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## CEO statement for ECCV's All One Together campaign

VicHealth is the leading health promotion agency in Victoria. Our focus is on promoting good health and preventing chronic disease.

We work with communities to ensure all voices are heard. We conduct vital research to act where it's needed most. We provide technical expertise and insights to government. And, above all, we aim to create a Victoria where everyone can enjoy better health and wellbeing.

Racism is harmful. Racism drives societies apart. Racism is a key driver of ill-health and health inequalities.

And research shows that it has detrimental health, social and economic consequences for individuals, communities and societies, with children and young people being particularly vulnerable to the harmful effects of racism. That's why we're thrilled to support ECCV on its All One Together campaign, and it is our privilege to join it as a Campaign Ambassador.

We all have a role to play when it comes to ending racism. At VicHealth, we're committed to working across sectors to create and implement strategies that support all children, their families, and their broader communities to develop positive attitudes towards cultural diversity and effectively combat racism to reduce its harmful effects.

Some of our key initiatives include:

•**Bigger Than This:** VicHealth, in partnership with Victorian Equal Opportunities and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) will consult, design, develop and deliver a program that aims to support children and young people to be active agents in their healthy futures from a mental health and race perspective. The first stage in 2022 will be to engage with young people with lived experience of racism, and the harms of racism, to develop resources (online, webinars, face to face workshops) as a pilot program for delivery in secondary schools.

•**Blak/Black Queer Spaces:** VicHealth and Koorie Pride Victoria will work in partnership with the Victorian Commissioner for LGBTIQ+ Communities, Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House, community advocate Joshua Tavares and Homes Victoria to support the creation of Blak/Black Safe Queer Spaces in for communities living in or associated with public housing communities. The project is an equity focused pilot to work with LGBTIQ+ community members who identify as First Nations Blak/Black or people of colour to create safe spaces for social connection and mental wellbeing.

We are also focused on taking a leading role in diversity and inclusion through our Diversity and Inclusion Framework. This Framework provides the VicHealth Board and employees with guidance and the tools, structures and support to position diversity as our strength while tackling the systemic, attitudinal and behavioral barriers internal and external to the organisation that may hinder true inclusion.

We still have a long way to go, but that won't stop us. Because we know that to optimise wellbeing – and to achieve health equity for all – eradicating racism and racial discrimination from the lives of children and young people in Victoria is an urgent priority. And the time to act is now.

