

# Media Release

**The Hon Harriet Shing MP**  
Minister for Housing  
Minister for Water  
Minister for Equality



Friday, 26 April 2024

## CONNECTION AND SUPPORT FOR OLDER LGBTIQ+ VICTORIANS

The Allan Labor Government is ensuring LGBTIQ+ Victorians have strong community and social connections as they age with a ground-breaking four-year pilot program now open for co-design with the community.

Minister for Equality Harriet Shing today announced \$4.5 million in funding for Switchboard to deliver the Pride in Ageing program which helps older LGBTIQ+ Victorians feel connected, safe and proud to live as their authentic selves.

Switchboard will lead the design of Pride in Ageing with other organisations invited to register their interest to co-design the program in partnership, while individuals are invited to register to volunteer or support the project in other ways.

Pride in Ageing will be run at a variety of locations across the state, and include local and regional partnerships with councils, libraries, community organisations and health and aged care services.

The program will develop new approaches to community engagement and how to best maintain connection for older LGBTIQ+ people.

Ageing LGBTIQ+ people are more likely to face stigma and isolation as well as a lack of recognition. They can be reluctant to engage with support services because of negative experiences or due to a lack of accessible, inclusive services. They are also seven times more likely to live alone than non-LGBTIQ+ community members.

Pride in Ageing is an important part of the Labor Government's first 10-year plan for LGBTIQ+ equality, *Pride in our Future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-2032* and aligns with the Government's *Ageing Well Action Plan 2022-2026*, supporting all Victorians to age well, connect socially and live healthy, active lives.

To register your interest, go to [switchboard.org.au/prideinageing](https://switchboard.org.au/prideinageing).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Equality Harriet Shing

*"Older LGBTIQ+ people face unique challenges in accessing community support and connection, and feeling safe being their authentic selves."*

*"In Victoria, equality is not negotiable. The Pride in Ageing program is an important part of that - and making sure everyone feels included, safe and connected as they age."*

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Ageing Ingrid Stitt

*"This program is an important part of our work to address the needs of older Victorians. It will ensure LGBTIQ+ people can foster social and community connections, reducing the risk of social isolation and improving health and wellbeing."*

### Quotes attributable to Switchboard CEO Joe Ball

*"We're committed to supporting and elevating the voices of older LGBTIQ+ Victorians and this co-design project will bring lasting change for our community."*

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