

Media Release

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Homelessness Week – Let's make sure everyone is home by this time next year.

Once again it almost is Homelessness Week, however 1600 people in our community are without a safe permanent and affordable home every single day of the year.

The ACT has the second highest number of people using homelessness support in Australia. 54 members of Canberra's community slept rough on our streets on 2016 census night, 92% higher than the previous count however still a number which, frontline services say, should easily be able to access safe, permanent and affordable housing in this city.

"More than any other city in Australia we have the resources, the knowledge and the tenacity to end street homelessness within a year," said Kate Cvetanovski, Executive Director, Community Services, "First and foremost, ending street homelessness requires housing before any other intervention or service. A roof, a house, a home."

Northside Community Service are leading the way in the ACT by implementing the Housing First model across all of their community programs including Common Ground Canberra for which they provide the tenant support services.

Housing First is a globally recognised and proven approach that connects people experiencing homelessness with long-term housing as quickly as possible and without preconditions. Housing First is guided by the belief that a safe home is a human right and a basic need that must be met before attending to personal issues. The model is based on evidence that people, even with long histories of homelessness, mental illness or addictions, can achieve housing stability in long-term housing if provided with the right supports.

"Providing safe, permanent and affordable housing for less than 60 members of our community is achievable. It is not a favour, it is not a privilege to bestow, it is a human right," said Ms Cvetanovski. "All housing problems are connected. Renters, home-buyers, people struggling to find a safe roof over their heads – what happens to one of us, affects everybody."

Northside Community Services are continuing to press government for a courageous and progressive response to end street homelessness in the ACT. There is no reason that Canberra could not lead the nation in responding to the homelessness crisis.

For more information or comment please contact

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