

# MEDIA RELEASE



19 October 2010

## **Churches of Christ Care supports Anti-Poverty Week and provides accommodation to almost 1000 people across SEQ**

The Director of Churches of Christ Care, one of the state's largest housing and social services providers, has called on greater community tolerance and cooperation to combat poverty across the state.

Regarded as a "quiet achiever", providing care and services to over 27,000 Queenslanders each year, including 1000 families or individuals who have suffered housing stress, the organisation has decided to speak out over what it sees as an increased fracturing of communities that contributes to poverty.

"There are over 100,000 homeless people in Australia, with around ¼ of these residing in Queensland," Whist concerning in and of themselves, these numbers don't reveal the extent of persons who are just managing to keep a roof over their head albeit more often than not at the cost of health, nutrition, education and child development, or personal safety. The pressures of increasing housing prices and escalating costs of living are being felt by more people.

It is estimated that on any given night approximately 105,000 people will be homeless in Australia, and Anti-Poverty Week, which runs from 17-23 October, provides a perfect opportunity to raise awareness of the growing issue.

Churches of Christ Care is supporting Anti-Poverty Week and working hard to help reduce homelessness by providing accommodation to almost 1000 people through a range of crisis, transitional and long term homes across South East Queensland. This figure is going to nearly double with six new developments being completed over the next two years.

Churches of Christ Care director David Swain said the developments in Brisbane, Ipswich, Caloundra and the Gold Coast would be available to those on the state government's Social Housing Register.

"Care Housing, a service of Churches of Christ Care, is committed to reducing poverty in Queensland, and Anti-Poverty Week reaffirms why the work of Care Housing is so important," Mr Swain said.

"While we can put a roof over someone's head, their underlying cause of poverty or distress remains. This is why our organisation has developed an approach which is "beyond housing". Within its housing programs Churches of Christ is providing 'value added' tenancy management, family support services, and pastoral care. Overall, the aim is to support tenants to access other community services, health or employment providers and the like. It is about helping individuals to re-establish their community linkages, restore their own capacity, and reach their potential.

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“Care Housing is one of the largest providers of affordable housing in the state, and every year we support almost 1000 people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

“These six new developments are happening right now, and will allow hundreds of individuals, couples and families to live in new accommodation that meets their needs.”

Care Housing general manager Frances Paterson-Fleider said demand for affordable housing on the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Brisbane and Ipswich was significant.

“Anti-Poverty Week is a chance to raise awareness of those who are sleeping rough or living below the poverty line in Australia,” Ms Paterson-Fleider said.

“We know our housing developments will fill a significant gap in accommodation within each of the regions and will assist those who are struggling to obtain or sustain a basic standard of living.

“We currently have more than 600 tenancies under management, and we continually receive feedback from tenants on how appreciative they are to be able to live in this accommodation and have somewhere safe to call home.”

Anti-Poverty Week in Australia runs from 17 October to 23 October and seeks to strengthen public understanding of the causes and consequences of poverty and hardship.

For more information about Churches of Christ Care, please visit their website [www.care.cofcql.com.au](http://www.care.cofcql.com.au)

**ENDS**

**Interviews and photos available.**

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For further information, please contact:

Ashleigh James  
Communications Coordinator  
Ph: 3336 1747

Desley Millwood  
Communications and Marketing Manager  
Ph: 3327 1692 or 0419 486 943

## **About Churches of Christ Care:**

Churches of Christ Care is a division of Churches of Christ in Queensland—a group of churches that is part of the worldwide Christian church.

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We strive to create an inclusive, caring, compassionate environment that meets our clients' needs without discrimination or prejudice. Everyone is welcome to call on our help regardless of their religious background.

Churches of Christ Care is one of Queensland's leading providers of early childhood, child protection, affordable housing, retirement living and aged care services. We are a not-for-profit organisation that supports more than 27,000 clients each year in urban, rural and remote areas.

We operate 137 services throughout Queensland with the support of more than 2,800 staff and over 700 volunteers.

Churches of Christ Care is built on a foundation of Christian values, commitment to quality care, and trust and respect for clients and the community.