

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**New CEO Taryn Black steps in to lead Life Ed Queensland into bold new era for children’s health**

Taryn Black has officially commenced as Chief Executive Officer of Life Ed Queensland, bringing decades of high-level experience in national advocacy and program innovation to one of the state’s most trusted children’s health charities.

Ms Black brings an impressive track record of achievement in the not-for-profit sector, including 15 years on the executive management team at Diabetes Australia, where she served as Chief Operating Officer at Diabetes Queensland, and later Chief Strategy Officer for the national peak body. She led the implementation of the $25 million National Diabetes in Schools program, training 35,000 school staff across the country, and designed and implemented KeepSight – Australia’s first diabetes eye screening program, a $10 million partnership with the Australian government and eye health sector.

Ms Black also played a pivotal role in shaping national health policy, leading the decade-long fight to provide more than $300 million in government funding to subsidise diabetes technology for all people living with type 1 diabetes. She played a critical role in advocating for last year’s federal Parliamentary Inquiry into Diabetes, making several key submissions with many recommendations adopted in the final report to tackle Australia’s diabetes epidemic.

She succeeds Michael Fawsitt, who will retire on 8 May after 19 years at the helm.

Board Chair Jack Ray said the appointment marked an exciting new chapter for the organisation.

“Taryn is an outstanding leader who brings a deep understanding of the challenges facing young people today,” Mr Ray said.

“She has extensive experience in government and stakeholder engagement, a strong history of managing multi-sector partnerships, and a passion for preventative health.

“The Board is excited to work with Taryn to build on Life Ed Queensland’s proud legacy and drive even greater impact for Queensland children.”

Prior to her work at Diabetes Australia, Ms Black held senior policy advisor and ministerial roles to the Ministers of Health in Queensland and Victoria, negotiating major health reforms and securing cross-party support for chronic disease prevention initiatives.

Ms Black said she was honoured to join one of Queensland’s most trusted health promotion charities, with a 38-year history of partnering with primary schools and early learning centres.

“I am incredibly excited to join Life Ed Queensland and work alongside such an innovative and passionate team,” Ms Black said.

“For nearly four decades, Life Ed Queensland has made a real difference in the lives of children, and I’m proud to continue that important work.

“I’m energised by the challenge of expanding our social impact through program innovation and growing our reach, so that even more children across Queensland have the opportunity to thrive.”

Mr Ray also paid tribute to outgoing CEO Michael Fawsitt, who will continue to support Life Ed Queensland as a Board member.

“Since 2006, Michael has been a passionate and visionary advocate for Life Ed Queensland’s work, overseeing our transformation from a very small team to the vibrant team we have today,” Mr Ray said.

“His leadership in expanding and diversifying our programs, particularly around emerging issues like mental health and respectful relationships, has had a lasting impact on the lives of tens thousands of Queensland children.”

**ENDS**

About Life Ed Queensland

Life Ed Queensland is the largest non-government provider of preventative health education for children and young people.

With the help of iconic mascot Healthy Harold and a team of specialist educators, Life Ed has been empowering children and young people to make safer, healthier choices for 38 years in Queensland, and more than 45 years nationally.

Each year, around 180 000 children across 1,000 schools and early learning centres take part in Life Ed's programs, which cover topics including nutrition and exercise, drugs and alcohol, vaping, bullying prevention, respectful relationships, consent, personal safety, mental health and wellbeing.

Life Ed Queensland also delivers Talk About It – the state's largest puberty, relationships and sexual health education program – reaching more than 50,000 students annually.

<https://www.lifeedqld.org.au/>

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