

Thorne Harbour Health Launches COVID-19 Rainbow Connection Service

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday 15 April 2020 - LGBTI Victorians who are isolated or impacted by COVID-19 will now be able to access additional social connection and support services through Thorne Harbour Health's Rainbow Connection.

Launched today, the COVID-19 Rainbow Connection offers a range of services to LGBTI communities throughout Victoria including peer support and assistance with food and housing issues.

"COVID-19 has created an unprecedented social change in our community that has seen many people being isolated from usual connections and supports. Thorne Harbour Health's Rainbow Connection program is here to fill the gap for the many LGBTI people who find themselves without adequate support or struggling with food or housing security," said Thorne Harbour CEO Simon Ruth.

"We know that maintaining meaningful connections to community has a profoundly positive impact on people's sense of self, feelings of anxiety/distress and general wellbeing. For this reason, and to address the challenges caused by the physical distancing measures in place, Rainbow Connection actively links isolated LGBTI people with the services and supports they need to get by during this time."

With the support of the Victorian Government for the next three months, Thorne Harbour has been able to extend their existing Community Support program for LGBTI seniors and people living with HIV to now include any LGBTI people who are isolated or impacted by COVID-19.

"Many LGBTI people have lost jobs, are struggling financially or with their mental health as a result of COVID-19," said Simon Ruth.

"Thorne Harbour Health continues to be there for the community with an expansion of our Rainbow Connection program that is providing support to any LGBTI person who is struggling with the impacts of COVID-19 in their lives."

The COVID-19 Rainbow Connection is a state-wide, volunteer-driven service supporting LGBTI people across Victoria.

The COVID-19 Rainbow Connection service can be contacted 9AM – 5PM, Monday to Friday by phoning 1800 961 780 or via email rainbowconnection@thorneharbour.org.

ENDS

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