

Policy Statements 2017–2018



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Opening Message

The Salvation Army is an international movement and one of the world's largest Christian social welfare organisations, with more than 1,650,000 members across 127 countries. Operating in Australia since 1880, The Salvation Army is one of Australia's largest providers of social services and programs and is committed to serving the most marginalised and socially excluded individuals in our society.

For more than 130 years, The Salvation Army has sought to serve the Australian community in ways that are consistent with our foundational values of integrity, compassion, respect, diversity, and collaboration. We are supported in our mission by many thousands of employees and volunteers, who are committed to social justice and the protection of the rights of disadvantaged and marginalised Australians.

As an organisation that works at the frontline, The Salvation Army is keenly aware of the debilitating impact of entrenched poverty and situational disadvantage. We constantly see the effects of such deprivation, which can be long lasting and have impacts on many generations of Australians. It can ultimately limit their capacity to engage fully in the social and economic life of their communities.

The Salvation Army will continue to advocate for the vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the communities that we serve on a daily basis. As a consequence, we commit ourselves to work with the Australian Government to promote innovative measures that effectively and compassionately support marginalised and disadvantaged Australians to fully engage in society.

This year, The Salvation Army would like to highlight these key areas of concern:

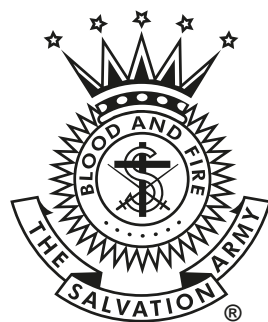
- Poverty and disadvantage
- Family and domestic violence
- Homelessness and housing
- Alcohol and other drugs
- Employment
- Aged care

We recognise that many of the areas of concern above are not discrete and have complex interactions in the lives of those who seek support from our services.

The Salvation Army calls on all political parties to consider the recommendations in the statements that follow and to work together to find innovative responses. The Salvation Army welcomes opportunities to discuss the concerns of those who use our support services with the Australian Government.

Commissioner Floyd Tidd
National Commander
The Salvation Army Australia

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The Salvation Army Australia

