



***MEDIA RELEASE***

***15 June, 2023***

**Blair Comley PSM welcomed as next Secretary of Department of Health and Aged Care**

Health Equity Matters, the federation for Australia's leading HIV and LGBTIQA+ organisations, warmly welcomes Blair Comley as the next Secretary of the Department of Health and Aged Care.

Mr Comley is a former secretary of the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet. He previously served as secretary of the Commonwealth Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism and the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency.

Health Equity Matters also wishes to recognise the enormous contribution of outgoing Secretary, Professor Brendan Murphy.

"Health Equity Matters looks forward to working closely with Blair Comley to achieve something truly historic, the virtual end of Australian HIV transmission," Health Equity Matters chief executive Darryl O'Donnell said. "Since the beginning of the HIV epidemic, a strong partnership between communities, government, researchers and the medical fraternity has powered our world leading response. We look forward to this continuing.

"The health needs of LGBTIQA+ communities demand specific and dedicated support. Our communities carry a greater burden of mental and physical health issues stemming from entrenched stigma and discomfort with mainstream clinical settings. We look forward to collaborating closely with Mr Comley and his department to improve outcomes.

Health Equity Matters paid tribute to Professor Brendan Murphy AC for his contribution to the health sector as Chief Medical Officer (CMO) from 2016 and Department secretary from 2020.

"Professor Murphy has made an outstanding contribution to the nation and retires with our deep gratitude and respect."

**Interview requests: Nick Lucchinelli 0422229032**