



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION  
Mr Michael Pettersson MLA (Chair), Miss Laura Nuttall MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Ms Nicole Lawder MLA

**ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE (QTON)**  
**Public Hearing - Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation in the ACT**  
**Tuesday, 21 May 2024**

Asked by Miss Laura Nuttall MLA on 21 May 2024: Lucy Hohnen, Chief Executive Officer, St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn took on notice the following question(s):

Ref: *Hansard - Uncorrected Proof Transcript (UPT)*, 21 May 2024 [p34]

In relation to:

*LGBTQIA+ social connection data*

**MISS NUTTALL:** So my question is to M Hohnen in particular. Just a clarifying question. Within your submission you make mention that a study conducted in 2023, those identifying as LGBTQIA+ reported higher social connection. In other submissions that we have seen, there are actually higher rates of loneliness reported for those who identify as LGBTQIA+. Would you be able to elaborate on the measures for the study and why the information might sort of differ a little bit?

**Ms Hohnen:** I think I will have to take that on notice, that level of detail.

Lucy Hohnen, Chief Executive Officer (St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn) The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

[You are right regarding our reference to the Living Well Report, published by the University of Canberra. Our primary interest in referencing this data in our submission was to highlight the different population groups and how they interface with social connection and loneliness. We note that, on Page 93 of the report, members of the LGBTQIA+ community are counted among those with a higher social connection. Again, on Page 96, members of the LGBTQIA+ community are counted among the cohort who reported they “hardly ever felt lonely”.

Our programs support Canberrans regardless of their identity. At the moment we do not have enough internal data on members of the LGBTQIA+ community to dispute the data presented in the Living Well Report, or to offer an informed position on any other research. Thank you.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion

Signature:

Date: 23 May 2024

By [Ms Lucy Hohnen]