A SNAPSHOT OF SUPPORT¹



200,000
people assisted
by Salvation Army
services



486,000
occasions of
emergency relief
assistance



26,500
people assisted by
homelessness and
housing services

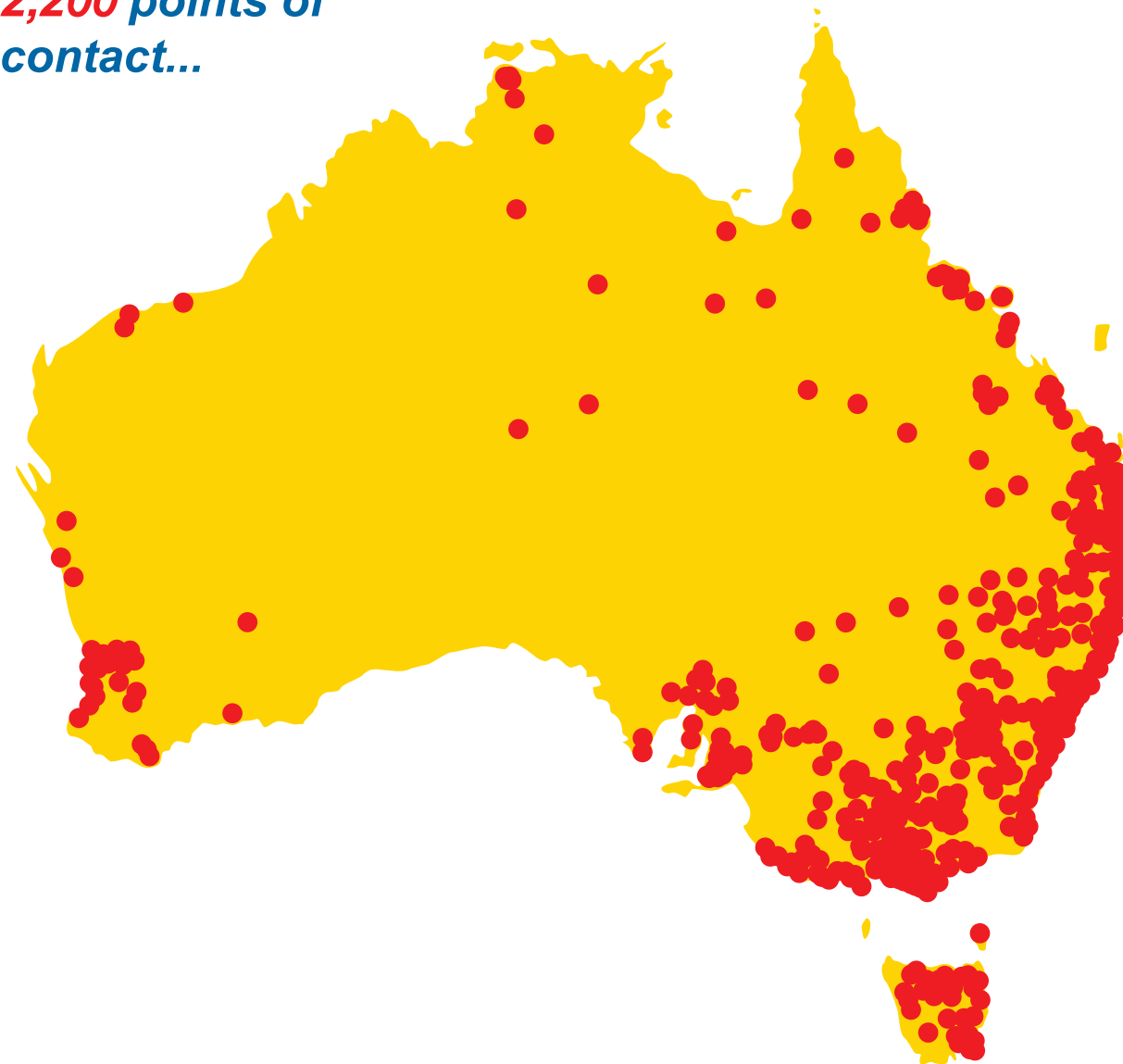


19,700
people assisted by
drug and alcohol
treatment services

Data collection

The Salvation Army's Service and Mission Information System (SAMIS) records data on client activities from government funded and Salvation Army funded programs. SAMIS provides information on service delivery, client presentations, demographics and support provided. SAMIS data (2016) is one of the key data sources used for this report. See endnotes for additional references.

*The Salvation Army provides more than **2,200** points of contact...*



... a significant majority are in low socio-economic areas.

SALVATION ARMY SERVICES

The Salvation Army provides more than 2,200 points of contact for the Australian community that range over vast distances. For example, from Darwin in the Northern Territory, to Hobart in Tasmania, Alice Springs in central Australia, Albany in Western Australia, and Rockhampton in Queensland. The Salvation Army's services and activities are overwhelmingly located in areas with significant socio-economic disadvantage.

The Salvation Army has one of Australia's largest networks of homelessness and community support services. In total there are more than 1,000 specialised social programs and activities, located in a vast network of other social support services, community centres and churches. The Salvation Army has a national annual operating budget in excess of \$700 million.

Key services provided include:

- Material aid and emergency relief
- Financial counselling and assistance
- Accommodation and homelessness services
- Personal counselling and support
- Family and domestic violence support services
- Drug and alcohol support and treatment services
- Out-of-home care
- Child, youth and family services
- Emergency disaster responses and chaplaincy support
- Education, training and employment support services
- Migrant and refugee services
- Aged care services
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) services



Poverty and Disadvantage

Key findings from respondents to The Salvation Army's ESIS 2016 report³:

85%

indicated that they were receiving income support payments

89%

reported not having access to up to \$500 savings if they experienced an emergency

66%

went without basic necessities

52%

went without meals due to financial hardship

53%

delayed payment of utility bills



486,000 instances of emergency relief assistance were provided by The Salvation Army²

Salvation Army response

A review conducted by The Salvation Army in the early 2000s highlighted the need to provide innovative responses for those struggling to 'make ends meet' and people seeking support through Community Support Services. Building on traditional responses that had centred almost exclusively on one-off transactional interactions, The Salvation Army's Doorways philosophy was developed. The Doorways philosophy is an early intervention approach that provides integrated,

holistic and capacity building services. In centres across Australia, more than 300 innovative programs and activities provide a range of responses that include: case management support, emergency relief, financial counselling, community development activities, and day-to-day assistance with the basic necessities of life. In 2016/17 The Salvation Army provided more than \$20 million of internally generated funds for Community Support Services.

