



MEDIA RELEASE

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The Equality Campaign **MORE THAN 35 NATIONAL HEALTH ORGANISATIONS UNITE** **FOR EQUAL MARRIAGE**

36 leading national health organisations have called on the Federal Government to put an end to marriage discrimination and legislate for marriage equality.

More than 35 leading health organisations across the nation have united together and called on the Federal Government to legislate for marriage equality and put an end to marriage discrimination.

Tiernan Brady, Executive Director, [The Equality Campaign](#) welcomed the statement, “It’s easy in the middle of all the politics to forget what or rather who this is about.

“Marriage equality is about real people, our friends and family, teammates and work colleagues who just want the same dignity as everyone else in their families. This statement by so many groups representing the people who take care of the health and well being of all Australians is an important and timely reminder of this.

“Our laws should never deliberately marginalize and exclude one group of people. It is time for our politicians to do their job and pass marriage equality. Our family and friends deserve better” Tiernan Brady continued.

Nicolas Parkhill, CEO of ACON said, “There is conclusive evidence that LGBTI people experience higher levels of depression, anxiety disorders, self-harm, suicidal ideation and suicide compared to the general population because of stigma, prejudice, discrimination and exclusion. These health conditions are exacerbated by the ongoing marriage equality debate in this country. This protracted discourse is harming people, creating segregation and contributing to poorer health outcomes.

“We call on our elected representatives to recognise the negative health consequences of marriage discrimination, to legislate for marriage equality and to improve the health and wellbeing of LGBTI



people. Marriage equality is beyond politics – real people, Australian families, dignity and importantly, health, are at the centre of this issue” Nicholas Parkhill said.

“The Marriage Equality debate is harming the health and wellbeing of Australians. We do not need to debate any longer. We do not need a \$160 million plebiscite. What we need is to treat LGBTI Australians with the same dignity and equal rights as everyone else,” Simon Ruth, CEO, Victorian AIDS Council.

“Young people overwhelmingly support marriage equality and tell us it’s a really important issue to them. For ReachOut, supporting marriage equality is a ‘no brainer’,” ReachOut CEO, Jono Nicholas said.

For information on the LGBTI communities’ response to the senate inquiry that provides a cross-party pathway for marriage equality go to:
<http://www.equalitycampaign.org.au/welcome-senate-report>

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Leading Health Organisations on the United Statement for Marriage Equality

*ACON Health
AIDS Action Council of the ACT (AACACT)
Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis, and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM)
Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO)
Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association
Australian Lesbian Medical Association
Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF)
Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association (APNA)
Australian Women’s Health Network
Black Dog Institute
Centre for Culture, Ethnicity & Health
Chronic Illness Alliance
cohealth
Drummond Street Services
EACH Social and Community Health
Family Planning Alliance Australia
Family Planning NSW
Family Planning Tasmania
Family Planning VIC
Family Planning Welfare Association Northern Territory
Headspace
Life Without Barriers
Mental Health Australia
Mental Health First Aid
MIND Australia*



Neami National

Northern Territory AIDS and Hepatitis Council (NTAHC)

Public Health Association of Australia

Queensland AIDS Council (QuAC)

ReachOut.com

Relationships Australia

Sexual Health Quarters (i.e Family Planning WA)

Shine SA (i.e. Family Planning SA)

Tasmanian council on AIDS Hepatitis and Related Diseases (TasCHARD)

Victorian AIDS Council (VAC)

Western Australian AIDS Council (WAAC)

