

## A Call for Contributions – June 2018

The June 2018 “Responding to Older Persons Homeless: What Works?”  
edition of *Parity*

*This edition of Parity is sponsored by Wintringham, the Housing for the Aged  
Action Group (HAAG) and the Salvation Army Adult Services.*

### Introduction

This edition of *Parity* is about the nexus between homelessness and aged care.

Arguably, most people as they inevitably grow older will require some form of aged care. This is true whether they are homeless or not.

However, there are seemingly insurmountable problems when an older person who is homeless or at risk of homelessness seeks to access the current aged care system.

The reality is that the current aged care system is designed for those with property and assets. It does not work for the impoverished, and especially not for the homeless or those at risk of homelessness.

Those aged care providers who attempt to assist older people experiencing homelessness usually discover that it is not at all financially feasible to do so because current aged care policies and funding arrangements do not support older people without property or assets.

As it now stands, the failure of the aged care system and sector to meet the housing and support needs of older socially disadvantaged Australians has meant that this work has largely been left to dedicated social welfare organisations. While many of these are faith-based organisations, a number of secular and non-denominational specialist service providers have developed models of care that are designed to meet the housing and support requirements of impoverished older people experiencing, or at risk of homelessness.

Equally, because of the excessive demands being made on their resources, the community housing and public housing sectors have struggled to meet the housing and support needs of socially disadvantaged older people.

Likewise, the specialist homelessness services (SHS) sector has also struggled to meet the housing and support needs of the emerging high number of group of older people reaching retirement who are renting and do not have housing security. As it currently stands, SHS’s can only provide unsatisfactory and often inappropriate crisis service responses.

Many older people without housing security need sound advice to help them plan for their future to prevent and avoid later life homelessness and the consequent disastrous impacts on their health and well-being. Those who are facing eviction are often relying on family and friends to survive as there are few organisations that can assist them to navigate the housing system.

The primary need for this group of older Australians is permanent, secure and supported housing that for obvious reasons, needs to be life-long. To meet future demand a wide range of housing options need to be developed to suit an increasingly ageing population that is increasingly less likely to have housing security.

**The June 2018 “Responding to Older  
Persons Homelessness:  
What Works?” Edition of Parity**

The twin aims of this edition are:

- To discuss the changes that are required in the social welfare system, including income support, health, housing, homelessness and especially aged care, so that all sectors work and operate to prevent older persons becoming homeless and meet the housing and support needs of impoverished older people without housing security and those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- To examine and discuss those models of housing and support that actually work to meet the specific needs of older disadvantaged and impoverished older Australians.

Where appropriate and relevant, overseas policies and models that have succeeded in both meeting the housing and support needs of the elderly homeless and preventing older persons' homelessness, will also be included.

The fundamental question that this edition will seek to answer is: *What works?*

## A Framework for Discussion

- What changes could be made to the wider social welfare system, for example, with income-support, and the health and mental health systems to prevent those without housing security becoming homeless?
- What changes need to be made to the aged care, community and social housing and the homelessness services system, particularly in relation to their funding arrangements, so that they can provide the appropriate housing, support and care to impoverished older people?
- How can the current aged care system be funded and supported to house and care for older people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness?
- What are the essential features of successful models of housing and support for older people experiencing or at risk of homelessness?
- What are the different models of housing and support and what are the main differences in the various models? For example, what are the differences between faith-based services and non-denominational secular service models?
- How are these services funded and how have both federal and state governments met these funding requirements?
- What is it about these models of housing and support that makes them sustainable?
- What are some examples of the range of services in place to meet the specific support needs of the elderly homeless?
- What are some examples of what is recognised as “best practice” in meeting the housing and support needs of the elderly homeless and those at risk of homelessness?
- What types of service responses are appropriate for the rising tide of older people at risk of homelessness in the private rental market?
- Is the homelessness sector able to respond to this group who are in poverty and at risk of homelessness?
- Is there a need for better integration of housing, homelessness and aged care systems to identify, assist and support older people at risk of homelessness?

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- Older persons' homelessness is becoming increasingly gendered with a number of research reports pointing to the growing number of older women living in poverty and housing insecurity who are increasingly at risk of homelessness or who become homeless. How have services responded to this developing crisis?
- Given the increasing cultural diversity of Australia's population have housing and support services been developed to meet these cultural and ethnic differences?
- The distinction is often made between those older persons' who become homelessness "for the first time" and those older persons who have had life-long experiences of disadvantage and sometimes chronic homelessness. Are different service responses required for these distinct groups and types of homelessness; and different kinds of housing and support responses?
- For those older people who have experienced chronic homelessness, they often have a range of associated issues such as physical impairment and mental illness, ABI and alcohol related health issues. What are the particular service models best suited to meet the specific needs of this group of the elderly homeless?

### Contributing to the June 2018 "Responding to Older Persons Homeless: What Works?" edition of *Parity*

**Deadline:** All contributions need to be submitted by COB Friday June 8 2018.

**Submissions:** All contributions should be submitted as Word attachments to [parity@chp.org.au](mailto:parity@chp.org.au)

**Word length:** Contributions can be up to 1,600 words. This equates to a double page spread in *Parity*. Single page articles can be up to 800 words in length. Contributions of a greater length should be discussed with the *Parity* Editor.

**Artwork:** Contributors are invited to submit the artwork they would like to accompany their article. Inclusion is dependent on the space being available. If artwork is not provided and is required, it will be selected by the *Parity* Editor.

**Questions:** If you have any questions at all about contributing to this edition please contact the *Parity* Editor by email [parity@chp.org.au](mailto:parity@chp.org.au) or ring 03 8415 6201

#### Referencing

NB: Due to space considerations, contributors are encouraged to use endnotes when referencing their *Parity* articles. All works that are cited or referred to in an article should be referenced.

#### For example:

1. Johnson G, Kuehnle D, Parkinson S, Sesa S and Tseng Y 2014, 'Resolving long-term homelessness: A randomised controlled trial examining the 36 month costs, benefits and social outcomes from the Journey to Social Inclusion pilot program', Sacred Heart Mission, St Kilda.
2. Parkinson S 2012, 'The Journey to Social Inclusion Project in Practice- A process evaluation of the first 18 months', AHURI Research Centre, RMIT University, Melbourne, p. 19.

CHP does not encourage contributors to list a bibliography of references used in the development of an article but are not cited in the article. There is simply insufficient space for the inclusion of extensive bibliographies.

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<http://search.informit.com.au/browseJournalTitle;res=IELHSS;issn=1032-6170>

### **Assistance**

Feedback, input and assistance can be provided with drafts if required. If prospective contributors have any questions at all they should contact the *Parity* Editor, [parity@chp.org.au](mailto:parity@chp.org.au) or ring 03 8415 6200 or 03 8415 6201.