Issues

The *Economic and Social Impact Survey*, conducted annually by The Salvation Army, highlights the total inadequacy of income support payments for disadvantaged Australians trying to make ends meet. More than half of those engaged in the research reported going without meals and the basic necessities of life, while others faced impossible choices such as paying the rent or buying food for their children. These circumstances have a detrimental impact on children, representing a significant risk to the individual child's health, development and wellbeing. In addition, there is a cost to the community if children do not flourish and are ultimately unable to participate in the social and economic community in the future.

A significant number of people seeking support from The Salvation Army have complex needs and are recipients of disability support payments. For this group of people, accessing the NDIS can be particularly difficult if they do not have family or friends to support them in negotiating the system. Contrary to popular myths, many of those seeking support from The Salvation Army are



very frugal and have highly developed budgeting skills; they simply do not have sufficient income to meet all their basic needs. The high cost of accommodation/rental is a contributing factor and is particularly debilitating for many Australians on inadequate income support payments.

Recommendations

The Salvation Army calls on the Australian Government to consider the following recommendations:

- 1 Immediate and significant increases in income support allowances, especially Newstart, to prevent disadvantaged Australians becoming entrenched in a cycle of increasing poverty.
- 2 Increase support for programs that provide early intervention through intensive case management support, financial counselling, employment opportunities and capacity building initiatives.
- 3 Targeted and increased support for children experiencing deprivation, particularly in single parent families on inadequate income support payments.



Family and Domestic Violence

Issues

To challenge the issues underlying Family and Domestic Violence, The Salvation Army believes changes must occur in attitudes towards women. Urgent changes are needed to promote independence and decision making, which challenges gender stereotypes and roles, and strengthen and value respectful relationships⁹. These changes are best achieved through prevention and early intervention programs that disrupt and prevent Family and Domestic Violence.

The Salvation Army supports the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022*, which identifies strategies to promote gender equality and addresses the causal issues to strengthen positive, equal and respectful relationships across our community.



The Salvation Army's Economic and Social Impact Survey (ESIS) for 2016 found that Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) was the reason⁵:

64%

reported their children had to change school

75%

spend three quarters of their income on housing and accommodation⁶

37%

had moved in the last 12 months



More than **6,400** Australians were assisted by specialist Salvation Army Family and Domestic Violence services⁴



Family and Domestic Violence is the main reason women experience homelessness; it is the biggest contributor to ill health and premature death in Australian women aged **15 to 44** years⁷

Salvation Army response

The Salvation Army supports many thousands of Australians fleeing Family and Domestic Violence from hundreds of suburbs, towns and cities across the nation. Salvation Army personnel struggle to meet the increasing demand for services; particularly for housing support, given the chronic lack of suitable and affordable housing in many Australian cities and towns. Salvation Army personnel respond to those who are at

extreme risk of life threatening violence. A range of responses are provided by The Salvation Army including: crisis accommodation, counselling, material aid, and support to access legal services. The innovative and highly successful private and community sector partnership, Safer in the Home, facilitates a collaborative risk assessment, resulting in the most appropriate security measures for those remaining at home.

Recommendations

The Salvation Army calls on the Australian Government to consider the following recommendations:

- 1 Increase the supply of safe housing and accommodation for women and their children escaping Family and Domestic Violence, including rapid re-housing, crisis and long-term housing.
- 2 Prioritise prevention, early intervention, advocacy campaigns to change community attitudes, and expand research-informed specialist men's services that address perpetrator behaviour.
- 3 Extend and support the Safer in the Home program to ensure ongoing and national access.

