**Case Study 2C: Fictional interview with LGBTQA+ advocate (Audio version accessible)**

**LGBTQA+ advocate River Reynes has agreed to speak to a reporter to give their thoughts on the new Rainbow Realities report, launched at the 2024 Health in Difference conference. The report covers a number of issues impacting LGBTQA+ Australians (including mental health and suicidality, discrimination and abuse, alcohol and other drug use) and is based on responses from more than 20,000 LGBTQA+ participants who shared their experiences.**

**Q: We thought it important to discuss some of the findings from the newly released Rainbow Realities Report.**

**A:** Yes, I agree, it’s such an important document and I’m happy to weigh in.

**Q: It’s a lengthy read – I want to zero in on one of the many important themes in the document: mental health and suicidality. What do you feel are the most important findings that you took from the report relating to these issues?**

**A:** For me, I feel the report highlighted that there are significant mental health challenges experienced by queer and gender and bodily diverse people, compared to others in the general population. And these challenges are often the direct and enduring effects of prejudice, stigma, and discrimination. The evidence in the report suggests that these stressors are internalised from an early age and can then have flow on effects for health and wellbeing. We need to do a lot more in this space to start changing those experiences.

**Q: How has this report been received so far and what impact can it have?**

**A:** It seems to have been well-received at the conference, but I think most of the people here today are already aware of these issues and of the need to make change happen. The Rainbow Realities report was commissioned by the government, and we’re all very much looking forward to seeing how it will be used to inform development of the 10-year LGBTQA+ Health and Wellbeing Action Plan. This document is a good first step - but how those in power now respond is what’s most important. So, we will be watching closely, continuing to push for the kinds of changes we know are needed and, of course, making sure they’re aware that their actions from here will be under very close scrutiny from the community.

**Thank you again, River, for speaking with us today.**

Thank you.

**[ENDS]**