

Drummond Street and VAC to Offer Adoption Service If Others Fail

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

30 March 2015 - With the recent Australian Christian Lobby warning that faith-based adoption agencies may cease to operate unless they're granted the right to refuse same-sex couples, both the Victorian AIDS Council (VAC) and Drummond Street Services have stepped up to say they'd be willing to offer an adoption service that doesn't discriminate if the need arises.

"If an adoption service can't operate without permission to discriminate against potential parents from a gender, sex, or sexually diverse background, then it's not a service that the state of Victoria should be supporting - whether that's through financial support or by being granted an exemption," said VAC CEO Simon Ruth. "VAC will do everything it can to support the diverse community it serves. If that means setting up an adoption agency to support potential rainbow families, we'll work with community partners to make that happen."

Committed to programs and services that ensure the wellbeing of Victorian families, Drummond Street Services has come forward to say it would work with VAC if such a need arose.

"In a time when so many children desperately need to be placed in alternative permanent, safe and nurturing families, faith-based organisations seeking to discriminate against same-sex loving adult couples who are willing to provide such support, seems ludicrous and offensive," said Drummond Street CEO Karen Field. "Asking for protection in order to maintain their prejudicial and homophobic beliefs in this day and age is insulting and, I would have thought, contrary to good Christian values."

Field went on to say, "It is unfortunate that the Royal Commission provides ample examples where the unfettered protection faith-based organisations have enjoyed, and have asked to be continued, has at times been at the detriment of children in their care. In addition, proposed changes to the *Adoption Act* by the Victorian government is merely seeking to both acknowledge and keep pace with the rich and diverse family forms in contemporary Australia life."

ENDS

For media enquiries, contact:

Caleb Hawk
Communications Coordinator
caleb.hawk@vac.org.au
03 9865 6700

VICTORIAN AIDS COUNCIL

Peter Knight Centre
6 Claremont Street
South Yarra Victoria 3141
P 613 9865 6700
F 613 9826 2700
Toll Free 1800 134 840

Positive Living Centre
51 Commercial Road
South Yarra Victoria 3141
P 613 9863 0444
F 613 9820 3166
Toll Free 1800 622 795

Centre Clinic - St Kilda
Rear of 77 Fitzroy Street
St Kilda Victoria 3182
P 613 9525 5866
F 613 9525 3673

PRONTO!
Rapid Testing Service
175 Rose Street
Fitzroy Victoria 3065
P 613 9416 2889

ABN: 52 907 644 835