



Funding Proposal – Veterans Focus

As of: 28 January 2022

The following proposal seeks seed funding from the Commonwealth Government to enable the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (AAEH) to support between 15-30 communities to identify and end rough sleeping, with a particular focus on veterans rough sleeping.

- **What** – Seed funding of \$3.5m to support and equip local communities to end all homelessness using the Advance to Zero Homelessness methodology, pioneered successfully in over sixty communities in North America so far.
- **Why** – Ending homelessness is possible, despite the common misconception to the contrary, the scale of rough sleeping homelessness in Australia is both preventable and solvable. We know this because fifteen communities have demonstrated this by achieving a standard known as functional zero homelessness (including for veterans).
- **How** – By helping establish community wide ‘by-name-lists’ we can support communities to identify the number, names and needs of every person sleeping rough in that community – including veterans. Data from the list can then be used to better triage the available housing and support along with a range of quality improvement techniques to drive down the number of people sleeping rough. By supporting communities to do this we can then ensure, and prove with data, that any future instances of homelessness that do occur are rare, brief and a one-time occurrence.
- **Who** – The Australian Alliance to End Homelessness will establish a national improvement team to build local community understanding and capacity through coaching, training, tools development and a range of other supports needed to help communities in their efforts to end homelessness. This national improvement team would be based out of Flinders University in South Australia and would have an initial particular focus on veterans rough sleeping.
- **Where** – Between 15 and 30 communities including the already participating local government areas of: Perth & Freemantle, Adelaide, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Port Phillip. The new communities could include a focus on rural and regional communities as well as veterans, families, aboriginal and/or chronic rough sleeping homelessness.

The Problem



A problem that many touch, but no single agency or organisation owns



A definition of success limited by program or point in time outcomes



Efforts driven by static, aggregate, out of date and nameless data



A problem solely understood as a problem of resource scarcity

The Advance to Zero Solution



A shared commitment to coordinating system, that break down silos and drives accountability



A commitment to reducing the number of individuals experiencing homelessness to zero



Comprehensive, real-time, individual data and coaching in problem solving skills adapted from other sectors



Data for targeted systems advocacy and investments that optimise benefits and deliver outcomes.

Why Now?

- Australia has led the world in its initial response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This included an extraordinary achievement in temporarily sheltering an estimated 10,000 homeless people who were formerly sleeping rough.
- This phenomenal effort represents one of the most significant homelessness responses Australia has ever seen, however it is only a first step. While temporarily sheltering people sleeping rough has been an important pandemic ‘crisis response’, it will not be an effective ‘recovery response’.
- As we have seen, only 32% of the people sheltered in response to COVID-19 were able to transition into longer-term affordable housing because of a lack of appropriate housing and support - including health support.¹
- There has never been a better time to end rough sleeping homelessness in Australia than right now.

Why Veterans?

- We know that focusing on veterans rough sleeping homelessness works. A growing number of communities in Canada and the USA have demonstrated this.

¹ Pawson, H., Martin, C., Sisson, A., Thompson, S., Fitzpatrick, S. and Marsh, A. (2021) ‘COVID-19: Rental housing and homelessness impacts – an initial analysis’; ACOSS/UNSW Poverty and Inequality Partnership Report No. 7, Sydney

- In Australia, we don't know for certain how many people sleeping on our streets are actually veterans. The 2021 Census will, for the first time, include a question on whether an individual has served in the Australian Defence Force. However, the census still provides an estimate and there remains challenges with identifying exact numbers of people sleeping rough through the census. What we do know is that ending veterans rough sleeping in Australia is eminently achievable and is something that communities want to support.
- Analysis of the data collected by AAEH partner communities between 2010 and 2017 showed that of the 8,344 rough sleepers surveyed, 5.6% or 457 identified as having served in the Australian Defence Force.

Why the Commonwealth?

- Despite record investments in homelessness programs and services by Australian Governments, homelessness has been increasing. There is a lack of transparency about the outcomes that existing investments are delivering – something that is an ongoing challenge for the Commonwealth in working with the states and territories.
- We know that it is cheaper to provide housing and support for people who have been chronically rough sleeping rather than leave them on the street. In fact, people use \$13,100 less in government-funded services per year when securely housed compared to the services they used when they were chronically homeless – hospitals, prisons, etc.²
- Too often, the inability to end chronic rough sleeping is not just a result of a lack of appropriate housing, but as a result of a lack of integration of local service systems such as health, housing, corrections, specialist homelessness services, disability, veterans, employment and other community services. The Commonwealth has a responsibility, to varying degrees, for many of these services.
- We also know that when rough sleeping homelessness is left unaddressed it has a negative effect on the public amenity of our communities with local demands to 'clean up the streets' often leading to reactionary approaches that move the problem or the criminalisation of the issue rather than focus on the solutions that address the root causes of the problem.
- Finally, the Commonwealth is responsible for Veterans Affairs, and we know that there are a relatively small, but highly vulnerable group of veterans who sleep rough in our cities and communities every night.

Why Seed Funding?

