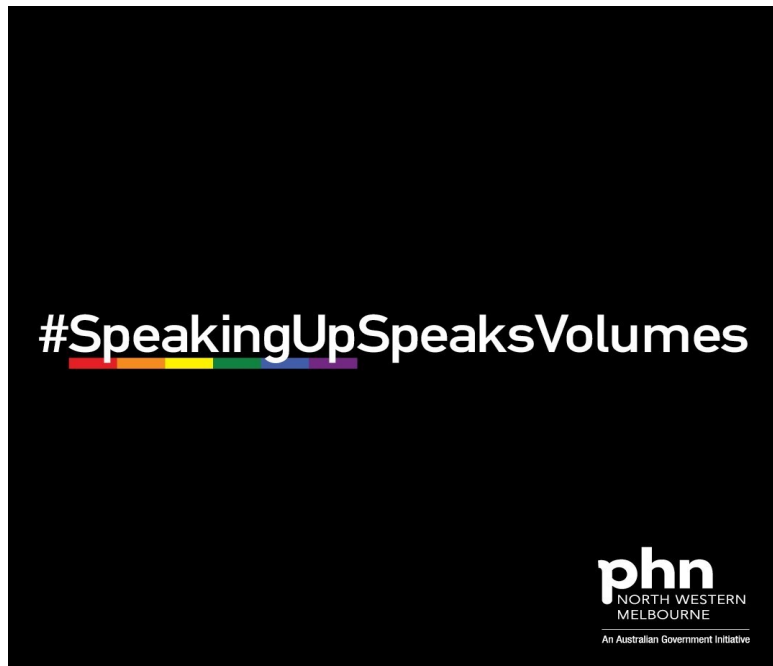


Tuesday, 23 February

## #SpeakingUpSpeaksVolumes for LGBTIQ+ communities



It's time for us all to speak up to help improve the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ communities.

LGBTIQ+ people still face high levels of stigma and discrimination in their daily lives. Of 1000 people surveyed by North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network, more than half knew someone who has been discriminated against because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or variation in sex characteristics.

Without support and acceptance, people who are LGBTIQ+ are more likely to experience mental health issues and young LGBTIQ+ people are 5 times more likely to attempt suicide.

We can all help make a difference in the lives of our LGBTIQ+ friends, colleagues and family. This week NWMPHN is launching the **#SpeakingUpSpeaksVolumes** campaign, calling on the broader community to speak up and show support for people who are LGBTIQ+.

Many of us value and appreciate living in an inclusive society but are often silent in our support. By speaking up, we can change lives.

There are lots of ways people can show active support, such as:

- 1) Sharing the hashtag **#SpeakingUpSpeaksVolumes** on Facebook and Instagram, with your own message of support.
- 2) **Sharing your positive stories** about how speaking up has made a real difference and ask others to do the same. There are some great examples of this on the [website](#)
- 3) Visiting [SpeakingUpSpeaksVolumes.org.au](https://SpeakingUpSpeaksVolumes.org.au) to find a range of posters, and social media graphics for you to share.

80% of the 1000 people surveyed for the campaign said they recognised the high level of stigma and discrimination faced by people who are LGBTIQ+, and more than 60% said they would speak up in support.

Some of those surveyed were shocked at the health and suicide statistics, especially for transgender, non-binary and intersex people.

*'It makes me feel really sad. It hurts to think people are still discriminated against and that some groups of people are so much more likely to feel depressed or suicidal. It breaks my heart and makes me wonder what more can I do.'*

NWMPHN CEO Adjunct Associate Professor Chris Carter said the simple act of openly showing support can be a catalyst for great change for the better.

"It's a domino effect – the more people that openly show their support for LGBTIQ+ communities, the more other people feel comfortable to do the same," A/Prof Carter said. "With that simple step, we can go a long way to creating a safer, healthier and more welcoming environment for everyone."

Whether you are a friend, workmate, teammate or family - every time you speak up or support someone who is LGBTIQ+ you will make a difference.

Visit [SpeakingUpSpeaksVolumes](#) to read stories of allies, learn more about the campaign, and find out where to get help, support and training to speak up and be a great ally.

## For all enquiries:

**Jeremy Kennett** *Communications Coordinator*

T: (03) 9347 1188 E: [jeremy.kennett@nwmpnh.org.au](mailto:jeremy.kennett@nwmpnh.org.au) or [newsletter@nwmpnh.org.au](mailto:newsletter@nwmpnh.org.au)



[@NWMelbPHN](#)



[@facebook](#)



[LinkedIn](#)

## ABOUT PHNs

Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health, PHNs began operation on 1 July 2015 and are responsible for coordinating primary health care and facilitating improved health outcomes in their local community. Melbourne Primary Care Network operates the North Western Melbourne PHN.

While the Australian Government Department of Health has contributed to the funding of this material, the information contained in it does not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government and is not advice that is provided, or information that is endorsed, by the Australian Government. The Australian Government is not responsible in negligence or otherwise for any injury, loss or damage however arising from the use of or reliance on the information provided herein