

MEDIA RELEASE

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Anti-Poverty Week highlights impact of housing stress

Leading community housing provider Churches of Christ Care has called on the state and federal governments to implement changes to make housing more affordable for struggling Queenslanders.

Churches of Christ Care Director David Swain said Anti-Poverty Week 16 – 22 October is a timely reminder that high private rents, long social housing waiting lists and not enough affordable homes, place significant stress on Queensland families.

“When people are paying 30 to 50 per cent of their income on rent, something has to give and quite often it is the basics that many of us take for granted,” he said.

“What we need is further investment from all levels of government to ensure Queensland families can afford a decent place to live, otherwise we will start to see more and more people becoming homeless.

“There needs to be an overarching unified plan and approach to affordable housing. All levels of government need to sit at the table to ensure everyone has access to affordable housing, better financial assistance for low income renters and a greater investment in low cost housing.

“Otherwise, the impact will continue to reverberate through our communities - people who do not have a secure and stable home don’t feel safe and that impacts their health, education, employment and family life.”

Churches of Christ Care is also concerned that thousands of people, whose lives were already in crisis, may have been overlooked during last summer’s natural disasters.

“While it was important and necessary to redirect services and funds to help the victims of the floods and cyclones, at what cost was this to services and support for people who were already homeless and struggling?” Mr Swain said.

“Homelessness and poverty were already issues for these people prior to the natural disasters, and still are, and we need to remember that they still need care and support. There are currently over 25,000 homeless people in Queensland, while as many struggle daily to keep a roof over their heads, and over 30,000 are on the social housing waiting list.”

Churches of Christ Care supports Anti-Poverty Week and is working hard to help reduce homelessness by providing accommodation to over 1,000 people through a range of crisis, transitional and long term housing across south east/west Queensland. The organisation also provides affordable housing for those on the Social Housing Register with new developments across a number of locations including Ipswich, Bribie Island, and Caloundra.

“While we can put a roof over someone’s head, their underlying cause of poverty or distress remains. 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,” Mr Swain said.

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About Churches of Christ Care

Established in 1930, today Churches of Christ Care is one of the largest, most diverse not-for-profit organisations in Australia.

Churches of Christ Care, a division of Churches of Christ in Queensland and working with Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas, provides a range of care services to vulnerable persons at different stages of their life journey.

Churches of Christ Care is active in the areas of early childhood services, child protection, community and affordable housing, retirement living, community aged care, and residential aged care. We operate more than 144 services throughout Queensland and Melbourne, Victoria with the support of more than 3,100 staff and over 750 volunteers.

Services provided by Churches of Christ Care are funded by a mix of government subsidies, grants, fees and charges for our services such as early childhood services and residential aged care, and through fundraising activities.

Our services are offered to all those in need regardless of religious background. 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.