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PRESS RELEASE

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GHN calls on people to show their support and solidarity with the LGBTQI+ communities by joining in their local vigil taking place throughout Easter weekend.

The Gay Health Network (GHN) is deeply shocked and saddened by the devastating news of two tragic murders in Sligo this week. We call on friends and colleagues to show their support and solidarity with the LGBTQI+ communities by joining in their local vigil taking place throughout Easter weekend. You can find a link to a vigil near you [here](#).

We also call on Governmental agencies and NGOs alike to act to ensure that homophobia, transphobia and hate speech are addressed in the strongest possible terms through sanctions, education and necessary legislation.

We have witnessed with disbelief and dismay the recent homophobic assaults in Dublin and Sligo and the tragic and distressing double murder in Sligo. GHN wish to extend our deepest condolences and sympathies to the families, friends and loved ones of Aidan Moffitt and Michael Snee, who lost their lives in the most tragic of circumstances. The murders have sent shockwaves throughout Irish society and LGBTQI+ communities across the world. Ireland has made considerable advances in recognising the rights of LGBTQI+ people since Law Reform in 1993. However, it is clear that societal attitudes have not fully kept pace with advancing legislative reform. Indeed, current levels of violence against our communities have been increasing in recent years.

GHN Secretary, Bill Foley, states:

“ LGBTQI+ people still live with the spectre of violence never far from our minds. These murders and a recent increase in violence toward LGBTQI+ people are painful reminders of the challenges our community still face in 2022. Events, such as what we have witnessed in the last week, are triggering. They, in turn, can affect our mental health and we encourage anyone who is feeling low to talk to loved ones or reach out to one of the many LGBTQI+ support organisations listed [here](#).”

He continues:

“Homophobia and transphobia cause isolation and anxiety. Dangerous rhetoric has consequences. As a community, we need to stand strong against hate and report acts of violence whenever they occur. We welcome the news that the long-awaited hate crime legislation will now be fast-tracked. This is necessary to provide safeguards in society to protect LGBTQI+ people along with other vulnerable minority groups.”

The LGBTQ+ message is and will remain one of love, kindness and acceptance. We stand in solidarity with all our LGBT brothers and sisters, together, defiant and proud. Love will always win. Love is Love.

The National LGBT Helpline is available for emotional support on freephone 1800 929 539, 7 days a week, from 6.30pm to 10pm Mon – Thurs, from 4pm to 10pm Fridays, and from 4pm to 6pm on Sat & Sun.

For information on staying safe when using hook-up apps visit this [link](#).

Further information on Minority Stress and Coping [here](#).

ENDS

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References:

Founded in 1994, GHN (www.ghn.ie) is a network of organisations and individuals working at the frontline of HIV and STI services. We are an expert network providing a national resource, response, and support for the promotion HIV prevention, and sexual health and wellbeing, for all G/B/MSM (gay men, bisexual men, trans men and men who have sex with men who don't identify as gay or bisexual). With our partner the HSE's, Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP) we manage and develop educational information and advice via www.man2man.ie programme. For further information on GHN and the man2man programme Email info@ghn.ie