

Calling for Action Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia in Victoria

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday 16 May 2023 - In the lead up to IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia), Victoria's LGBTIQ+ community-controlled health organisation, Thorne Harbour Health, is calling for swift and collective action to address the recent series of attacks on Victoria's LGBTIQ+ communities.

"While IDAHOBIT is a chance to acknowledge the discrimination faced by our LGBTIQ+ communities internationally, this year Victoria has an opportunity to lead by example and swiftly respond to the recent spate of attacks on our LGBTIQ+ communities," said Thorne Harbour Health Acting CEO Carolyn Gillespie.

"The threats of violence and hate speech from a vocal minority cannot and should not dictate whether LGBTIQ+ people can safely and fully participate in society," Ms Gillespie said.

Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews recently called the threats of violence that led to the cancellation of Monash Council's IDAHOBIT event 'hate speech — plain and simple'.

Thorne Harbour Health is calling on the Government to follow through on its commitment to protect LGBTIQ+ Victorians by expanding anti-vilification laws. The organisation is also seeking greater leadership from Victoria Police to work with LGBTIQ+ communities so events can be held safely.

"Our communities have already started to mobilise and find innovative solutions to make events safer to attend. We hope that Victoria Police can get on board and support their efforts," Ms. Gillespie said.

"Cancelling an IDAHOBIT event due to threats of violence toward our LGBTIQ+ communities is a powerful reminder that our work is far from over. Community events can offer us a meaningful engagement with one another, a space to be affirmed and celebrated for who we are, and an important contributor to a more equitable and inclusive society."

Thorne Harbour Health is currently planning a series of community events, exhibitions, and forums this winter to celebrate the organisation's 40th anniversary. The full schedule is due to be released later this month.

ENDS

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Centre Clinic

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St Kilda VIC 3182
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