



Merri Health
Healthcare that moves with you

MEDIA RELEASE

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Queer service responds to extra demand during plebiscite

Victoria's alcohol and drug queer support service Q Health, has made room for extra support as the same-sex marriage survey reaches its final days.

Q Health provides individual, couple and family counselling to anyone that identifies same-sex attracted and gender diverse, and is experiencing alcohol and drug issues.

Manager of counselling and support services at Merri Health, Jemma Mead, said that the public marriage equality debate can affect people's mental health and wellbeing, with Q Health ready to provide extra support during this time.

"In response to homophobia and discrimination, members of the LGBTIQ community experience a higher rate of drug and alcohol abuse and can use substances as escape mechanisms. If you're in need of extra support, Q Health can provide this in a confidential and safe space, with a worker that identifies as same-sex attracted or gender diverse," said Jemma.

Q Health is a free service that is available to anyone living in metropolitan, western or northern suburbs of Melbourne. Anyone can self-refer to the service by calling 1800LGBTIQ or emailing info@queerspace.org.au.

Q Health is a partnership approach to meeting emerging needs of marginalised groups, from Rainbow Tick accredited provider, Merri Health and founder of Queerspace, drummond street services.

– Ends –

Quick facts

- A report of almost 4000 people, A Closer Look at Private Lives 2, found that nine per cent of people identifying as same- sex attracted and gender diverse, used methamphetamine in the past year, compared with two per cent nationally.
- Q Health has been funded by the North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN) under the Primary Health Networks Programme – An Australian Government Initiative. NWMPHN has committed \$2.4m to provide better access to alcohol and other drug services and more personalised support in Melbourne's north and west.

Media contact

Viviana Rosas

(03) 8319 7447

Viviana.Rosas@merrihealth.org.au