Housing and Homelessness

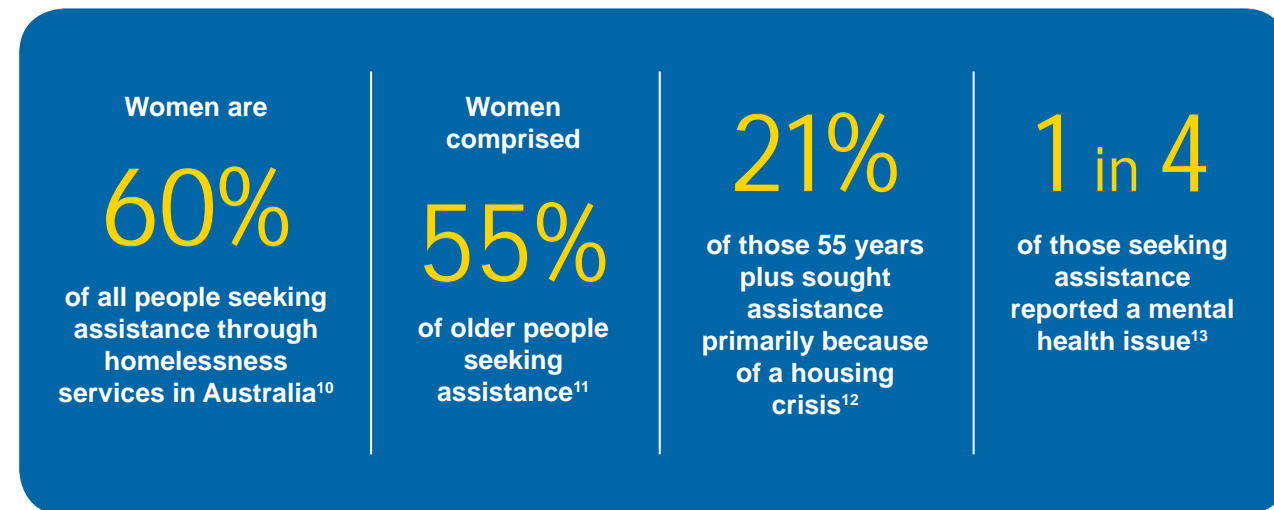


Issues

A number of innovative social housing models have been developed over the last few decades to provide a remedy for the growing shortfall of affordable and social housing in Australian capital cities and some regional centres. Many of these initiatives are providing much needed assistance, and may benefit from the establishment of an affordable Housing Growth Fund¹⁴. Nonetheless, a growing body of research leads to the inevitable conclusion that only sustained and significant investment by both state and federal governments, combined with policy change, is likely to resolve housing affordability issues¹⁵. The capacity of the private and NFP sector is demonstrably unable to adequately increase the supply of housing independently, as the experience of comparable countries indicates.

Beyond the need to adequately increase the supply of affordable housing, significant support services are required to ensure that those who have experienced homelessness/rough sleeping are supported to gain and then retain tenancy. Intensive case management and support for complex underlying needs, including mental

health and addictions, are often necessary to ensure that people who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness can transition back into stable accommodation. Early intervention in the cycle of risk, with intensive support services, is an essential and often underfunded component in preventing long-term homelessness.



 **26,500** people were assisted by Salvation Army Housing and Homelessness services⁹

Salvation Army response

Housing and homelessness services are a significant part of The Salvation Army's commitment to the Australian community through more than 183 services and activities. In 2016/17 more than \$28 million of Salvation Army generated funds have been invested into service delivery. These include crisis accommodation for short term support, transitional accommodation that enables people to stabilise their living circumstances, and longer term housing, and

post-prison housing. Salvation Army services are frequently co-located with other programs to provide holistic support.

The Salvation Army also provides services that are specifically designed to meet the needs of women (25%) and services with a youth focus (25%), delivering targeted support services such as case management, advocacy, referral, and material aid.

Recommendations

The Salvation Army calls on the Australian Government to consider the following recommendations:

- 1 Establish an advisory mechanism to support innovation and evidence based responses to the provision of homelessness services.
- 2 Initiate an extensive increase in Social Housing investment through the National Affordable Housing Agreement.
- 3 Expand and develop intensive support services to rough sleepers to address the complexity of their need.



Alcohol and Other Drugs



19,700 people were assisted by Salvation Army Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) services¹⁶

Salvation Army response

In response to the needs of those struggling with addictions, The Salvation Army has developed a comprehensive range of programs that can address the spectrum of needs arising out of substance misuse. These include sobering up and detox programs, residential rehabilitation, community rehabilitation and day programs, outpatient services, counselling, case management, and community development activities. Many of those seeking support from The Salvation Army have complex needs that include issues with their mental health, cognitive impairment and social isolation. The extensive

range of services provided by The Salvation Army within Australia creates a large network that works in collaboration with many local Primary Health Networks (PHN) and other support services.

In addition, there are AOD programs co-located within other Salvation Army services, such as homelessness services, to meet the need of specific groups more effectively. Needle and syringe programs, alongside other harm reduction measures, are offered either within treatment services, as part of a treatment pathway, or as stand-alone measures.

