



Homelessness Australia

Creating a framework for ending homelessness

MEDIA RELEASE

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It can happen to anyone: Diversity in homelessness

Homelessness Australia, the national peak body representing Australia's diverse homelessness services sector and advocating for people experiencing homelessness is promoting awareness of diversity in homelessness during Homeless Persons' Week this year which runs from 1-7 August.

"Homelessness can happen to anyone. People experiencing homelessness come from all walks of life and all age groups. During Homeless Persons' Week in 2011, Homelessness Australia is raising awareness of diversity in homelessness" Homelessness Australia's Chief Executive Officer, Nicole Lawder said.

Homelessness Australia is also drawing attention to the diverse causes of homelessness and the factors that prevent homelessness from being resolved quickly.

"There are many reasons why people experience homelessness, including; domestic violence, family breakdown, the lack of affordable housing, poverty and social inequality. Homelessness can be a complex problem but by addressing these issues and providing more affordable housing we know that it can be solved," Nicole Lawder said.

Homelessness Australia also points to data and research showing that homelessness is a significant problem among people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander as well as the need for more research into homelessness amongst those from emerging communities.

"One in five people who accessed specialist homelessness services in 2009/10 identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. In addition, data indicates that almost one in ten people counted as homeless on Census night were Indigenous. Homelessness is yet another indicator of disadvantage in which Indigenous Australians find themselves overrepresented," Homelessness Australia's Policy and Research Officer, Travis Gilbert said.

"Member services are also reporting that homelessness among members of emerging communities and humanitarian visa entrants is widespread and hidden. We urgently need better data and more research to improve our understanding of homelessness amongst people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds" Mr Gilbert said.

During Homeless Persons' Week public awareness is raised nationally in all allied sectors including schools, hospitals and employment industries signifying that reducing numbers of people who are homeless is based on a bipartisan effort and whole of community response. [HA Web page here.](#)

For further information and comment, please contact:

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