

Media Release

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Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Ageing

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DELIVERING BETTER MENTAL HEALTH FOR LGBTIQA+ VICTORIANS

In Victoria, equality is not negotiable – that’s why the Allan Labor Government is continuing to back programs that improve mental health outcomes for LGBTIQA+ Victorians.

The *Victorian Budget 2024/25* invested \$3.8 million to continue lifesaving programs that support communities disproportionately impacted by suicide, including Mind Australia’s LGBTIQA+ Aftercare program and Switchboard Victoria’s LGBTIQA+ suicide prevention program.

As part of the Mind Australia Aftercare program, members of the LGBTIQA+ community in Victoria who are having thoughts of suicide can seek a safe place for psychological healing with the support of peer-led mental health support workers, counsellors and psychologists.

Taking a recovery-focused approach, the program supports participants and their families by providing therapeutic care and support as well as strategies to support recovery. The program also supports people that need longer-term assistance through a group-based program and access to a peer-led drop-in session for as long as they need.

Switchboard Victoria will continue its LGBTIQA+ postvention and bereavement support – delivering counselling in peer-based spaces to those who have lost someone to suicide, and helping them build connections with others who are bereaved by suicide.

Funding for these lifesaving programs builds on \$17.7 million delivered in the *Victorian Budget 2023/24* to support priority suicide prevention and response efforts.

Because we know that LGBTIQA+ Victorians deserve to be able to access safe and inclusive services, the Labor Government is also expanding the world-first \$9.7 million Rainbow tick program. This means even more community and mental health providers will become accredited providers under this world-first quality framework.

This work is part of the ongoing delivery of the recommendations from the *Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System* – providing safe and inclusive treatment, care, and support for all Victorians including the LGBTIQA+ community.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt

“This funding is ensuring Mind Australia and Switchboard can continue to provide dedicated mental health support for some of our most vulnerable Victorians – a key priority of Victoria’s landmark Pride in our Future strategy.”

“We know that tragically, LGBTIQA+ Victorians are far more likely to experience mental health issues due to social stigma and discrimination, which is why funding these services are so important.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Equality Harriet Shing

“LGBTIQA+ Victorians are more vulnerable to disadvantage, stigma and trauma but can often struggle to find safe and inclusive services. These peer-led programs make a significant difference to recovery and overall well-being, and are part of our ongoing investment into LGBTIQA+ equality in Victoria.”