



# Victorian Homelessness Conference 2017- Talking Solutions

## Plenary Program (Updated 11 September)

### DAY 1 – Wednesday 13 September

<p><b>9.00am</b></p>	<p>Opening plenary  <b>Welcome</b>            John Blewonski, Council to Homeless Persons Chair and CEO of VincentCare  <b>Welcome to country</b>            Wurundjeri Elder Colin Hunter  <b>Ministerial address:</b>            The Hon. Martin Foley MP, Minister for Housing, Disability &amp; Ageing</p>
<p><b>10.00 am</b></p>	<p>Morning tea</p>
<p><b>10.20 am</b></p>	<p><b>Keynote Plenary Address</b>  <b>Putting the home into ending homelessness – the evidence from Europe</b>            Can we end homelessness without housing for people who have no home? How do we build an effective homelessness service system? Many European nations have adopted evidence-based ‘housing led’ homelessness strategies, but with different implementation approaches. Professor Eoin O’Sullivan, a leading academic on homelessness in Europe, and editor of the European Journal of Homelessness points to the way forward for Australia by comparing the approaches in Ireland, Denmark and Finland to highlight what works, and what doesn’t.  <b>Keynote address:</b>            Professor Eoin O’Sullivan, Head of School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin  <b>Facilitator:</b>            Jenny Smith, CEO, Council to Homeless Persons  <b>Discussant:</b>            Professor Guy Johnson, Unison Professor of Urban Housing and Homelessness; Director, Unison Housing Research Program, RMIT University</p>
<p><b>12.00pm</b></p>	<p>Lunch</p>

12.45pm	<p><b>Plenary Panel</b></p> <p><b>The NDIS – Is it working for people experiencing homelessness?</b></p> <p>The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) delivers choice and control over individualised ongoing support to people with severe and permanent disability. This could be life changing for the many people who have psychosocial disabilities, alongside other complex needs, and who are highly vulnerable to homelessness. Yet in practice there are roadblocks for homeless people with complex needs on the path to having their needs met by the scheme. This panel will explore what’s working and what is yet to work for people with disability who are also homeless.</p> <p><b>Facilitator:</b>  <b>Jenny Smith</b>, CEO, Council to Homeless Persons</p> <p><b>Panellists:</b>  <b>Kate Paterson</b>, Consultant with a background advocating for appropriate housing and support for people with psycho-social disability  <b>Mark Rosser</b>, Director Scheme Strategies, Scheme Practice Approaches, Participants and Planning, National Disability Insurance Agency  <b>Mirella Rao</b>, Flexible Outreach Support Service Coordinator, Launch Housing  <b>Andrew Hollows</b>, Executive General Manager - Research, Policy and Service Development, Launch Housing</p>
2.00pm	<b>Concurrent sessions</b>
3.10pm	Afternoon tea
3.30pm	<p><b>Keynote Plenary Address sponsored by Melbourne City Mission</b></p> <p><b>Trauma and adolescent family violence: Delivering better homelessness responses</b></p> <p>Young people who use violence in the home are often both victims and perpetrators of violence and commonly have experienced significant trauma. This presents complex challenges for both mainstream and youth homeless services. How can we both protect family members and best support young people with complex behaviour to become positive and independent adults with healthy relationships? What does our understanding of trauma bring to these problem solving efforts? Dr Anita Morris, the Family Violence Principal Practitioner at Department of Health and Human Services will speak on these challenges in the context of Victoria’s family violence reforms.</p> <p><b>Keynote address:</b>  <b>Dr Anita Morris</b>, Family Violence Principal Practitioner, Department of Health and Human Services</p> <p><b>Facilitator:</b>  <b>Vicki Sutton</b>, CEO, Melbourne City Mission</p>
4.30pm	<p><b>Homelessness Sector Awards and Cocktail party</b></p> <p><b>MC: Sami Shah</b>, ABC radio and The Project</p>

