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## **No respite from living on the street**

The Australian Federation of Homelessness Organisations (AFHO) is concerned that the \$1.8 billion announced yesterday by the Federal Government does not address adequately the needs of people experiencing homelessness who have a mental illness in Australia.

'It's encouraging to see that an improved response to mental health is now firmly at the centre of Australian social policy. However, the 1 in every 200 Australians who are homeless also need a more coordinated and integrated response from governments working together,' states Annabel Senior, AFHO Chairperson.

The recent Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) evaluation showed that the homeless services system is already under-funded and has to turn away 1 in every 2 people seeking accommodation. Many homeless Australians in need have a mental health issue.

AFHO is disappointed that there has been a lost opportunity to support the homelessness service sector and that no funding has been allocated to assisting front-line service providers respond to the needs of people presenting with mental illness.

"It is essential that homelessness service providers are provided with increased resources to respond to the mental health needs of homeless Australians" states Ms Senior.

### **For further information:**

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