

Media Release

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



Thursday, 20 August 2020

FURTHER SUPPORT FOR LGBTIQ VICTORIANS FACING HARDSHIP

Vulnerable LGBTIQ Victorians who are at risk of homelessness or facing financial hardship will have access to greater support, as the Victorian Government continues assisting all Victorians during the coronavirus pandemic.

Minister for Equality Martin Foley has announced \$80,000 in additional emergency funding to Drummond Street Services and Thorne Harbour Health to continue their critical services for LGBTIQ people experiencing housing insecurity, unemployment and or other financial difficulties.

This new funding means the Government has now provided \$1.14 million in support directly to organisations offering services to LGBTIQ Victorians during the coronavirus, which is helping to address the unique needs of rainbow communities.

The announcement follows a virtual roundtable hosted by Minister Foley with a diverse group of representatives from LGBTIQ organisations and communities, to seek their advice on supporting LGBTIQ Victorians through this pandemic and beyond.

People ranging in age from 17 to 73 were present, with the group including representatives from Aboriginal communities, multicultural and faith communities, the disability sector, along with people living with intersex variations and trans and gender diverse voices.

LGBTIQ people living in rural and regional communities and people from asylum seeker backgrounds were also part of the meeting and offered rich insights on the challenges facing their communities.

The \$1.14 million provided to LGBTIQ organisations includes \$225,000 to Switchboard Victoria to fund a relationship counselling and support service for LGBTIQ people, couples and families.

Another \$255,000 has been given to JOY 94.9 FM to produce an online entertainment show, which has been giving rainbow communities a regular experience they can share since April and includes Auslan interpreting services to ensure it's truly inclusive.

Quote attributable to the Minister for Equality Martin Foley

"We are working with Victorian LGBTIQ communities and backing organisations that support them, to ensure no Victorian are left behind during this pandemic and beyond."

Quote attributable to the Victorian Commissioner for Gender and Sexuality Ro Allen

"This funding will help already stretched organisations cater to the increased demand for services that can be life-saving. It's great to see the Government's commitment to equality and the needs of LGBTIQ communities."