

Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Our vision

A NSW where no one is experiencing homelessness and no one is at risk of homelessness.

A NSW where there is affordable and safe housing for all with access to a range of community and support services.

Our purpose

To advocate and provide leadership on homelessness issues across NSW and to support effective service delivery to those who are experiencing homelessness, have experienced homelessness or are at risk of homelessness.

Our values

We are guided by the principles of social justice and human rights.

We act with accountability, transparency and quality practice.

We encourage our members to participate in shaping our policies, conducting our advocacy and designing and delivering our services.

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land and respect elders, past and present and recognise the impacts of colonisation and dispossession on homelessness.

Our strategic goals for the next 3 years 2017 – 2020

Homelessness NSW is committed to working to halve homelessness in NSW by 2025.

During the next three years there will be a Federal and a State election. Homelessness NSW's priority during this period must be to focus on advocacy and campaigning that brings about a commitment to:

1. Resource programs and system responses that prevent homelessness such as no exits into homelessness

2. Resource programs and system responses that address homelessness such as supportive housing
3. Investing in and expanding available social housing supply
4. Increasing the availability of affordable housing

In addition to this, we will also be focusing on supporting the delivery of:

- A homelessness sector that offers high quality services and delivers outcomes for clients
- An increased organisational capacity and profile
- A consumer focus as a core element of service provision

Our key strategies

- Partnership and collaboration
- Policy development and advocacy
- Evidence based research and analysis
- Sector support and organisational development
- Consumer participation
- Stakeholder engagement
- Member services and support
- Information and communications
- Resource development

The environment in which we operate

Since 2011 (the date of the last census) homelessness in NSW has been increasing. The 2016 census has yet to be released, however, the 2015/16 AIHW data identified that over 69,000 people accessed Specialist Homelessness Services (SHSs), an increase of 35% since 2013/14.

The increase in homelessness is caused by a lack of social and affordable housing in NSW. There is currently over 60,000 people on the social housing waiting list and the private rental market is increasingly unaffordable for people living on income support and on low incomes. Without significant resource investment and commitment to policy change at a Federal and State Government level the lack of social and affordable housing will continue to cause the levels of homelessness to increase in NSW.

Alongside this issue is increased community awareness of the impacts of domestic and family violence for women and their children, an increasing prison population and significant reforms being undertaken in the disability and mental health areas all of which is in part contributing to the demand for homelessness services. Consequently, prevention of homelessness and linkages with other service systems, programs and plans needs to be a key priority.

In 2014, the NSW Government reformed the SHS service system via Going Home Staying Home. This created a large amount of upheaval and change within the sector and it has taken a number of years for the sector to re-establish service provision. This has largely been achieved and the priority now is to support the sector to deliver quality services whilst also addressing the issues that continue to be a barrier to this.

Homelessness NSW has and will continue to focus on a consultative and collaborative approach to preventing and addressing homelessness. It works in close partnership with Specialist Homelessness Services and is developing strong relationships with the community housing sector and a range of stakeholders in the health, justice, youth, local government and domestic and family violence sectors. Homelessness NSW is active in the national policy and advocacy environment through its support of Homelessness Australia. It also seeking to work in deeper partnership with the philanthropic and corporate sectors.

Finally, it is essential that the needs, experiences and input from consumers is increased across the sector. Homelessness NSW has already begun to embed consumer input into all of its project work and is now seeking to expand this across the organisation and the sector more broadly.

Who we are

Homelessness NSW is a small not for profit peak organisation in NSW with approximately 170 member agencies, both large and small who provide a diversity of direct services to homeless people and those at risk of homelessness across NSW.

We rely on Government funding assistance to meet the cost of the vast bulk of our services and activities. We are structured as a tax exempt charitable organisation and are reviewing options to better enable the organisation to move to a more sustainable financial position in the medium term via other sources of funding.

Homelessness NSW is an incorporated association, governed by a Board of Management. This Board is comprised of nine persons elected by our membership. The Board is advised by a Policy Council, which can comprise up to 16 members, including Board members. The Board meets at least bi-monthly, whilst the Policy Council meets at least 3 times a year. Homelessness NSW also regularly undertakes consultations with members across NSW, including regional and rural areas to ensure that members views underlie the work of the organisation. Homelessness NSW distributes information widely and also seeks members and other views through extensive use of e-bulletins, email networks, our website and other instruments such as online surveys. Our organisation is a member of several Government advisory and consultative forums as well as being a participant in several not for profit sector peak networks.

Our Strategic Goals and the results we seek in the next three years and our strategies to achieve this

OVERALL GOAL: TO HALVE HOMELESSNESS BY 2025

Results	Deliverables	Targets
Preventing homelessness - resourcing of programs and system responses that prevent homelessness		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased understanding of the determinants of homelessness and effective prevention practice Increased number of members involved in prevention practice <p>Increased number of programs, services and resources in other service systems focused on preventing homelessness and reporting outcomes around this</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government policy and practice aligns with Homelessness NSW position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research, resources and submissions made on the prevention of homelessness, with a particular focus on good practice approaches and emerging groups such as older women Regular dissemination of good practice and emerging research via social media and an e-bulletin Build the capacity of the mainstream service system to prevent homelessness with a particular focus on social housing, NDIS, Health and Corrections Actively provide advice on the development of the NSW Homelessness Strategy with a focus on the evidence base/good practice, systemic change and outcomes measurement Consult with members and other relevant stakeholders on the design, development and priorities of the Homelessness Strategy Actively provide advice on the implementation of the NSW Homelessness Strategy to help ensure that the Strategy is meeting the agreed outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW Government implements a Homelessness Strategy with whole of government outcome measures and resources to deliver outcomes NSW Government adopting a 'no exits into homelessness' policy and monitors and resources this NSW Government agencies required to report on homelessness prevention outcomes Homelessness sector adequately resourced to undertake prevention work such as maintaining tenancies, supporting women and children experiencing domestic and family violence to maintain housing and supporting young people who are identified as at risk of homelessness