## DAY 2 - Thursday 14 September

<p><b>9.00am</b></p>	<p>Keynote Plenary Address sponsored by the HomeStretch campaign  <b>Resolving homelessness for young care leavers – Ireland’s success</b></p> <p>The Republic of Ireland has successfully reduced youth homelessness over the past 25 years. Starting with the Child Care Act, 1991 (which put in place a statutory right to services for homeless young people, including limited aftercare) through to <i>Child Care (Amendment) Act 2015</i> (which provides an enhanced statutory right to aftercare), a combination of statutory entitlements and strategic focus on prevention, homelessness among young people (under the age of 18) has substantially declined. Professor Eoin O’Sullivan will explore the lessons of the Irish experience – with a particular focus on the last part of the lengthy process to end youth homelessness, the provision of an enhanced statutory right to aftercare.</p> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> Paul McDonald, Chair Homestretch and CEO, Anglicare Victoria</p> <p><b>Keynote address:</b>          Professor Eoin O’Sullivan, Head of School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin</p> <p><b>Discussants:</b>          Eveanne Liddle, Executive Manager, Southern office, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)          Aisha Rizanovic, Young person with an experience of out-of-home care</p>
<p><b>10.15am</b></p>	<p>Morning tea</p>
<p><b>10.45 am</b></p>	<p>Plenary Panel: presented in partnership with the Victorian Indigenous Statewide Homelessness Network  <b>Aboriginal homelessness: Strengthening cultural responses and improving outcomes</b></p> <p>Aboriginal people represent almost 1 in 10 clients of Victorian homelessness services, but there are few Aboriginal specific service responses. What are we doing well around prevention, early intervention, and tenancy sustainment with Aboriginal consumers, and where do we need service reform?</p> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> Dan Laws, Victorian Indigenous Statewide Homelessness Network Coordinator, Ngwala Willumbong</p> <p><b>Panellists:</b>          Jamie Waring, Service Manager – Wadamba Wilam, NEAMI          Karen Derschow, SHS Support Worker, Southern Metro, Ngwala Willumbong          Faye Chapman, Aboriginal Tenancies at Risk worker, Child and Family Services Ballarat (cafs)          Jason Russell, Peer Education Support Program participant</p>
<p><b>12.00pm</b></p>	<p>Lunch</p>

12.50pm	<p><b>Plenary Panel:</b>  <b>Effective support post-housing: What works?</b>  Once people experiencing homelessness are housed they often experience a new set of challenges – battling loneliness, managing unresolved trauma, and dealing with the day to day grind of poverty. A panel of people with a lived experience of successfully transitioning out of homelessness share their knowledge about what works, and what doesn't, and pose some challenges for the homelessness sector.  <b>Facilitator:</b> <b>Cassandra Bawden</b>, Team Leader Peer Education and Support Program, Council to Homeless Persons  <b>Panellists:</b>  <b>Christine Thirkell, Jody Letts, Trevor Brown, Jason Russell, and Allan Martin</b>, Peer Education Support Program participants  <b>Emma Ladd</b>, General Manager, Quality and Service Development, Wellways Australia</p>
2.00pm	<b>Concurrent sessions</b>
3.10pm	Afternoon tea
3.30pm	<p><b>Plenary Debate</b>  <b>Transitional housing: does it still have an important role in addressing homelessness</b>  <b>Moderator:</b> <b>Chris Povey</b>, Head of Policy and Research, Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission  <b>Affirmative:</b>  <b>Heather Holst</b>, Deputy CEO, Launch Housing  <b>Mark Smoljo</b>, Community Housing Federation of Victoria  <b>Mark Dixon</b>, General Manager, Homelessness Services, UnitingCare Harrison  <b>Negative:</b>  <b>Michael Perusco</b>, CEO, Unison Housing  <b>Jo Swift</b>, CEO, Kids Under Cover  <b>Lucy Adams</b>, Manager and Principal Lawyer, Homeless Law</p>
4.30-4.45pm	<p><b>Conference close</b>  <b>Jenny Smith, CEO, Council to Homeless Persons</b></p>

# Victorian Homelessness Conference 2017- Talking Solutions Concurrent Session Program

## DAY 1 – Wednesday 13 September (2.00-3.10)

### Swimming against the tide: managing impossible demand

#### Main Hall

Demand for homeless services far exceed the sector's capacity to respond, and continues to increase as broader inequality deepens. This session explores the innovations in demand management and 'triaging' homelessness in specialist homelessness services and debates how best to balance competing needs.

