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Marriage equality – think about mental health

Mental Health Australia, the peak group for mental health in Australia, has today issued a Position Statement on marriage equality. **The Position Statement mirrors a statement that was released more than 300 days ago on 4 October 2016.**

The statement highlights the negative effects of ongoing discrimination on the mental health of LGBTIQ Australians and calls on the Parliament to pass laws to establish marriage equality.

"LGBTIQ Australians experience routine discrimination, along with all its negative mental health effects. Marriage equality is squarely a mental health issue" said Mr Frank Quinlan CEO of Mental Health Australia.

"Determinants of mental health are the same for LGBTIQ Australians as they are for the rest of the community, but ongoing discrimination creates additional challenges."

"LGBTIQ Australians experience triple the rate of depression and double the rate of anxiety when compared to their heterosexual counterparts."

"LGBTIQ Australians are also between 3.5 and 14 times more likely to attempt suicide."

"More than half of the LGBTIQ population have experienced verbal homophobic abuse."

"No part of the population should be reliant on the outcome of a plebiscite to free them from discrimination," Mr Quinlan said.

"\$122 million saved on a postal vote would go a very long way towards providing much needed mental health and suicide prevention programs for LGBTIQ Australians."

The Position Statement is available at <https://mhaustralia.org/general/marriage-equality-statement>

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