

Inquiry into Homelessness in Victoria

Dr Beryl Langer

Organisation Name:

Your position or role:

SURVEY QUESTIONS

Drag the statements below to reorder them. In order of priority, please rank the themes you believe are most important for this inquiry into homelessness to consider::

Rough sleeping, Services, Public housing, Indigenous people, Family violence, Housing affordability, Mental health, Employment

What best describes your interest in our Inquiry? (select all that apply) :

Academic & research , Concerned citizen

Are there any additional themes we should consider?

YOUR SUBMISSION

Submission:

The causes of homelessness are complex, and include changes in the nature of work and security of employment, along with broad changes in family and community structure over the last half century. At the same time, however, the causes are simple and reside in a combination of increased social and economic inequality combined with the withdrawal of governments from the investment in social housing that Australian governments made in the 1950s and 60s. While Australia is now a much wealthier country, governments at both state and federal level appear to have little interest in the kind of social investment required to provide housing as a human right.

In Victoria, decline in government investment in housing has been in inverse relation to government investment in policing and prisons, whereas it is arguable that increased government investment in housing would reduce the need for continuous expansion of the prison system. The example of the Housing First approach taken in Finland certainly suggests this. The number of homeless people in Finland has been steadily decreasing since the introduction of the Housing First scheme in 2007. Built on the principle that having a permanent home can make solving health and social problems much easier, the scheme has also been successful in such places as Edmonton in Canada where its proponents estimate that every dollar spent to fund a housing-first model saves four dollars in shelter, medical, law enforcement and health costs. I therefore draw the attention of the Inquiry to the Finnish and Canadian cases, which provide humane solutions to the increasingly desperate problem of homelessness in Victoria.

References:

Distasio, Jino. 'A proven way to end homelessness in Canada' The Conversation, October 1, 2019.

<https://theconversation.com/a-proven-way-to-end-homelessness-in-canada-122452>

Gray, Alex. 'Here's how Finland solved its homelessness problem', World Economic Forum, February 2018

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/02/how-finland-solved-homelessness/>

Purdon, Nick & Palleja, Leonardo. 'What if the solution to homelessness is really as simple as offering everyone a place to live?' Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, (March 7, 2020)

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/homeless-solutions-housing-first-1.5486779>

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?:

FILE ATTACHMENTS

File1:

File2:

File3:

Signature:

Beryl A. Langer