



Health and wellbeing for
lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex [LGBTI]
people and sexuality, genders, and bodily
diverse people and communities
throughout Australia

**MEDIA STATEMENT: NATIONAL LGBTI HEALTH WELCOMES DRAFT PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION
REPORT INTO MENTAL HEALTH**

Thursday 31 October 2019

The National LGBTI Health Alliance (the Alliance), the national peak health organisation in Australia for organisations and individuals that provide health-related programs, services and research focused on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex people (LGBTI) has welcomed the release of the Draft Report by the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Mental Health, and its recognition that LGBTI people are a priority population for consideration and action.

The Alliance welcomes the Commission's acknowledgement that LGBTI communities are more likely than the general population to face stigma and discrimination, and that we are highlighted as a population group most at risk of poor mental health and suicidal behaviours. More needs to be done to foster the social inclusion of LGBTI people and communities into the fabric of Australian society by reducing discrimination, eliminating violence and removing legal barriers that affect our ability to experience connection.

Nicky Bath, Executive Director of the Alliance, said: "It's reassuring to see the Commission recognising the need to improve access to appropriate services, and to have a well-trained workforce to provide high quality and culturally safe services for LGBTI people. If we are truly going to improve our community's mental health and wellbeing, we need to go much further and talk about and address the causal factors."

"This is complex and is made more difficult when we live in the shadows of government processes and legislation that seek to entrench discrimination in society more broadly, as well as within health and other much needed well-being and social services and schools." Nicky Bath continued.

The Alliance also notes the Report's recommendation for routine data collection, and their acknowledgement that significant knowledge gaps remain.

"One of those gaps is the Census. Currently the Census does not capture data on sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status of the Australian population. Their exclusion means that vital data indicators will remain excluded from important data sets that are used across community, primary and tertiary health care services and programs. We again call on the government to approve the inclusion of these questions in the 2021 Census," Nick Bath concluded.

If you are experiencing distress and would like to talk with someone on the phone or over the web, then please call QLife on 1800 184 527 or go to [www.qlife.org.au](http://www qlife.org.au)

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