Issues

Adequate funding is an ongoing issue for services, which has been exacerbated by the inadequate *Health flexible funds-pausing indexation and achieving efficiencies*²² policy. The policy has had the effect of decreasing funding over time by not providing a CPI increase. The success of AOD programs relies on sufficient funding to deliver intensive support and early intervention approaches to recovery, which is CPI adjusted.

The Salvation Army continues to see first-hand the damage that addictions and substance misuse cause to individuals, their families and communities. Increasing public health education and prevention measures that include limiting advertising of alcohol in the media, and at public and sporting events, should be part of a national harm minimisation strategy.



Recommendations

The Salvation Army calls on the Australian Government to consider the following recommendations:

- 1 Continue to develop measures aimed at supporting the service delivery of large organisations that cross multiple PHN boundaries and provide consistency between PHN jurisdictions.
- 2 Reinstate the CPI increases on service agreements to enable program delivery to adequately meet the needs of service users through adequate funding.
- 3 Strengthen measures limiting advertising of alcohol in the media and at major public events.



Employment

In 2015-2016, EPlus placed more than 20,000 people in jobs with over 14,400 Australian businesses. Of these job seekers:

22%

were young people aged 15-24

11%

identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

21%

experienced a mental or physical disability

5%

were either refugees or people seeking asylum



The Salvation Army Employment Plus (EPlus) assists in excess of **40,000** job seekers every year

In December 2016, more than **723,000** Australians were unemployed and looking for work²³

Salvation Army response

The Salvation Army supports hundreds of Australians experiencing temporary or long term unemployment each week through our dedicated employment service, Employment Plus. EPlus provides a comprehensive range of job search, recruitment and training services to job seekers and employers. As the largest not-for-profit jobactive provider in Australia, EPlus delivers outcome-focused employment support on behalf of the Australian Government in every state and territory.

Unemployment affects the quality of life and wellbeing of people who are already experiencing disadvantage in our society, compounding the effects of poverty, homelessness or social isolation. EPlus' mission is to support those who are most affected by unemployment. This includes holistic referral to other services of The Salvation Army, including: youth and family programs, accommodation, drug and alcohol, and mental health services, until job seekers secure sustainable employment.

Issues

The Salvation Army remains concerned that youth unemployment is more than double the national rate²⁴. Young people present at EPlus with a range of complex issues, barriers and expectations. In addition to recent youth employment interventions such as PaTH and Transition to Work, EPlus believes additional services targeting specific barriers to youth engagement and participation in the labour market are required. These should include initiatives addressing issues related to under-employment, casualisation, social and educational disengagement and managing the transition from school to work.

The Salvation Army notes the rise in part-time and casual employment rates relative to the creation of full time jobs in the past year. While this is occurring in labour markets across Australia, its impact is most pronounced in regions which have experienced a labour market downturn such as Western Australia. We believe a response to these changing workforce conditions requires dedicated service support, reflected in the targets for employment providers.



Recommendations

The Salvation Army calls on the Australian Government to consider the following recommendations:

- 1** Prioritise program funding to support the most disadvantaged cohorts of job seekers, in particular those with limited access to mainstream employment support services (e.g. people seeking asylum, disengaged youth).
- 2** Ensure contemporary employment models such as self-employment and casual employment are adequately reflected in the practice and measurement of public employment providers, particularly in depressed labour markets.
- 3** Provide selective early access to funded jobactive support for employees who will be adversely affected by upcoming redundancies, in addition to major Structural Adjustment Programs. This will enable advance planning, support and re-training to protect these workers from subsequent welfare reliance.



Aged Care

141%

increase in those aged 85 years and over in the last two decades²⁷

484,600

people are aged 85 years and over²⁸



3,000 elderly people were assisted by The Salvation Army's aged care services²⁵



38 Salvation Army aged care services and activities across Australia²⁶

Salvation Army response

In 28 specialised aged care facilities across the country, The Salvation Army supports and cares for aged Australians. Salvation Army residential aged care centres accommodate and care for older Australians, maximising their health and wellbeing. Qualified nurses and dedicated care staff provide 24 hour professional aged care services, working with residents to create a tailored care plan that meets their needs and preferences.

The Salvation Army also operates retirement villages that offer a range of services, enabling residents to downsize their home with ease.

In addition to residential care and retirement living, The Salvation Army delivers a range of in-home care services; older Australians in Salvation Army care receive a range of services to support their independent living, in their own homes, as they continue to be a part of their community.

