



## Tasmanian organisations join campaign as deadline looms for homelessness funding

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016

Tasmanian housing and homelessness services have joined with 180 frontline services from across Australia to urge State and Federal Ministers to commit to long-term funding of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH), which is due to expire in 6 months.

“Many essential services which assist vulnerable people in Tasmania are currently in jeopardy and cuts to the NPAH will withdraw support from some of the most vulnerable people in our community”, Shelter Tas EO, Pattie Chugg said.

This Friday, the Prime Minister will meet with Premiers and Chief Ministers to decide on the future of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH), which provides \$5.6m each year to support the 1,579 people who experience homelessness on any given night in Tasmania. Nationally, this is equal to \$230m, or one third of Australia’s homelessness support system.

“The December 9<sup>th</sup> COAG meeting provides an opportunity to end the uncertainty facing Australia’s homelessness system. It guarantees future support for over 1,500 people here in Tasmania, and also the 80,000 people Australia-wide who quite literally have nowhere else to turn. This important national Agreement impacts both Tasmanians and people all across the country”, Hobart City Mission CEO, John Stublely said.

“Homelessness is a serious problem in Tasmania. It is largely hidden but its impact is huge, not only for individuals, but for the whole community. The loss of NPAH funding in Tasmania will mean a real reduction in services. You can’t take away \$5.6m a year and not expect to have a major reduction in services for people facing homelessness”, CatholicCare CEO, Tim Gourlay said.

There will be fewer services to prevent homelessness for young people leaving child protection, support services for families at risk of homelessness and women escaping domestic violence. Homelessness services help more than 7,300 Tasmanians a year who are facing homelessness. Each year, 700 people are assisted out of homelessness and into secure housing and thousands more are helped to stay in their current home.

“While we are kept waiting for the Federal Government’s decision on the NPAH, the intensive support and services that deliver it can’t just be turned on and off without huge negative repercussions. This drip-feeding of funding creates unnecessary risk for the most vulnerable people”, Ms Chugg said.

The outcomes from the State’s much needed *Affordable Housing Strategy (2015-2025)* will be significantly reduced without securing homelessness funding”, Mr Stublely said.

“We hope there is some good news to report before Christmas, as services will be forced to start preparing for the end of the NPAH by letting staff go and closing referrals from people in need of long-term and intensive support. We have joined national homelessness organisations to call on our Government to secure the future of the NPAH as an urgent priority”, Mr Gourlay said.

### For more information, contact:

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