

A Call for Contributions for the November 2011 edition of Parity

Responding to Homelessness in Tasmania

This edition of Parity is sponsored by the Tasmanian Government's Housing Tasmania and Anglicare Tasmania, the Salvation Army Tasmania and Colony 47 and is being organised with the assistance and support of Shelter Tasmania.

All those involved in responding to homelessness in Tasmania are invited to contribute to the upcoming November 2011 "Responding to Homelessness in Tasmania" Edition of *Parity*.

Parity is the national publication of the Council to Homeless Persons and is the national homelessness publication in Australia. (Please visit: www.chp.org.au/parity)

One aim of this publication is to develop a comprehensive and detailed resource for all those working in the homelessness, social housing and related welfare sectors that examines and discusses all aspects of homelessness and the response to homelessness in Tasmania.

An equally important aim is to provide an opportunity for all those involved in responding to homelessness in Tasmania to actively participate in this project and contribute to the publication. All voices need to be heard.

A Framework for Discussion: Responding to Homelessness in Tasmania

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to contextualise the development of current Tasmanian homelessness policies and programs. A crucial part of providing this context will be to outline the development of homelessness and changes in the nature and character of homelessness in Tasmania. In addition, the development of our understandings of homelessness and most importantly, the development of the policy and program responses to homelessness in Tasmania need to be understood and discussed.

This is much more than mere background information. Current policies are built on the foundations of previous policies and it is crucial to set out how the policy response to homelessness has evolved and changed over time.

For example, it is important to understand the origins and the development of the SAAP system in Tasmania and as important to appreciate the impact and changes wrought by the Tasmania Government's homelessness initiatives under the 2010 *Coming in from the Cold* 2010–2013 Tasmanian Homelessness Plan.

Similarly, it will be imperative to discuss the progress of the Support and Accommodation Assistance Review (SAAR) into the current support and accommodation assistance service system in Tasmania and examine and discuss its recommendations for a preferred service system model and service delivery platform.

Tasmania has a history of "developing its own road" and likewise, a strong record of program and service system innovation.

The recent *Keys to the Future and Stay Programs* and the Hobart City Council's *Affordable Housing Strategy 2010–2012* are but two examples among many others of a distinctly a Tasmanian approach that should be highlighted in this edition of *Parity*.



Call for contributions

Chapter 1: Homelessness in Tasmania

The aim of this chapter is to map out the nature, character, structure and forms of homelessness in Tasmania.

This chapter will look at empirical issues like enumeration, the character and make up of the homeless population, the location of those experiencing homelessness and base line issues like demographics and any other information required to understand the size, nature, and character of the homeless population in Tasmania.

This chapter will look at the issues around the ABS Census and the estimation of the numbers of people experiencing homelessness as well as the role and function of street counts in determining the homeless numbers.

This chapter will also seek to examine and discuss the specific if not unique character of homelessness in Tasmania, particularly the impact of rural and regional settlement patterns and the regionalised nature of Tasmania's development.

Chapter 2: The Policy Framework

The aim of this chapter is to build on the information and context provided by the Introduction and Chapter 1 and look at in depth the policy and program responses developed and being implemented under the 2010 *Coming in from the Cold* 2010–2013 Tasmanian Homelessness Plan as part of the National Affordable Housing Agreement and the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness.

The aim of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive picture of where the response to homelessness in Tasmania is NOW. It will also cover planned future developments under Tasmanian Homelessness Plan. At the same time, relevant examples of both policy and practice and in particular insights from evaluations and the critiques of policy, programs and aspects of practice could be included here.

Chapter 3: Program, Service and Practice Responses

The aim of this chapter would be to examine, program, service and practice responses to homelessness in Tasmania and in particular to provide an opportunity for all those operating at the coalface to share their expertise and the benefit of their experience.

This chapter also provides the opportunity for mainstream services to explain and to highlight their contributions to the integrated response to homelessness.

What are some examples of "best practice" in responding to homelessness?

Similarly, there should be opportunity for all those working for holistic and integrated program and service delivery models to have their say.

Both urban, regional and rural services and programs will be included to make sure that practice examples are representative of the whole State.

These could take the form of exemplars or snap-shots of good practice and there are many initiatives that warrant coverage and discussion in this chapter.

However, it is not the intention of this chapter to just be a compendium of the "stories" of different services that simply say who they are and what they do. This information is available elsewhere.

Rather the intention of this chapter is to examine those aspects of program, service and practice responses to homelessness that deliver positive outcomes for their client groups.