The Salvation Army offers aged care services in Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, New South Wales, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory.

Issues

The Salvation Army has provided care and accommodation for older Australians for more than 100 years. The earliest beginning of The Salvation Army's work in aged care was with a commitment to homeless people and the most disadvantaged members of the community. This group of Australians remain a concern to The Salvation Army, as changes in the sector occur through the implementation of Consumer Directed Care (CDC), which is among a wide range of aged care reforms by the Australian Government which are taking effect. In principle, and for many individuals, the empowerment associated with CDC is a positive development; however, it may also present challenges.

Unfortunately, there are some highly disadvantaged and isolated Australians with complex needs who do not have sufficient support from family or friends to enable them to navigate the system successfully. Disadvantaged aged care consumers in the market driven CDC system are at risk of experiencing diminished access and equity compared to others accessing the system.



The Salvation Army's experience indicates that this group of disadvantaged, aged Australians requires significant additional support to gain equity of access to aged care services.

The Australian aged care sector is the highest ageing workforce of all industry sectors, with many aged care workers due to retire within 15 years. This will place enormous pressure on the aged care industry to provide sufficient and skilled workforce for the future. It will require an intense focus on workforce planning.

Recommendations

The Salvation Army calls on the Australian Government to consider the following recommendations:

- 1 Develop policy responses that specifically address the disadvantaged, and lack of access, that those with complex needs experience in the aged care system.
- 2 Further develop the planned reforms with a specific focus on long term sustainability. This means taking into account those who can contribute to the cost of their care and those who cannot, so as to eliminate the risk of creating a two-tier system.
- 3 Implement an appropriate strategic workforce plan to meet the changing needs of the aged care industry to build a skilled, modern, stable and diverse aged care workforce.

Endnotes

- ¹ SAMIS data, TSA national figures for 2016.
- ² The Salvation Army, *ESIS* report, 2016.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ SAMIS data for FDV, TSA national data for 2016.
- ⁵ The Salvation Army, *ESIS* report, 2016.
- ⁶ Equivalised disposable income based on ABS calculation. <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/6523.0Appendix3201112?opendocument&tabname=Notes&prodno=6523.0&issue=2011-12&num=&view>
- ⁷ Cox, P. (2015) Violence against women: Additional analysis of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Personal Safety Survey 2012, Horizons Research Report, Issue 1, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS), Sydney; and Woodlock, D., Healey, L., Howe, K., McGuire, M., Geddes, V. and Granek, S. (2014)
- ⁸ Our Watch, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and VicHealth. (2015). Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia. Our Watch: Melbourne, Australia. <http://www.ourwatch.org.au/getmedia/0aa0109b-6b03-43f2-85fe-a9f5ec92ae4e/Change-the-story-framework-prevent-violence-women-children-AA-new.pdf.aspx>
- ⁹ SAMIS data for homelessness, TSA national figures 2016.
- ¹⁰ AIHW, (2016). *Specialist homelessness services 2015-16*. Available: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/homelessness/specialist-homelessness-services-2015-16/>
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² Ibid
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ ACOSS, (2017). ACOSS Budget Priorities Statement 2017-18. Available: http://www.acoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/ACOSS_Budget-Priorities-Statement_2016-17_web.pdf
- ¹⁵ Ibid, p. 69.
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- ¹⁷ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2013). *National Drug Strategy Household Survey*. Available: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/alcohol-and-other-drugs/>
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Ibid.
- ²² See *Health Flexible Funds- Pausing Indexation, Achieving Efficiencies*. Available: [https://www.health.gov.au/internet/budget/publishing.nsf/Content/20B07FC9EC3025C3CA-257FA8001101ED/\\$File/FlexibleFunds.pdf](https://www.health.gov.au/internet/budget/publishing.nsf/Content/20B07FC9EC3025C3CA-257FA8001101ED/$File/FlexibleFunds.pdf)
- ²³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017), *Labour Force, Australia, January 2017* (Latest Issue 16 February 2017), www.abs.gov.au
- ²⁴ Australian Government, *Australian Jobs 2016*, p.3
- ²⁵ SAMIS data for Aged Care, TSA national figures for 2016.
- ²⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁷ ABS. (2016). Population by age and sex, Australia, states and territories 3101.0 - Australian demographic statistics, June 2016. Available: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/1CD-2B1952AFC5E7ACA257298000F2E76?OpenDocument>
- ²⁸ Ibid.



