

Media Release

The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples



Wednesday, 29 March 2023

STANDING WITH VICTORIA'S GENDER DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

The Andrews Labor Government is standing with transgender and gender diverse Victorians, their families and carers, with funding to expand access to vital mental health and support services.

The Labor Government will deliver a \$900,000 package to eight organisations to help respond to the additional demand these services are seeing following the events of the last week.

Funding will go to essential services that support Victoria's LGBTIQ+ communities year-round, including:

- Mind
- Transcend
- Transgender Victoria
- Switchboard
- Zoe Bell Gender Collective
- Thorne Harbour Health/Equinox
- Rainbow Families
- Queerspace

The toxic public debate around the hurtful, divisive 'Let Women Speak' march – an anti-trans rally – last weekend has had a significant impact on members of the transgender community, and on their loved ones.

This package will boost counselling and family therapy, referrals and peer support to ensure LGBTIQ+ Victorians, their families and carers can get the support they need – and that they know it's available.

Just as LGBTIQ+ Australians should never have been subject to a plebiscite on whether they deserved to marry the person they love, transgender Victorians should not have to endure their worth being debated by a so-called 'mainstream political party.'

Quote attributable to Minister for Mental Health Gabrielle Williams

"While the Liberals are content with spreading divisive rhetoric about our gender diverse community, and tacitly endorsing extreme views, we're making sure Victorians know our Government will always stand with them because in Victoria, equality is not negotiable."

Quote attributable to Minister for Equality Harriet Shing

"Trans people routinely endure abuse, violence, and discrimination in the name of free speech, and the past week has caused further trauma for an already vulnerable group. Trans people deserve better, and this funding will help organisations to provide crucial support, safety, and care."