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# NSW ELECTION 2023: QUESTIONS

October 2022



# QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

RESET

## HIV, BBVS, AND STIS

### If elected, will you:

1. Maintain strong funding commitments and partnerships across government, health, community organisations, key affected populations and researchers, both to achieve the goals of the current NSW BBV and STI Strategies, and to build on this commitment in future Strategies?
2. Commit to additional funding for innovative programs that are targeted toward improving access to testing, treatment and prevention for priority populations across all HIV, BBV and STI Strategies?

Yes  No

Comment

New South Wales will only remain a world leader in the prevention and management of BBVs and STIs if we continue to implement and build on existing strategies.

If I am re-elected, I will work with whoever is in government, as I always have, to push for funding and support in achieving strong HIV, BBV and STI targets.

Yes  No

Comment

New South Wales has made enviable achievements in HIV, BBVs and STIs through a combination of approaches from testing and treatment to harm minimisation measures. But certain populations are falling behind and need new targeted strategies including gay and bi migrant, refugee, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and incarcerated populations.

If I am re-elected I will call for additional funding for these priority groups.

3. In line with the National HIV, viral hepatitis and STI Strategies, recognise in current and future NSW HIV, viral hepatitis and STI Strategies the need to eliminate the negative impact of legal and human rights issues on people's health?
4. Repeal the *Mandatory Disease Testing Act 2021*?

Yes  No

Comment

Penalising people for their health status has no place in a modern healthcare system. Unfortunately laws continue to encourage stigma and even criminalise people with HIV, viral hepatitis and STIs, impacting on their human rights and the effectiveness of health strategies.

My record in Parliament shows that I will always oppose and call out attempts to weaken harm minimisation approaches to HIV, viral hepatitis and STIs. I will continue this approach if re-elected.

Yes  No

Comment

I opposed this legislation when it was introduced in Parliament and continue to support its repeal. The laws passed with government and opposition support and I am committed to further work in Parliament to convince the major parties that these laws are harmful.

## QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES CONTINUED

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5. Repeal s79 of the *Public Health Act 2010*, and if necessary, substitute it with non-stigmatising provisions that protect public health?

Yes

No

Comment

When these laws were introduced I worked to encourage the government to instead introduce laws that encourage mutual responsibility between parties to prevent the transmission of sexually transmissible diseases. At the time, the government did not agree with my proposal and if I am re-elected, I will raise this matter with the new health minister and determine the most effective pathway for reform.

6. Amend s61HJ(k)(3) of the *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW) to clarify that fraudulent inducement does not include a misrepresentation about a person's health or disability, gender history or identity?

Yes

No

Comment

I understand the concern and will seek further advice in order to consider the best way forward to ensure people are not criminalised for not disclosing the very personal details of their health, disability, gender history or gender identity.

# QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES CONTINUED

## COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND RESEARCH

### If elected, will you:

**7.** Ensure that all funding agreements the NSW Government has with community organisations are indexed to appropriately match inflation and ensure community organisations do not incur a real loss of income?

Yes  No

Comment

Community organisations' contribution to people's lives in this state is invaluable and comes with significant budget savings through increased productivity and decreased costs in health and justice for example.

The organisations need to be funded to cover rising costs and remunerate staff appropriately in the face of rising costs of living and a tight labour force.

**8.** Bring together a senior level, cross portfolio standing committee, with community representation, that is tasked with coordination of efforts, enhanced investment in partnerships, and information sharing about programs and services that focus on key populations experiencing significant intersecting inequities?

Yes  No

Comment

This is a great idea. The approach of siloing people into distinct programs that only address one aspect of their needs does not reflect many people's reality of intersecting needs and complex challenges while limiting the outcomes of programs.

**9.** Increase the government investment in the peer workforce and specialist peer support services in all aspects of government health services, from planning and development to implementation and evaluation?

Yes  No

Comment

I have always sought advice from specialist peer support services in health policies and believe those who work in these services are best placed to establish and evaluate health services. If re-elected I will continue this approach.

**10.** Provide funding to expand the peer workforce across all aspects of health and community services, including and especially mental health, suicide prevention, ageing, alcohol and other drugs, sexual health, and service navigation?

Yes  No

Comment

I have a long history of successfully supporting funding requests to government to help peer run services expand. These services provide the best outcomes for those facing challenges and we need these services to grow in order to protect people falling through the cracks.

## QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES CONTINUED

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**11.** Provide long-term investments to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to achieve sustainable, culturally-informed outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQ communities including Sistergirls and Brotherboys (LGBTQ+SB), and people affected by viral hepatitis?