- This proposal seeks once off seed funding, that does not intrude into areas the Commonwealth considers to be the responsibility of the States and Territories.
- The AAEH provides training and support to a range of communities, much of which is provided by the US organisation that pioneered the by-name list and functional zero approach – Community Solutions. Seed funding will enable a move to a train the trainer model where the capacity to deliver this training can be built up in Australia.
- Over time, it is expected that as more and more State and Territory governments adopt this methodology and incorporate it into their homelessness strategies and policies, enabling the AAEH to move to a fee for service model.
- Seed funding is also needed to cover the once off costs of continuing to develop the methodology and IT infrastructure needed to support its implementation in Australia.

Key Outcomes

- Each community would be supported to create a local dashboard to publicly reveal in real time aggregated and de-identified data on the performance of their local homelessness and other support system in housing people, preventing homelessness, deaths, active number of people sleeping rough and other measures.
- Most importantly these dashboards would help track the communities progress towards the goal of functional zero rough sleeping and other prioritised cohorts in that community.

Which Communities?

- The AAEH already works with the following five communities³: Perth, Adelaide, Brisbane, Sydney and Port Philip local government areas. Up to a further ten communities could be supported to establish local Zero Projects.
- To identify willing communities an Expression of Interest process would be run. This would enable local NGO's, community groups and importantly state, territory and local governments to pledge their support.
- Selection criteria could include number of homeless veterans, alignment with strategic priorities for the Commonwealth Government (i.e. Veterans Wellbeing Centres), the level of commitment and resources by local communities. Final decision on the new communities would be decided jointly by the AAEH and DSS/DVA.

More Information - Contact:

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² Cameron Parsell, Maree Petersen, Dennis Culhane, Cost Offsets of Supportive Housing: Evidence for Social Work, *The British Journal of Social Work*, Volume 47, Issue 5, July 2017, Pages 1534–1553.

³ A community is generally the local government area, or cluster of local government areas.

Proposed Funding

Purpose	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Totals
Advance to Zero					
Core 15 Communities	\$ 1,864,000	\$ 1,864,000	\$ 1,864,000	\$ 1,864,000	\$7,456,000
Extra 15 Communities (30 total)	\$444,800	\$444,800	\$444,800	\$444,800	\$1,779,200
Sub Total	\$2,308,800	\$2,308,800	\$2,308,800	\$2,308,800	\$9,235,200
Small Supportive Housing Capital Fund*	\$30,000,000	\$30,000,000	\$30,000,000	\$30,000,000	\$120,000,000
Sub Total	\$ 32,308,800	\$ 32,308,800	\$ 32,308,800	\$ 32,308,800	\$ 129,235,200
Large Supportive Housing Capital Fund*	\$100,000,000	\$100,000,000	\$100,000,000	\$100,000,000	\$400,000,000
Total	\$ 102,308,800	\$ 102,308,800	\$ 102,308,800	\$ 102,308,800	\$ 409,235,200

* We know that there is a need for additional supportive housing in Australia, we recommend a capital fund be established to support the efforts at system improvement and coordination through the Advance to Zero campaign, the above has been provided for indicative purposes. Such a fund should seek to leverage investments out of state and territory governments, local governments and community housing providers to provide land and other in-kind support.

Potential Communities

The following lists the federal electorates and Local Government Areas (LGAs) with the highest rates of rough sleeping.

Top 5 Federal Electorates			Top 5 LGAs		
NSW	Sydney	624	NSW	Sydney (C)	631
	Richmond	356		Tweed (A)	217
	Page	144		Central Coast (C) (NSW)	197
	Cunningham	133		Byron (A)	135
	Robertson	129		Wollongong (C)	131
VIC	Melbourne	396	VIC	Melbourne (C)	353
	Melbourne Ports	91		Frankston (C)	75
	Dunkley	86		Port Phillip (C)	71
	Corio	62		Greater Geelong (C)	67
	Murray	59		Yarra (C)	62
QLD	Kennedy	292	QLD	Gold Coast (C)	221
	Leichhardt	187		Brisbane (C)	216
	Flynn	179		Cairns (R)	124
	Brisbane	169		Mount Isa (C)	91
	Moncrieff	144		Fraser Coast (R)	76
SA	Adelaide	130	SA	Adelaide (C)	121
	Grey	98		Berri and Barmera (DC)	38
	Barker	87		Unincorporated SA	27
	Wakefield	19		Port Augusta (C)	17
	Hindmarsh	14		Onkaparinga (C)	16
WA	Durack	361	WA	Perth (C)	215
	Perth	285		Derby-West Kimberley (S)	63
	Canning	70		Port Hedland (T)	57
	O'Connor	70		Mandurah (C)	54
	Forrest	68		Fremantle (C)	51
Tas	Denison	56	Tas	Hobart (C)	51
	Braddon	25		Launceston (C)	12
	Franklin	22		Huon Valley (M)	11
NT	Lingiari	637	NT	Darwin (C)	385
	Solomon	460		Roper Gulf (R)	105
ACT	Canberra	48	ACT	ACT	54
	Fenner	5			