Chapter 4: Consumer and Client Input

The primary purpose of this chapter would be to provide an opportunity for people who are or have been homeless, and in particular people who are or have been clients or users of services, to have their say about the response to homelessness in Tasmania and the experience of seeking and receiving homelessness support and assistance.

There are a number of ways this input will be sought and these should all be pursued.

Chapter 5: Key Themes and Issues in Tasmania

The aim of this chapter is to provide the opportunity and the scope for the discussion of a number of key issues that underpin and influence both the development of homelessness in Tasmania and in particular the policy and program responses to it.

These are not presented here in any order or hierarchy of importance. This list of themes and issues is not exclusive or comprehensive. Potential contributors wishing to discuss other themes and issues they believe relevant to the response to homelessness in Tasmania should do so.

Domestic and Family Violence

What are the distinctive features of the Tasmanian response to domestic and family violence? Women and children fleeing domestic and family violence make up a large and significant proportion of those experiencing homelessness in Tasmania.

Family Homelessness

There is growing evidence that an increasing number of families are experiencing homelessness.

What role has a lack of affordable housing or "housing stress" played in the growth of family homelessness?

How are programs and services responding to family homelessness?



Public Space Issues

The increasing development and implementation of legislation by local government in particular has a dramatic impact on the lives and welfare of people who are homeless, especially those sleeping out or "sleeping rough". What is the state of play with regard to these legislative restrictions?

Young People and Children

Youth Homelessness has always had a predominant place in the public perception and understanding and in particular, misrepresentation of homelessness. Is the privileged position of youth homelessness in the wider discourse of homelessness a reality in Tasmania?

What are the distinctive features of the Tasmanian response to youth homelessness?

What in particular do mainstream services, for example, Youth Justice play in the prevention of and response to youth homelessness?

How is the service system meeting the needs of the increasing number of children experiencing homelessness?

Affordable, Social and Supportive Housing

While affordable housing is a national issue it takes on specific guises in Tasmania.

This section is an opportunity to examine and discuss some affordable and social housing initiatives that are intended to assist people make the transition out of homelessness as well as assist those at risk of homelessness.

Likewise, this section will provide an opportunity to examine and explain recent developments in the provision of different models of supportive housing.

Rethinking Elderly Homelessness

While homelessness data shows relatively small numbers of elderly homeless, anecdotal evidence from service providers is saying that there are increasing numbers of frail and chronically homeless people who for all intents and purposes could be considered as "elderly homeless".

What is the policy, program and service response to the changing face of elderly homelessness?

City, Regional and Homelessness in Remote AreasThe Three Regions

Homelessness in Tasmania is far from homogeneous. Do metropolitan and rural/Are there regional differences and distinctions that play such a significant role in both the character of homelessness and the responses to it in Tasmania?

This section is intended to provide an opportunity to examine and discuss this divide what the three regions have in common as well as what makes them different.

Conclusion: Where to From Here?

The aim of this chapter will be to examine some of the possible lines of the development of the Tasmania response to homelessness and pose the question of the relevance of the Tasmania experience for other states and territories as well as the national response to homelessness.

This chapter poses the questions: *What is (still) to be done?* and *Where to from here?*

The above framework is only an option for discussion and the final framework for the edition is still to be determined. Indeed your input into this is welcomed.

Contributing to the Responding to Homelessness in Tasmania edition of Parity

If you are at all interested in contributing to this edition of *Parity*, contact Noel Murray, *Parity* Editor parity@chp.org.au (03 9419 8699) and leave your contact details so you can be put on the mailing list for this project.

Alternatively you are welcome to contact Guest Editor, Dr Anne Coleman at UTAS, Anne.Coleman@utas.edu.au, (03) 6226 7598.

Please let me know if you are interested in participating in and contributing to this discussion.

Deadline

All contributions are welcome and need to be submitted by **Friday, 28th October, 2011**.

Submissions

All contributions should be submitted as MS Word attachments to an email addressed to parity@chp.org.au

Contributions are usually between 900 words, (single page) and 1800 words (double page). If additional space is required please contact the *Parity* Editor.

Please send submissions as a MS Word attachment to parity@chp.org.au or ring (03) 9419 8699 to discuss. Images and artwork are welcome.

Assistance

Feedback and input can be provided with drafts. If prospective contributors have any questions at all they should contact Noel Murray, *Parity* Editor at parity@chp.org.au or (03) 9419 8699.

