



2016/17 Federal Budget ends any commitment from the Commonwealth towards addressing homelessness

The 2016/17 budget fails to allocate any funding in either the housing or homelessness sectors that will assist in preventing and addressing homelessness. It even fails to provide indexation meaning an overall reduction in services across the board.

According to the 2011 Census on any given night 1 in 200 people are homeless across Australia. Nationwide services are currently experiencing unprecedented demand and the affordable housing crisis has been well documented. It is expected that the 2016 Census will find an increase in the number of homeless people – rough sleepers, young people and women and children escaping domestic and family violence.

Beyond 2016/17 things become even more bleak for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness as the forward estimates have not included any extension of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH) which is due to end in June 2017.

The NPAH represents \$115 million per annum of Federal funding that enables hundreds of homelessness services nationally to provide programs to women and children affected by family violence, rough sleepers, young people leaving state care and those at risk of homelessness. 80,000 clients are supported each year, to rebuild their lives, by programs funded under the NPAH. Without these programs many of these clients will be unable to be assisted, and will remain homeless or fall into homelessness.



The NPAH needs to continue beyond 2017 and be accordingly indexed so that front line homelessness services can continue to provide essential housing and support services for people experiencing homelessness.

We have to work towards scaling up our response to homelessness in Australia – reducing an already stretched service system with no investment in affordable housing- is just not good enough. Services are at breaking point and communities across Australia will continue to see more and more people turned away from services and on the streets.

We need some national leadership on ending homelessness.

For Comment:

Contact Dr Michael Coffey on 0425 228 758.