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with members/stakeholders on the impacts/benefits of the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy and work collaboratively with Government around promoting and/or addressing the benefits/impacts • Partner with non-traditional stakeholders (eg aged care sector, corporates) to support homelessness prevention good practice 	
Addressing homelessness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resourcing of program and system responses that address homelessness ▪ Investing in and expanding social housing supply ▪ Increasing the availability of affordable housing 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased understanding of the linkages between homelessness and the lack of social and affordable housing • Increased number of members involved in advocating for an increase in social and affordable housing • Increased number of programs and resources that prioritise social and affordable housing • Government policy and practice aligns with Homelessness NSW position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and implementation of an affordable housing campaign in partnership with relevant stakeholders including Homelessness Australia and the NSW Federation of Housing Associations • Bi-ennial conference on affordable housing jointly convened with the NSW Federation of Housing Associations • Research and submissions made on the impact of the lack of social and affordable housing and related policies on homelessness • Regular dissemination of good practice and emerging research via social media and an e-bulletin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Government invests in expansion of social housing supply • Federal Government invests in expansion of social housing supply • NSW Government implements an affordable housing strategy with whole of government outcome measures and resources to deliver outcomes • Federal Government implements an affordable housing strategy with outcome measures and resources to deliver outcomes • Supportive housing is embedded as a resourced and systemic response to addressing homelessness and maintaining tenancies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources and practice support provided to relevant stakeholders on supporting people who have experienced or at risk of homelessness to maintain tenancies Active provision of advice to the Department of Family and Community Service on the implementation of the Future Directions social housing reform Consultation with members/relevant stakeholders on the impact/benefits of the implementation of Future Directions, and work collaboratively with Government around promoting and/or addressing the benefits/impacts. 	
<p>A homelessness sector that offers high quality services and delivers outcomes for clients</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service system gaps and structural barriers of the homelessness service system are addressed Homelessness sector is able to demonstrate client and service outcomes Coordinated industry and workforce development support that is valued by the sector Independent accredited quality system is implemented for the homelessness sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build an evidence base on emerging issues that are contributing to homelessness and appropriate responses to these issues with a focus on older women and inner city homelessness Work in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to develop appropriate policy, resource and/or good practice responses to emerging issues Participate in public and media forums to raise awareness of these issues and to highlight appropriate responses Actively provide advice on the necessary review and improvements required around 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW Government adequately resources homelessness service system to provide outcomes for people experiencing homelessness and these outcomes are measured and reported on Federal Government adequately resources homelessness service system to provide outcomes for people experiencing homelessness and these outcomes are measured and reported on Homelessness services can measure their client outcomes and can demonstrate that they are addressing and preventing homelessness

	<p>the SHS Program to ensure that the homelessness service system is delivering high quality and effective services to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with members and other relevant stakeholders during the review process on the impact/benefits of identified changes and work collaboratively with Government to ensure effective change • Actively provide advice and work collaboratively with the sector to shift to an outcomes measurement approach to service delivery • Bi-ennial Homelessness NSW conference that showcases local, national and international good practice • Annual rural and regional forum/conference that focuses on rural and regional homelessness issues • Regular dissemination of good practice and emerging research via forums, social media and an e-bulletin • Support the development of homelessness communities of practice including the Sydney Women’s Homeless Alliance • Develop and implement the NSW Homelessness Industry and Workforce Development Strategy in collaboration with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Government introduces an independent accredited quality system for homelessness services
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	<p>Yfoundations, Domestic Violence NSW and the SHS sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice to Government on good practice approaches to quality systems management 	
<p>An increased organisation capacity and profile</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased recognition of Homelessness NSW as a voice of influence • Increased number and diversity of members • Strengthened Board and governance structures • Increased member input into our service activity • Growing levels of diversified, sustainable sources of revenue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong media and social media presence on homelessness and affordable housing issues • Transparent and respectful communication with members and other stakeholders regarding advocacy work • Development of evidence base and reference to this when undertaking advocacy work • Partnership approach to policy, project and campaign work that enables member participation • Active participation at a national level via Homelessness Australia or national homelessness peak • Twice yearly consultations with members across NSW that discuss reforms, service delivery and good practice • Active engagement with members on improving service delivery of Homelessness NSW via member surveys and twice yearly consultation • Review and reform of member structures and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness NSW is the peak of choice for services working to prevent and address homelessness • Homelessness NSW and the NSW Federation of Housing Associations jointly manage housing and homelessness industry and workforce development • Homelessness NSW has an identified source of non-government revenue

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaign to encourage membership of the organisation across the broader housing and community services sector • Organisational review undertaken that incorporates governance structures • Joint planning undertaken with relevant peak organisations around improving sustainability • Investigation and identification of options to diversify sources of revenue via the corporate and philanthropic sector 	
Consumer focus is a core element of service provision		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A client centred and human rights focus incorporated in our advocacy activities • Increased consumer engagement in our governance and service activity • Increased consumer engagement in SHS development of their own services • Increased evidence available about quality client centred practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a model framework to include consumer participation in all aspects of Homelessness NSW work • Include consumer participation and input into all Homelessness NSW policy and research projects • Support SHS services and Government to implement processes that include consumer participation in the development and implementation of service delivery and reforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer input is embedded into every aspect of Homelessness NSW's management and operation • Consumer input is embedded into sector and Government service provision and policy development.