NSW Homelessness Peak Bodies call on all levels of politics to commit to ending homelessness in NSW

4 August 2017

NSW homelessness peak bodies Homelessness NSW and Domestic Violence NSW have today called for a planned approach to supporting all homeless people in NSW, including those in Martin Place.

The Martin Place community is a small proportion of the broader rough sleeping population in the inner city which in February 2017 totalled 433 people. Rough sleeping in Sydney has increased by 28% since 2011.

Rough sleeping represents only 6% of the broader homeless population. In 2015/16 NSW specialist homelessness services provided support to over 69,000 people—this is an increase of 35% over 2 years.

To address and prevent the current increase in homelessness, NSW urgently needs an investment in social and affordable housing and for all levels of government to take substantial action to prevent the causes of homelessness including significant State investment in services and programs that prevent and address domestic and family violence, family breakdown and poverty.

Government agencies and non-government support services must take a ‘no exits into homelessness’ approach to people at risk of homelessness including intervening earlier and more effectively with people in custody and young people in out of home care. The current system is broken and is failing the most vulnerable people in NSW with a 60% increase in the number of people accessing homelessness support in 2015/16 identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

The NSW Government has recently announced its intention to develop a statewide Homelessness Strategy. This Strategy needs to be well resourced with targets to end homelessness in NSW including targets for investment in social and affordable housing. There is a shortfall of over 100,000 affordable homes in our State and to address inner city and all other forms of homelessness we need an investment and expansion of social housing and action taken to make private rental more affordable for people on low incomes.

Next week is Homelessness Week. We call on local, state and federal politicians to commit to addressing the homelessness crisis in NSW and ending homelessness.

Quick Facts

- Rough sleeping in Sydney has increased by 28% since 2011
- February 2017 City of Sydney StreetCount found that there were 433 people sleeping rough and crisis accommodation services were 90% full.
- In 2015/16 homelessness services in NSW supported over 69,000 clients. Of those that needed long term housing, only 34% were able to access this.
- 23,171 or 33 per cent were clients who had experienced domestic violence (26 per cent increase from 2013/2014)
- 13,743 or 20 per cent were young people aged 15-24 who presented to the SHS alone (13 per cent increase).
- As of June 2016 there were 60,000 people on the social housing waiting list in NSW
- Less than 1% of private rentals are affordable for people on low incomes in greater Sydney (Anglicare Private Rental Snapshot April 2017)
- 18000 of the clients accessing homelessness support services in 2015/16 in NSW identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, this is an increase of 60%.

Contacts:

Katherine McKernan CEO Homelessness NSW 0425 288 446
Moo Baulch CEO Domestic Violence NSW 0400 936 192