



***MEDIA RELEASE***

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## **Darryl O'Donnell steps down as CEO of Health Equity Matters**

Health Equity Matters pays tribute to chief executive officer, Adjunct Professor Darryl O'Donnell, who is stepping down after eight impactful years leading the organisation.

Health Equity Matters president, Mark Orr AM, said O'Donnell had been a transformative leader.

“Darryl became chief executive at a very challenging time for the organisation. In the years since, he has worked tirelessly to enhance its stability and sustainability. This has expanded our capacity and impact.

“Among his many achievements, Darryl has most recently helped shape the work of the HIV Taskforce chaired by the Hon Mark Butler MP, and the LGBTIQA+ Health Ten Year Action Plan chaired by Assistant Minister the Hon Ged Kearney MP. The report released by the HIV Taskforce last week charts a credible path to virtual elimination of HIV transmission by the end of the decade.

“Internationally, Darryl has led programming in South East Asia, funded through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. This work builds the capacity of civil society organisations to work with their governments to address the funding and delivery of HIV prevention, treatment, and care services.

“In his time with Health Equity Matters Darryl has always put communities and people at the centre of our work. This essential humanity has lit a path for genuine progress.

“On behalf of the Health Equity Matters board and members, I thank Darryl for his passion, insight and commitment. He has served our mission and the communities we support with intelligence, sensitivity and impact. We have all been fortunate to benefit from Darryl's decades long contributions to the HIV sector in the community based and led organisations, and government.

“Darryl leaves Health Equity Matters well positioned to be the Government's partner leading the virtual elimination of HIV transmission in Australia, driving improvements in LGBTIQA+ health care, and continue to advocate for sex worker rights and drug law reform, alongside our members.”

Scott Harlum, president of the National Association of People Living with HIV Australia said:

“Darryl's sincere, rock-solid commitment to the partnership approach of Australia's HIV response has provided a foundation for all partners to thrive and perform our individual role in ways to the greatest benefit of us all. Darryl's wisdom and leadership has brought out the best in all of us.



HIV. LGBTIQA+. COMMUNITIES.

"It is impossible to quantify just how much Darryl's insight and expertise will be missed. A true giant of our cause, and friend to all. Thank you, Darryl - NAPWHA wishes you the very best."

Dash Heath-Paynter will act as CEO from the new year, ably supported by Felicity Young, Principal Director, International. The Board will shortly commence an extensive search for Health Equity Matters' next CEO.

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