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MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INAUGURAL AWARDS RECOGNISE OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS IN LGBTQ INCLUSION IN HEALTH AND WELLBEING SECTOR

A variety of role models, allies and organisations dedicated to LGBTQ inclusion within the Australian health and wellbeing sector have been recognised for their efforts in advancing LGBTQ inclusion at the Australian Pride in Health + Wellbeing Awards, held online today.

Held for the first time, the awards event is a celebration dedicated to recognising exceptional efforts in improving LGBTQ inclusion within health and wellbeing organisations across the country. It is produced by Pride in Health + Wellbeing, the national not-for-profit inclusion program for the health, wellbeing, human services, and community care sector, spearheaded by Australia's largest LGBTQ health organisation ACON.

Cohealth was recognised as the Service Provider of the Year, along with Drug & Alcohol Services Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District who were awarded for being the Most Improved Service Provider. Erin Heine and Jason Van Ritten from Central Coast Local Health District received the LGBTQ Out Role Model Award and LGBTQ Ally Award respectively, for their significant contribution to and advocacy for LGBTQ inclusion for staff and for service users.

The Trans and Gender Diverse Healthcare Training Project from Sydney's St Vincent's Hospital Network was celebrated for its innovation efforts by receiving the LGBTQ Inclusive Innovation Award.

The awards showcase the results of the Pride in Health + Wellbeing Index— a free national benchmarking instrument used to assess LGBTQ inclusion within the Australian health services sector.

Award attendees were addressed by leading sector figures, including a keynote address from ACON Board Director and co-founder of GenderQ, Dr Atari Metcalf, as well as the Victorian Commissioner for LGBTIQ Communities Todd Fernando, National Mental Health Commission Chair Lucinda Brogden AM, and ACON President Dr Justin Koonin.

The awards ceremony was emceed by ABC journalist Mon Schafter, who was joined by Pride in Health + Wellbeing co-patrons, leading doctor and LGBTQ health advocate Dr Keryn Phelps AM and former Telstra Group Executive and CEO of SBS, Michael Ebeid AM.

Claire Allen, National Program Manager of Pride in Health + Wellbeing said: "Since it was established in 2017, the Pride in Health + Wellbeing Index has continued to see a tangible shift in practice with LGBTQ inclusion work in the sector across the country. With a wide and an increasingly diverse range of organisations participating, we are seeing greater commitments to providing safer and more inclusive environments and experiences for sexuality and gender diverse people when they access health and wellbeing services.

"As our diverse LGBTQ communities continue to face a number of shared and distinct health and social inclusion issues, providers across the board and across the country are demonstrating that they are stepping up to take action to address barriers our communities face in accessing help and support."

Allen added: "I would like to congratulate the organisations within the health and wellbeing sector working towards overcoming these very serious issues, and the many individuals on the efforts they are making to ensure everyone who accesses their services is welcome and supported."

"It's important to acknowledge and celebrate the many achievements that have been made in the greater inclusion of LGBTQ people so that our communities can see where progress is being made."

ENDS

(Award recipients on next page)

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2022 Pride in Health + Wellbeing Awards Recipients

Award	Recipient
Service Provider of the Year	cohealth
Most Improved Service Provider of the Year	Drug & Alcohol Services Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District
LGBTQ Inclusive Innovation	Trans and Gender Diverse Healthcare Training Project - St Vincent's Hospital Network Sydney
LGBTQ Out Role Model	Erin Heine - Central Coast Local Health District
LGBTQ Ally	Jason Van Ritten – Central Coast Local Health District
Gold Service Providers	cohealth Uniting Vic.Tas
Silver Service Providers	Advance Diversity Services Network of Alcohol & Other Drugs Agencies (NADA) Wayss
Bronze Service Providers	Australian College of Applied Professions: Clinic (ACAP) City Fertility Drug & Alcohol Services Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District Flourish Australia Relationships Australia (NSW) +one not for publication
Participating Service Providers	CAMHS Unit – Central Coast Local Health District Good Shephard ANZ Gna Ka Lun – Southern Western Sydney Local Health District Hunter Primary Care Silver Chain Group Virtus Health +four not for publication