

# CCHQ 2022

**STRONG ECONOMY. STRONGER FUTURE.**

12 May 2022

Ms Nicky Bath  
Chief Executive Officer  
LGBTIQ+ Health Australia  
Email: [amber.loomis@lgbtiqhealth.org.au](mailto:amber.loomis@lgbtiqhealth.org.au)

Dear Ms Bath,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the views of the Coalition on important issues facing your members. A response to your questions is attached.

The last two years have been tough for our country.

Despite the setbacks, Australia's economic recovery is leading the world.

Unemployment is at 4%, the equal lowest in 48 years. And the recent Budget included the biggest turnaround in our finances in over 70 years.

There's much more to be done. To build a stronger future, our plan will:

1. Deliver more jobs and working towards unemployment below 4%.
2. Deliver tax relief for workers and small businesses.
3. Invest in roads, rail, water infrastructure and renewable energy technology.
4. Make record investments in health and other essential services.
5. Invest in stronger defence, security and borders.

This election provides a clear choice, with real consequences for Australia.

The alternative at this election is Anthony Albanese and Labor. Labor would weaken our economy and put Australia's recovery at risk. Now is not the time to change course.

Thank you for communicating our response to your members.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Hirst  
Federal Director

## **MORRISON GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO LGBTIQ+ HEALTH AUSTRALIA**

The Morrison Government believes all people are entitled to respect, dignity and the opportunity to participate in society, and recognises that to enjoy civil and political rights on an equal basis with others, people need to be able to do so free from discrimination.

The *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* prohibits discrimination on the grounds of gender identity, sexual orientation and intersex status in many areas of public life, including employment, education and in the provision of goods, services and facilities.

The Morrison Government is working to keep our economy strong, keep Australians safe and keep Australians together. Australia is stronger and more prosperous as a nation because of our diversity and cohesion. Our Government actively invests in programs that embrace our diversity and wants all Australians and all communities to benefit from Australia's economic and social development.

The Morrison Government will continue to consult and work with LGBTIQ+ organisations across the broad range of policy issues affecting LGBTIQ+ Australians within our existing frameworks.

### **Data Collection**

The Morrison Government is supportive of the collection of statistical data relating to sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status where these factors are relevant to the health and welfare of the LGBTIQ+ community. Decisions on data collection are ultimately the responsibility of agencies such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

### **The National Preventative Health Strategy**

The Morrison Government launched The National Preventative Health Strategy (NPHS) 2021-2030 in December of last year. The Strategy recognises that social determinants are a key component of an individual's overall health and wellbeing. The Strategy has highlighted the importance of addressing social determinants for the LGBTIQ+ communities and the wider community, particularly in cancer detection, tobacco and alcohol use, stigma, and mental health and suicide prevention. These are issues that our Government are committed to addressing in partnership with the community.

To that end LGBTIQ+ Health Australia was one of the peak health groups that received funding in the third round of the Health Peak Advisory Bodies Programme. This will enable LGBTIQ+ Health Australia to continue their important work, providing expert, evidence-based and impartial advice to inform current health policy and program development. The program also helps support communication and consultation activities across the wider health sector, the community and government.

## **Mental Health**

The Morrison Government has made mental health and suicide prevention a national priority. Our Government's almost \$3 billion National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan (the Plan) represents the single largest Commonwealth investment in mental health and suicide prevention in Australia's history.

The Plan includes establishing a new national network of 70 new adult Head to Health centres and child mental health hubs and funding for the largest ever expansion of Australia's headspace network to 164 locations (up from just 56 when the Coalition took office in 2013) to provide access to free, multidisciplinary mental health care

Support under Medicare has doubled with the Better Access Medicare subsidised psychological therapy sessions increasing from 10 to 20 per patient per year.

These investments will see our mental health and suicide prevention funding increase to an estimated record \$6.8 billion in 2022-23 in the health portfolio alone – a more than 100 per cent increase from \$3.3 billion since 2012-13 when Labor was last in Government.

The Morrison Government is committed to supporting the mental health of the LGBTIQ+ community, particularly the LGBTIQ+ youth - as demonstrated by the ongoing investment in child and youth mental health and LGBTIQ+ specific programs and services.

Our Government has provided \$7.33 million over three years to LGBTIQ+ Health Australia for Qlife, which provides online, telephone counselling and support services for LGBTIQ+ people. Additional funding has been provided to LGBTIQ+ Health Australia to increase Qlife telephone and online service capacity to meet COVID-19 demand.

The 2022-23 Budget also provided \$42.7 million to build on the findings of the National Suicide Prevention Trial (NSPT), which ran from 2016-17 to 2021-22 and included a specific focus on LGBTIQ+ people. As part of the trial, \$12 million was provided to Brisbane North and North Western Melbourne Primary Health Networks (PHNs) to deliver innovative regional approaches to suicide prevention, particularly among the LGBTIQ+ community. Commissioned activities included LGBTIQ+ specific suicide aftercare services, local media campaigns challenging stigma, and peer mentoring support programs for LGBTIQ+ young people and families of LGBTIQ+ people. The additional funding in the 2022-23 Budget will allow PHNs to employ Suicide Prevention regional response leaders and commission services to address specific risks in their local communities

## **Primary Care**

The Morrison Government has guaranteed Medicare, with record funding year on year, and we have made telehealth a permanent feature of the primary care system with more than 100 million services already provided.

