Parity

A Call for Contributions
– July 2023

Where to Now? Responding to Rough Sleeping Post-Covid

Deadline: COB Friday 14 July 2023.

Word length: Contributions can be up to 1,600 words. Submissions to be sent to: parity@chp.org.au

This edition of Parity is sponsored by Homes Victoria, Launch Housing, Micah Projects, The Salvation Army and Ballarat Uniting

Introduction

Rough sleeping has once again become an increasingly visible and seemingly intransigent form of homelessness in Australia, especially in the major cities, despite the development and implementation of a range of specific policy and service responses designed to end, or at least prevent and mitigate its duration.

In Australia, for example, Housing First models like Street to Home, Common Ground, J2SI, 500 Lives- 500 Homes, Way2Home, Advance to Zero, (and others) have now been in place for some time and have built up a substantial body of evidence for their effectiveness.

These initiatives are based on the increasing convergence of international evidence and practice around effective responses to chronic homelessness. This strong evidence base has had clear implications for the response to rough sleeping. This body of evidence, called Housing First, has focused on the primacy of the provision housing alongside flexible wrap around services and supports.

There have also been homelessness policies and strategies in most jurisdictions that have incorporated a response to rough sleeping. How have these policies and strategies sought to respond to rough sleeping?

Since last edition of Parity devoted to the response to rough sleeping, the May 2018 "Revisiting Rough Sleeping" edition, we have seen the advent and impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and

government responses to the public health implications of rough sleeping for the spread of the virus. These responses have seen the implementation of initiatives in most states and territories designed to minimise rough sleeping through the provision of some form of accommodation. Despite the acknowledged effectiveness of these initiatives and programs, their continued implementation in the now normalised "post-Covid" world is now being questioned in a number of jurisdictions.

It has now been at least 15 years since the response to rough sleeping became a dominant issue in the response to homelessness in Australia. Given that rough sleeping has increased over this period, it is now time to explore what is driving its persistence and to revisit and review past, existing and developing policy and service responses to rough sleeping across Australia, and elsewhere.

The previous 2018 edition sought to build on the April 2007 edition of Parity "Gimme Shelter: Responding to Primary Homelessness", which focused on the conceptual and definitional issues of rough sleeping, its enumeration, and the emergence of Housing First models like Street to Home and Common Ground.

The 2018 edition examined and discussed the implementation of State based policies, initiatives and programs like the Victorian Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Plan, the emerging Adelaide Zero Project, the Sacred Heart Mission's J2SI project, the role and effectiveness of outreach programs, and the lessons and experience of successful overseas rough sleeping policies and programs.

While the 2023 edition aims to build on these two previous editions, its focus will be on what is being done to respond to rough sleeping in the now, so called Post-Covid world, and what policies, programs and initiatives are needed today, especially in the context of the re-emergence of rough sleeping as a major issue. A starting point could be a discussion of the effectiveness of the policies and programs put in place during the Pandemic and its aftermath to respond to rough sleeping. Likewise, the edition will focus the development and implementation of new responses to rough sleeping.

The central questions remain: What needs to be done to end rough sleeping, and what are the best ways to end rough sleeping?

A framework for discussion

Introduction: Responding to Rough Sleeping in the "Post-Covid" World

The public health crisis better known as the Covid-19 Pandemic has dominated public policy and particularly public health policies in the years since its advent in early 2020.

Most State and Territory Governments responded to the public health imperatives of rough sleeping in the context of Covid-19 with a range of policies, programs and initiatives that saw a largely effective, albeit temporary, responses to the housing and support needs of many people

who were sleeping rough. The Homeless to Home (H2H in Victoria and the Together Home program in New South Wales are but two examples.

These initiatives demonstrated that when governments think it necessary, policy responses to the housing needs of people sleeping rough can be developed and implemented.

These "new" responses to rough sleeping could now form the basis for a further discussion of what policies and programs are required to respond effectively to the re-emergence of high levels of rough sleeping in a world where living with Covid-19 has now become normalised.

- How and in what ways has the incidence and extent of rough sleeping changed since the advent of Covid-19?
- What lessons have been learned during Covid-19 for the response to rough sleeping and can they be applied today and into the future?

Part 1: Policy Responses

This chapter is devoted to a discussion the national (where relevant) and state and territory policy initiatives and frameworks designed to respond to rough sleeping.

- What is the place and importance of rough sleeping policies and initiatives in the broader context of state or territory homelessness policies? For example, what has been the effectiveness of Victoria's Opening Doors Framework been in responding to rough sleeping? Likewise, how effective has the NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023 been in responding to rough sleeping? The same question applies to the policy frameworks of all jurisdictions.
- Where there are stand-alone "responding to rough sleeping" initiatives and programs, what do they have in common or what differentiates them?
- What has been the policy and service response of local government, particularly capital city local governments, to rough sleeping? Has it changed over time?
- How and where have the policies and initiatives put in place during the pandemic been continued in one form or another. Likewise, where and why have they been discontinued, and what has replaced them?
- Why to current policies fail to prevent rough sleeping, and what policies are required to prevent rough sleeping happening in the first place?
- What are some of the groups of people that are over-represented I the rough sleeping population and why?

Part 2: Service and Program Responses

The aim of this chapter is to examine and discuss the service response to rough sleeping and discuss.