**Facilitator:** Jenny Smith, CEO, Council to Homeless Persons

#### Panellists:

Heather Holst, Deputy CEO, Launch Housing

Professor Guy Johnson, Unison Professor of Urban Housing and Homelessness;  
Director, Unison Housing Research Program, RMIT University

Wayne Merritt, General Manager (Acting), Homelessness and Justice, Melbourne City Mission

### LGBTIQ homelessness – understanding the gaps, delivering great responses

#### Supper Room

This workshop will explore how to deliver best-practice responses to LGBTIQ service users. We'll consider recent research with LGBTIQ people who accessed homelessness services and reveal what they experienced – what were the challenges and gaps that point to the need for change. We'll also examine a pilot project that attempts a best-practice response. You will then be asked to join the conversation to inform best practice guidelines for homelessness services working with LGBTIQ clients. This is policy in action – come ready to be part of the process and thrash out the real-life challenges and ways forward.

**Facilitator:** Sue Carlile, CEO, Family Access Network

#### Presenters:

Tony Keenan, CEO, Launch Housing

Sally Goldner, Executive Director, Transgender Victoria

Dr Cal Andrews, LGBTI Homelessness Research Project, Gay and Lesbian Foundation of Australia and The University of Melbourne

## **Resolving tenancy issues: learning about great practice**

### **Portico Room**

Homelessness is often the consequence of tenancy breakdown, which makes resolving tenancy crisis a critical skill in the homeless workers toolkit. In this practical workshop you'll learn top tips from the experts, including how to use unexpected avenues to solve tenancies at risk.

#### **Presenters:**

**Angela Kyriakopoulos**, Homeless Advocacy Service, Council to Homeless Persons

**Ben Cording**, Principal Solicitor, Tenants Victoria

**Sally Kenyon**, Lawyer and **Rachelle Driver**, Women's Homelessness Prevention Project Liaison Officer, Homeless Law

## **Modern life and family breakdown: Joining the dots with youth homelessness**

### **Condell Room**

Breakdown of family relationships is the most frequently identified reason that young people seek help with homelessness and feel unable to return home. We can better prevent youth homelessness or intervene early to respond if we better understand the nature and causes of this critical driver. In this workshop, you'll learn about findings from new research undertaken with young people and their families that explores the dynamics of family breakdown.

**Facilitator: Paul Turton**, Senior Manager, Homelessness Early Intervention Services, Melbourne City Mission

#### **Presenters:**

**Dr Justin Barker**, Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University

**Steven Roche**, Research Associate, Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University

## **Getting young people engaged: Music therapy in youth homelessness**

### **Yarra Room**

*music is my life*

*music gets me through everything*

Many young people connect with music as part of their social world, to explore their identity, or just to relax. It is in this context that music therapy offers an opportunity to connect with young people, and to support and strengthen their pre-existing coping mechanisms; delivering a truly strengths-based intervention. This workshop will provide an overview of the music therapy program at Frontyard Youth Services and include an immersive music activity for participants.

**Presenter: Asami Koike** is a registered music therapist who introduced and implemented the music therapy program at Frontyard Youth Services in 2015.

## DAY 2 – Thursday 14 September (2.00-3.10)

### Ending rough sleeping and chronic homelessness: Practice evolution

#### Main Hall

The housing affordability crisis is driving dramatic increases in rough sleeping across Victoria. This has resulted in a corresponding escalation of media and political attention to the challenge of homelessness. This panel explores how practice is evolving to better respond to rough sleeping and chronic homelessness. You will hear from Tony Nicholson about the development of a state-wide strategy in relation to rough sleeping, explore options for more effective coordination of homelessness services in inner Melbourne, and understand how Street to Home and Crisis Supported Accommodation can provide pathways to permanent supportive housing.