Yes

No

Comment

I will continue to request investment in First Nations LGBTQ+SB controlled organisations. These organisations are essential to ensuring the needs of First Nations LGBTQ+SB people are being met.

**12.** Continue to invest in quality research about our communities (particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally, ethnically and linguistically diverse members of our communities), including new investments in peer-led clinical and academic research on sex workers?

Yes

No

Comment

There is a need for continuous research into LGBTIQA + communities, particularly around priority populations. LGBTIQA+ people still have poor health, mental health and wellbeing and this can be heightened in other communities. More research will help identify better supports and preventative measures.

# QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES CONTINUED

## INCLUSION IN GOVERNMENT DECISION-MAKING AND DELIVERY

### If elected, will you:

**13.** Have a dedicated Minister or spokesperson for LGBTQI+ communities?

Yes  No

Comment

Currently my requests for action get moved around from one minister to another with no one taking full responsibility.

I have repeatedly called on the government to make a minister responsible for a dedicated LGBTQI+ portfolio, raising the matter directly with the Premier. It is hoped that an announcement will come soon.

**14.** Establish an office, branch or unit of government dedicated to LGBTQI+ issues?

Yes  No

Comment

In addition to a dedicated minister, there needs to be a dedicated department unit taking responsibility and coordinating with departments, agencies and ministers and ensuring the delivery of holistic programs.

**15.** Establish an LGBTQI+ advisory council to allow for ongoing community consultation and engagement?

Yes  No

Comment

We will only improve outcomes for LGBTQI+ people if we listen to them to better understand their challenges and establish solutions together. An advisory council covering various organisations should be created to consult with LGBTQI+ communities to promote equality.

If re-elected, I will call on the government to set up such a council.

**16.** Develop a whole-of-government LGBTQI+ inclusion strategy?

Yes  No

Comment

I advocated for the NSW LGBTQI+ Health Strategy 2022-2027 and am pleased there is now a funded strategy to improve the health and welfare of LGBTQI+ communities. A whole-of-government inclusion strategy with targets across fields including workforce and education.

If re-elected, I will call on the government to establish an LGBTQI+ inclusion strategy. I will also include provisions for greater public service inclusion in my Equality Bill.

# QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES CONTINUED

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND JUSTICE

### If elected, will you:

**17.** Commit to a review and comprehensive reforms of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* (NSW), including to:

- ensure all LGBTIQ+ people and sex workers are protected from discrimination;
- remove exceptions allowing discrimination by private educational authorities and religious organisations in employment and service delivery (including adoption)?
- narrow exceptions allowing discrimination against trans and gender diverse people in sport?
- remove exceptions allowing discrimination against trans and gender diverse people in superannuation?

Yes  No

Comment

The Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 is no longer fit for purpose and needs a rewrite to modernise its approach to discrimination. If re-elected, I will call for a rewrite while also introducing a private members bill to expand protections for all LGBTIQ+ people, provide protections against discrimination for sex workers, remove exceptions for private educational authorities and religious organisations, narrow exceptions for trans and gender diverse people in sport and repeal exemptions on superannuation providers that allow them to discriminate against trans and gender diverse people.

**18.** Amend government procurement requirements to require service providers to provide non-discriminatory services?

Yes  No

Comment

Government procurement should always reflect values around equality, sustainability and human rights. If re-elected I will raise the need for all government funded services to be provided without discrimination.

**19.** Introduce legislation to end conversion practices seeking to change or suppress a person's sexual orientation or gender identity?

Yes  No

Comment

This will be a part of my Equality Bill.

## QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES CONTINUED

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### If elected, will you:

**20.** Reform the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act to allow trans and gender diverse people to update their gender markers on birth certificates through a simple administrative mechanism, including without the need for surgical or medical interventions?

Yes  No

Comment

Requiring trans and gender diverse people to undergo surgery to update their state documentation is archaic and fails to reflect the reality of the majority of people who are transgender. I have raised the matter with multiple ministers and the Premier, initiated discussion in Parliament and drafted legislation. My Equality Bill will include reforms to ensure all trans and gender diverse people can update their gender markers on birth certificates.

**21.** Introduce legislation preventing so-called 'normalising' medical interventions on people with innate variations of sex characteristics without their personal consent?

Yes  No

Comment

If re-elected, my Equality Bill will include a framework to prohibit unnecessary medical interventions on people who have variations in sex characteristics without their consent. The reforms will likely be based on the ACT bill which is yet to be available so may not be included in the first draft of the bill.

**22.** Commit to a review and comprehensive reforms to parentage laws to ensure families created through surrogacy or with co-parenting arrangements are properly recognised?

Yes  No

Comment

Children should have the protections of having all their parents recognised in law regardless of the circumstances of their birth.