Better access to healthcare for LGBTIQ+ people is a key foundation for reform under Australia's Primary Health Care 10 Year Plan, noting that LGBTIQ+ people can face barriers in accessing appropriate health care.

Australia's Primary Health Care 10 Year Plan supports reform and investment in primary health care over time, to ensure any funding and policy changes deliver real improvements in patient care and outcomes.

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring that all Australians are able to access timely and affordable, high quality health care by providing Medicare rebates for services listed on the MBS and free hospital services for public patients in public hospitals.

## **Family, domestic and sexual violence**

The Morrison Government announced a historic \$1.3 billion investment in women's safety initiatives in the recent Budget. This brings our commitment to \$2.5 billion over the first five years of the National Plan to end Violence Against Women and their Children.

The development of the next national plan has been the culmination of over 18 months of consultation with advocates, victim-survivors, service providers, researchers and other experts across Australia. Our Government acknowledges that to succeed we must listen and engage with those with diverse lived experiences, and we know that we must get this right.

The Morrison Government established the National Plan Advisory Group to inform the development of the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children, with members representing a range of groups in the Australian community, including LGBTIQ+ communities. The Advisory Group has played a key role in the plan's development.

As part of our 2022-23 Women's Budget Statement, the Coalition committed \$222.6 million to prevention initiatives. This specifically included \$104.4 million in new funding to support the leading primary prevention organisation Our Watch. This funding represented about a 65 per cent increase on annualised funding to enable Our Watch to boost its efforts in prevention for LGBTIQ+ people, women with a disability and migrant women. The funding will also be used to develop further resources to educate young people about consent.

## **Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability**

The Morrison Government believes that people with disability should have the same opportunities and access to disability services including the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) regardless of their identity or life experiences.

Whilst the Morrison Government cannot pre-empt the findings of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, our Government is committed addressing recommendations concerning LGBTIQ+ Australians.

## **Aged Care**

It is a requirement of the Aged Care Quality Standards that every person is treated with dignity and respect, with their identity, culture and diversity valued.

The Aged Care Royal Commission makes several recommendations that recognise people from diverse backgrounds. Specifically, Recommendation 30: Designing for diversity, difference, complexity and individuality.

The Government accepts this recommendation and is responding through the measures Residential Aged Care Quality and Safety. As such the Morrison Government will implement a number of measures to address the Royal Commission's finding that 'diversity should be core business in aged care.' This includes total investment of \$585.7 million for measures that will specifically benefit people with diverse characteristics and life experiences:

- \$93.7 million in additional funding to introduce a network of up to 500 local Community care finders to improve engagement with vulnerable senior Australians (such as people who are homeless).
- \$65.2 million to increase translating and interpreting services to address gaps and the under utilisation of these services for diverse older Australians assisting more than 75,000 older people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- \$9.6 million to certify providers where specific services are offered that meet diverse needs and help consumers select providers that meet their specific needs.
- \$6.2 million to provide assistance to aged care providers to understand the diversity of the community they are serving and assess whether actual usage of their service reflects any barriers to access which must be rectified.
- The introduction of a new Aged Care Act. The new Act will place older people, in all their diversity, at the centre of the reformed aged care system.
- \$396.9 million over five years for capital investment to enable aged care providers to make needed improvements to their buildings and build new services in areas where senior Australians currently do not have access, or where staff caring for their needs do not have suitable housing. First Nations peoples, homelessness providers and rural and remote areas will be initial priority areas to benefit from this measure from 2022-23.
- The expansion of the Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS) from residential care into home and community care. This initial \$14 million from 1 July 2022 will provide greater protections to consumers receiving home and community aged care services, including older people who are more vulnerable such as those who are socially disadvantaged.
- National Aged Care Data Strategy to identify, improve and better use aged care data, better data collection and use of diversity identifiers.

- Measures to support First Nations people by assisting older First Nations people to be better informed and understand all the services available through the aged care system. The measures will increase capability and viability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and increase a skilled and culturally safe workforce.

LGBTIQ+ Australians will also benefit from the full aged care reform package. For example, the \$3.9 billion investment to increase the care time for residents will particularly benefit older people with diverse backgrounds and life experiences who may require more care or will benefit from more time to build trust and rapport with their carers.

Our Government is also working to improve the quality of aged care for older people with diverse characteristics and life experiences through the Aged Care Diversity Framework and associated Action Plans. The framework is currently being considered in the context of the review of the Aged Care Quality Standards.

The National LGBTIQ+ Health Alliance (LGBTIQ+ Health Australia) was provided \$2.0 million in 2020-2022 to provide a national voice for LGBTIQ+ people in aged care and support LGBTIQ+ awareness training.