**Facilitator:** **Cathy Humphrey**, CEO Sacred Heart Mission, and Deputy Chair, Council to Homeless Persons

#### Presenters:

**Tony Nicholson**, Executive Director, Brotherhood of St Laurence

**Sandy Forbes**, Principal, NOUS Group

**Theresa Swanborough OAM**, Manager, Royal District Nursing Service, Homeless Persons Program

**Jane Barnes**, General Manager, Salvation Army - Adult Services

### Reform reform reform: What has changed, and what remains to be solved?

#### Supper Room

New funding and significant reform have followed the Royal Commission into Family Violence. Reform has also been progressing in housing and homelessness services. This session explores and debates what reforms are taking place, what they might mean, and what remains to be done.

**Facilitator:** **John Blewonski**, CEO Vincentcare and Chair, Council to Homeless Persons

#### Presenters:

**Fiona McCormack**, CEO, Domestic Violence Victoria

**Jenny Smith**, CEO, Council to Homeless Persons

**Peta McCammon**, Director Health and Human Services Branches, Department of Premier and Cabinet

**Lisa Morgan**, Gippsland Homelessness Network Co-ordinator

## **“Happiness is hugging a therapy dog”: Exploring the use of Animal Assisted Interventions with homeless young people**

### **Yarra Room**

We know animal-assisted interventions (AAI) can have great benefits, including to help homeless young people cope with challenges, and build social skills, intrapersonal awareness, interpersonal skills and to reduce aggressive behaviours. The session will showcase Frontyard Youth Services’ implementation of a 12-week Animal Assisted Intervention, facilitated by Lead The Way. You’ll learn about: some of the benefits of this model, some practical challenges, recent advances in AAI research with vulnerable population groups, and you will meet a wonderful therapy dog.

#### **Presenters:**

**Poppy Fotiadis**, Frontyard Youth Services

**Melanie Jones**, Lead The Way

**Dr Jess Heerde**, Westpac Bicentennial Foundation Research Fellow, The University of Melbourne

## **Learning and employment – making the link for young people at risk of homelessness**

### **Condell Room**

Young people at risk of homelessness, and those who are homeless, often struggle to stay engaged in education or employment, making them highly vulnerable to social exclusion and long-term unemployment. This session explores why keeping young people connected is so important, and how to achieve it. Presenters Associate Professor David Mackenzie and David Wells draw on their experiences in the ‘community of schools and services’ [COSS] model, aka The Geelong Project and The Melbourne Academy (now Hester Hornbrook Academy) respectively, to explore:

- how early intervention can be accomplished systemically?
- the challenges and learnings from the Youth Foyer model, and its cost effectiveness
- how flexible education opportunities can improve homelessness outcomes?
- innovations and reforms need to achieve collaboration between the homelessness and education sectors

#### **Presenters:**

**Associate Professor David Mackenzie**, Swinburne Institute for Social Research

**David Wells**, General Manager – Early Years, Education and Employment, Melbourne City Mission



## **Advocacy skills: How can we achieve change?**

### **Portico Room**

Working in homelessness is often immensely frustrating. We know we can end homelessness with the right strategies and resources, and yet despite considerable evidence about what is needed, every year the challenge grows. This session aims to empower homelessness sector workers and consumers with practical tools to be a part of the change process. Learn how to plan and execute a successful campaign, why and how to engage your local MP, how to get media attention, and how to make a digital splash on social media.

### **Presenters:**

**Danny Pearson**, Victorian Member for Essendon

**Kate Colvin**, Manager – Policy and Communication, Council to Homeless Persons

**Lanie Harris**, Communications Coordinator, Council to Homeless Persons

**Belinda Lack**, Digital Communications Officer, Council to Homeless Persons