



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Labor commitments on HIV, LGBTIQ health a big step forward**

AFAO warmly welcomes new commitments from Federal Labor to end Australia's HIV epidemic and bolster the health of LGBTIQ people.

Labor has announced that, if elected, it will establish a bipartisan taskforce to drive the effort to end HIV transmission and also restore funding to peak organisations involved in the community-led HIV response. It will also fund a pilot program of peer contact tracing and wrap-around clinical and peer support at diagnosis.

In a separate commitment, Labor will consult on the unique health issues and barriers to access that LGBTIQ Australians may face, with the assistance of organisations such as AFAO.

AFAO chief executive, Darryl O'Donnell, said the commitments were a significant advance.

"We have made important strides in HIV prevention over the last five years, but progress is delicate and will stall without additional investment. These commitments provide a solid foundation as we attempt something quite remarkable, the end of Australian HIV transmission," Mr O'Donnell said.

"We are now in the fifth decade of the HIV epidemic, but with renewed political and financial commitment we can absolutely avoid entering a sixth."

"While LGBTIQ communities are resilient they have poorer overall health and are less likely to access health services. We warmly endorse the support of Labor health spokesman, Mark Butler, in understanding this challenge and identifying the need for additional support."

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### **AFAO**

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AFAO is the national federation for the HIV community response in Australia. AFAO works to end HIV transmission and reduce its impact on communities in Australia, Asia and the Pacific. AFAO's members are the AIDS Councils in each state and territory; the National Association of People with HIV Australia (NAPWHA); the Australian Injecting & Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL); the Anwernekenhe National HIV Alliance (ANA); and Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association. AFAO's affiliate member organisations – spanning community, research, public health and clinical workforce – share AFAO's values and support the work we do.