

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Equality
Minister for Creative Industries



Sunday, 17 May 2020

SUPPORT FOR LGBTIQ VICTORIANS DURING PANDEMIC

The Victorian Government is supporting all Victorians through the coronavirus pandemic, with \$820,000 for a range of new measures to support the mental health and wellbeing for LGBTIQ communities.

Minister for Equality Martin Foley announced the funding today, which will help organisations to meet additional demand and provide the best support to vulnerable LGBTIQ Victorians at risk of homelessness and mental illness.

Established Victorian LGBTIQ organisations Switchboard Victoria, Thorne Harbour Health and Drummond Street Services will receive \$450,000 to support the increased demand for counselling and support services for LGBTIQ individuals and their families impacted by coronavirus

In addition, \$300,000 of the Government's \$59.4 million coronavirus mental health support will go to JOY 94.9 FM, Thorne Harbour Health, Switchboard Victoria.

The Pride Cup, Celebrate Ageing and Drummond Street Services will also get extra \$70,000 to support community connectedness and reduce the impacts of social isolation.

Victoria's LGBTIQ communities will have a dedicated hub for many health and support services, entertainment and meetings when the Victorian Pride Centre opens in late 2020, with a virtual 'topping out' ceremony celebrated last month after the Centre's structure was completed.

A coastal banksia indigenous to the Port Phillip area was raised on the rooftop terrace of the Victorian Pride Centre and will remain there until the Centre opens.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Equality Martin Foley

"We know the effects of this pandemic are being felt in complex and difficult ways among our LGBTIQ communities – so we're supporting the organisations on the frontlines to ramp up their efforts and support more Victorians."

"The Victorian Pride Centre represents the best of our values – resilience, solidarity and community connection – and with the structure complete, we're one step closer to providing a hub for LGBTIQ services."

Quotes attributable to Victorian Commissioner for Gender and Sexuality Ro Allen

"LGBTIQ communities have shown yet again that we thrive on supporting each other and we need that now more than ever. We welcome funds from a government that not only recognises but prioritises this."

"The first thing I wanted to do when I became Commissioner was work with government to leave a lasting legacy for LGBTIQ communities in Victoria. I'm thrilled that the Victorian Pride Centre is almost complete."