteristics of infants and children without their freely given and fully given consent
- Intersex people to have freely given and fully informed consent to medical interventions, with independent access to funded counselling and independent and affirmative peer support.
- Designated, sustainable funding for LGBTIQ+ drug and alcohol services and a national targeted alcohol and other drug use awareness and education campaign.

SELF-DETERMINED AND COMMUNITY- CONTROLLED SOLUTIONS

- Sustainable resourcing of LGBTIQ+ Health Australia in the form of peak funding to increase capacity for research and development, strengthen national coordination of policy and research, and increase LGBTIQ+ membership and sector development.
- Increased investment in LGBTIQ+ community-controlled health organisations to enhance capacity, meet demand and expand geographical reach, including targeted new funding for priority areas such as intimate partner and family violence, sexual assault, and drug and alcohol.

NATIONAL REFORM FOR BEST PRACTICE

- Action on National Suicide Prevention Adviser recommendations for all jurisdictions to contribute to national actions for LGBTIQ+ communities in a National Suicide Prevention Strategy
- Inclusion of action for LGBTIQ+ people affected by intimate partner and family violence and sexual assault in a new 'National plan to reduce family, domestic and sexual violence'
- Access, equity and inclusion for LGBTI elders, including implementation of recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety
- Targeted recommendations from the Disability Royal Commission to address higher rates of violence, abuse and neglect, and additional barriers to services for LGBTIQ+ people with disability
- Removal of legislative exemptions that allow faith-based organisations receiving government funding to discriminate based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity in the provision of public services such as health, aged care, community services and education
- Translation of national priorities and strategies into a practical and funded 10-year National LGBTIQ+ Health and Wellbeing Action Plan, finalised with input by LGBTIQ+ stakeholders