

## Media Release

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### Finally elderly lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex seniors get the support they need

- How does an elderly transgender person feel about being showered by someone not sensitive to his/her needs?
- What does it feel like to have to 'de-gay' your house every time the cleaner comes over?
- How easy is it to reach out for care when you have been branded 'illegal' for most of your life?

It is precisely these questions that prompted community care organisation, Care Connect, to design aged care services specifically for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) seniors.

"This community has been invisible, marginalised and discriminated against for most of their lives. Even though this topic is seemingly mainstream to most Australians LGBTI seniors have substantial and life long barriers to asking for culturally appropriate services.

"LGBTI seniors have had to hide their sexuality and gender identity out of necessity and this has meant, up until now, they have suffered from care needs that have gone unmet.

"The Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) supported our proposal to tailor existing aged care packages to suit the specific needs of the LGBTI community in South East Queensland. We worked in partnership with Healthy Communities to ensure these services were a right-fit with the community," says **Paul Ostrowski**, Chief Executive Officer, Care Connect.

On **Wednesday 2 November** Care Connect is launching its LGBTI aged care services for South East Queensland. Launching the program is **Noeline Brown**, Ambassador for Ageing (Office for an Ageing Australia).

"In Australia many gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex people are part of a marginalised group so it is terrific that Care Connect's trained staff understand the issues facing the LGBTI community. I believe Care Connect strives to provide an environment where LGBTI people do not fear discrimination, and for those in relationships, Care Connect recognises partners as chosen decision makers, which is a wonderful thing," says **Noeline Brown**, Ambassador for Ageing, Office for an Ageing Australia.

Also speaking at the event is **Paul Martin**, Executive Director, Healthy Communities who says "An 80-year-old LGBTI senior for example, would have been in their 60s when homosexuality was decriminalised in Queensland and in their 70s when discrimination, based on gender identity, became illegal in Queensland.

"We are now calling for LGBTI seniors in South East Queensland to make contact with us," says **Paul Ostrowski**.

**Event date/time:** Wednesday 2 November 10.45am-12.45pm  
**Venue:** Customs House, 399 Queens Street, Brisbane

**\*\* Note this is an invitation-only event\*\***

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