My Equality Bill will include provisions for legal parentage of children born out of surrogacy, but a review is the best way forward to address all issues around parental recognition. If re-elected, I will support a review.

**23.** Commit to an audit and comprehensive reforms of NSW laws that discriminate or disadvantage LGBTIQ+ people?

Yes  No

Comment

I have been working with stakeholders on reforms to remove all discrimination against LGBTIQ+ people to inform my Equality Bill which I intend to introduce to Parliament if re-elected.



## OUR COMMUNITIES' HEALTH AND ACCESS TO SERVICES

### If elected, will you:

**24.** Support and actively monitor implementation of the LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy for the entire term of government, including evaluation reporting, and embedding the goals of the Strategy across all other health Strategies? These goals include:

- Deliver high-quality, safe, inclusive and responsive healthcare, including:
  - Education and training
  - Mental health and suicide prevention
  - System responsiveness
- Respond to the health needs of transgender and gender diverse people in NSW
- Respond to the health needs of intersex people in NSW
- Capture data on sexuality, gender and intersex variations at the point of care and population level.

Yes  No

Comment

I advocated for the LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy and strongly believe that we need to continually measure and monitor progress in achieving the goals and targets set. If re-elected, I will hold the government to account for action and outcomes throughout the next term and the period of the strategy.

**25.** Implement reforms to ensure transgender young people are allowed to legally consent to gender-affirming medical treatment with the consent of one parent or on their own when they have the maturity to do so?

Yes  No

Comment

Transgender children and young people face barriers to gender affirming treatment that other young people do not have to deal with in accessing treatment. I am currently consulting with trans and gender diverse stakeholders on how to best ensure competent young people can access gender affirming care for inclusion in my Equality Bill.

**26.** Ensure that NSW continues its world-leading commitment to innovative, evidence-based responses to infectious diseases that are grounded in partnership with affected communities and researchers, in light of the evolving MPXV and COVID-19 climates?

Yes  No

Comment

My advocacy helped secure urgent access to monkey pox vaccines for at-risk populations and then for the broader population ahead of WorldPride. The quick response has helped prevent stigma while protecting the community. If re-elected, I will continue to support evidence-based responses to infectious diseases.

## QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES CONTINUED

### If elected, will you:

**27.** Commit to the development of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQ+SB Health Strategy to ensure there is a framework to improve the physical, social, and emotional wellbeing of First Nations people?

Yes  No

Comment

I acknowledge concerns raised by First Nations LGBTQ+SB stakeholders that the NSW LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy lacked culturally sensitive information and approaches. I share concern that First Nations LGBTQ+SB people have poorer outcomes and may not access mainstream services. If re-elected I would support a Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific health strategy, and I intend for my Equality Bill to include provisions for First Nations LGBTQ+SB data collection.

**28.** Ensure that there is always a focus on, and consultation with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGTBO+SB peoples when developing government strategies, and evidence-based frameworks for health provision?

Yes  No

Comment

If we are to close the gap, we must consult with First Nations people and organisations on every aspect of health and welfare policy. I am committed to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led organisations on LGBTQ+SB policies and more broadly support the Uluru Statement of the Heart, an Indigenous voice to Parliament and treaty.

**29.** Provide support and services that recognise the unique needs of older people in our communities, including social isolation programs and social housing initiatives?

Yes  No

Comment

If re-elected I will call for targeted programs for older LGBTIQ+ people living in supported accommodation who may not be accessing the services they need due to past experiences of discrimination, stigma and even violence.

I have called for a reduction in the age for priority housing to 55 years to prevent older people ending up in crisis. I will continue this push if I am re-elected.

**30.** Commit to safe and inclusive crisis accommodation and social and affordable housing across NSW?

Yes  No

Comment

Improving housing affordability has been a priority for me since I was elected and will continue to be for as long as our system fails to ensure everyone has access to safe, affordable housing. We need to build 5,000 new social housing homes every year for the next 10 years, require at least 20 percent social and affordable homes in major redevelopments and expand innovative solutions such as shared equity and co-operatives.

## QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES CONTINUED

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**31.** In committing to the improvement of health services in rural, remote and regional NSW, will you commit to specific measures that target the needs of our communities in these areas as an important aspect of this work?

Yes

No

Comment

The inquiry into health outcomes and access to health and hospital services in rural, regional and remote New South Wales found severe gaps in healthcare in country areas and we know that LGBTIQ+ people fare worse than their peers. While I represent the inner city, I share concerns about the health crisis in regional areas and if re-elected, I will call for service improvements to include better services for LGBTIQ+ people. I have made a number of successful funding requests on behalf of LGBTIQ+ organisations wanting to expand services in rural, regional and remote areas and will continue to do so while the need remains.

# QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES CONTINUED

## ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

### If elected, will you:

**32.** Commit to reforms that ensure drug use is seen as a health and social issue, rather than a criminal one, such as the reforms contained within the Report of the Special Commission of Inquiry into crystal methamphetamine and other amphetamine-type stimulants?

✓ Yes                      No

Comment

I support the recommendations of the ice inquiry and oppose criminal sanctions for personal drug use, drug dog detections operations and strip searches, and support pill testing. If re-elected I will continue to push for harm minimisation to replace the damaging criminal approach to drug use which does nothing but encourage risky behaviour and prevent people from seeking help if they need it.

**34.** Provide funding for tailored, community-led programs for people of diverse genders and sexualities that:

- provide early interventions into alcohol and other drug use
- respond to chronic and long-term use of alcohol and other drug use; and
- seek to address the modifiable risk factors for cancer, such as alcohol and tobacco use?

Yes                      No

Comment

If re-elected, I will continue to call for LGBTIQ+ targeted drug and alcohol programs to ensure they feel they can access them and to help reduce harm, intervene early to change behaviour and improve the health of people with chronic habits.

**33.** Develop an evidence-based whole-of-government Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategy that prioritises health initiatives, commits funding to harm reduction and early intervention programs for priority populations, and is produced in co-design with people with lived experience of drug use?

✓ Yes                      No

Comment

I am a member of the NSW Parliament Harm Minimisation Roundtable and we continue to call for a whole-of-government drug summit to develop a new drug strategy based on evidence and harm minimisation. The summit would provide the opportunity for those with lived experience and those on the frontline to contribute to a new approach. I will continue this advocacy if re-elected, including a push for programs to be developed with the input of people with lived experience.

# QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES CONTINUED

## SAFETY

### If elected, will you:

**35.** Ensure that NSW based responses to sexual, domestic and family violence be inclusive of the needs and experiences of people in our communities, by:

- building the knowledge base, capacity and capability of specialist SDFV and community organisations to provide services and support to people in our communities experiencing and using violence
- commit to primary prevention initiatives that address the cisgenderism and heteronormativity that drive violence against people in our communities
- invest in community-led service delivery, research, policy and legal change, and improvements in data collection

Yes  No

Comment

Despite high rates of sexual, domestic and family violence experienced by LGBTIQ+ people, policy has focused on cisgenderism and heteronormativity at the expense of addressing the unique challenges LGBTIQ+ victims and survivors face. I have always consulted with LGBTIQ+ organisations on sexual, domestic and family violence matters to bring their voice to decision-makers and my amendments to the coercive control laws will see specialist committees established to provide advice on implementation. If re-elected, I will continue to support the inclusion of the LGBTIQ+ community in developing safe responses to sexual, domestic and family violence.

**36.** Commit to a whole-of-government approach to developing and implementing intersectional and inclusive sexual, domestic and family violence policy in NSW, in line with the Seven Calls to Action to End Gendered Violence?

Yes  No

Comment

I support the seven calls to action to end gendered violence and will work towards achieving these reforms if re-elected.

**37.** Amend the *Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007 (NSW)* to improve protections for sexuality and gender diverse people and sex workers; and recognise conversion practices and threats to out, disclose or publish a person's sexuality, gender experience, HIV status or sex work as a form of family or personal violence?

Yes  No

Comment

My Equality Bill will include these provisions. These unique attempts to control or suppress LGBTIQ+ people are a form of violence unique to LGBTIQ+ communities that need to be addressed.

## QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES CONTINUED

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### If elected, will you:

**38.** Repeal the entirety of 'Part 3 Prostitution' of the *Summary Offences Act 1988* (NSW)?

Yes  No

Comment

My Equality Bill will include this needed reform. Part 3 is a hangover from criminalisation that serves no purpose but can create stigma and make life difficult for sex workers and their families.

**39.** Commit to a transparent process and timely government response to the Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ hate crimes that reflects the importance of this historical redress?

Yes  No

Comment

I have a long history of engaging with NSW Police to make policing safe for LGBTIQ+ communities, from addressing violence at the 2014 Mardi Gras to getting NSW Police to review past cases of potential gay hate crimes.

It is my hope that the Special Commission of Inquiry will bring to light past wrongs where LGBTIQ+ safety and justice were disregarded, and violence condoned or encouraged, while providing scope for justice. LGBTIQ+ policing will need reforms to heal the past and ensure these wrongs don't happen again.

If I am re-elected, I commit to working with the government and NSW Police to establish an appropriate response to restore relations with LGBTIQ+ communities and ensure they have access to safe policing. The Special Commission of Inquiry has shown how important it is to have independent