This encompasses both mainstream services like Centrelink, mental health, health and justice services well as the Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) system and specific programs and

services like Street to Home, J2SI, Way2home, 500 lives 500 homes, Common Ground and initiatives like Advance to Zero, as well as SHS initiatives like Launch Housing's Rough Sleepers Initiative (and others).

The essential question here is the effectiveness of these service responses in terms of providing the support and housing required to end a person's rough sleeping and homelessness.

- What are the constraints working to inhibit or limit the effectiveness of the various service responses to rough sleeping?
- Has the demand for the services established to respond to rough sleeping and chronic homelessness exceeded their capacity to meet growing demand?
- How has the difficulty in providing affordable and sustainable housing prevented the service system providing an effective response to rough sleeping?
- What is the role and effectiveness of outreach services in responding to rough sleeping?
- How has the experience of responding to rough sleeping been impacted by the constraints of Covid-19 (and more recently) its normalsation?
- What are some examples of new service delivery models that could better respond to rough sleeping?
- Should culturally specific/culturally safe approaches to responding to rough sleeping be developed and implemented?

Part 3: Practice Issues

There now appears to a general consensus that assertive outreach approaches are the most effective in engaging with rough sleepers and getting them to take up and persist with the service responses that have been developed.

- What are some examples of new or emerging practice approaches to responding to rough sleeping?
- What are the main practice issues in engaging with and supporting rough sleepers and sustaining them?
- How and in what ways has the experience of Covid-19 impacted on practice issues?
- What are some of the practice issues for the provision of post–settlement support?
- How have practice issues evolved and developed over time?

Part 4: Conclusions

- Where to now for the response to rough sleeping?
- What are the obstacles and constraints on development and implementation of new and more effective responses to rough sleeping?

Key information

Deadline: The deadline for contributions: COB Friday 14 July 2023. Should additional time be required, please contact the *Parity* Editor.

Submissions format: All contributions should be submitted as Word attachments via email to 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.

Embedded media: Contributors are able to make suggestions for the placement of relevant hyperlinks, video and other multimedia within their content which can be embedded in the *Parity* online edition. Any suggestions will be reviewed by and decided upon by the *Parity* editor.

Content: By providing your contribution, you confirm and agree that (except where you have referenced or cited any other's work) the contribution is your original work and has not been copied from any other source.

Use: If your contribution is accepted, it will be published by or on CHP's behalf in an edition of the *Parity* magazine. *Parity* is available in hard copy and online.

Assistance and questions: Feedback, input and assistance can be provided with drafts if required. The *Parity* editor is available at all stages of the preparation of your contribution to look at drafts and provide input and feedback. The earlier drafts are received for feedback, the better.

Contact: The *Parity* Editor, Noel Murray, can be contacted on:

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References

All works that are cited or referred to in an article should be referenced. *Parity* 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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- Number references consecutively in the order in which they are first mentioned in the text. The first reference you cite will be numbered (1) in the text, and the second reference you cite will be numbered (2), and so on.
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- References are listed in numerical order at the end of the document.
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- If a single sentence uses two or more citations, simply identify the references one after the other.

For example:
International research has found that resilience in a homeless youth sample correlates with lower levels of psychological distress, suicide ideation, violent behaviour and substance abuse. (4) (5)

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Author's surname, initial(s), year of publication, Title of book, Publisher, Place of Publication, Page number**(s).**

For example:
1. Seung S 2012, Connectome: How the Brain's Wiring Makes Us Who We Are, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston, p.90.

Journal Articles

Author's surname, initial(s), year of publication, 'Title of article'**,** *Title of Journal,* volume number, issue number, Page number(s).

For example:
Trevithick P 2003 'Effective Relationship Based Practice', *Journal of Social Work Practice*, vol.17, no.2, pp.163-176.

Newspaper articles

With identified author:
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With no author:
Use 'Unknown'
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Unknown 2008, 'Brumby calls for tough sentences', *The Age*, 29 October 2017, p. 8.

Webpage/document within a website or blog post

Author's surname (if known) Initial, 'Page/Blog/Document Title', *The person or organisation responsible for the website,* Year of Publication (if known) <URL>
For example:

Greenblatt S, 'A special letter from Stephen Greenblatt', Australian Council of Social Services, 2017 <http://acoss.org/media/greenblatt>

Audio podcast

Speaker/Hosts surname Initial, 'Title of episode', *Title of Podcast*, Year and date of Publication, <URL> (if available).
For example:
Todd B 2018, 'What homelessness looks like for women', Stuff Mom Never Told You, 14 March 2018 <https://www.stuffmomnevertoldyou.com/podcasts/what-homelessness- looks-like-for-women.html >

Online video/film or documentary

Title Date of recording, Format, Publisher.
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Indigenous homelessness 1992, video recording, Green Cape Wildlife Films.

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Use Ibid. when the same reference appears consecutively. If the page number is different from the first use, cite the page number as well.
For example:

1. Florn B H 2015, 'The cost of youth homelessness', *Journal of Adolescence*, vol.17, no.2, pp.163-176.
2. Ibid. pp.32-33.

Multiple Authors

For every reference type, give all the authors Surnames and first Initials followed by a comma in the bibliography. The last author listed should be preceded by 'and'.
For example:
Sharp J, Peters J and Howard K 2002, The management of a student research project, Gower, Aldershot, England.