



MEDIA RELEASE

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New Government faces social and economic challenges

The WA Council of Social Service congratulates Mark McGowan and WA Labor for their victory at the polls on Saturday. Now the election is over, however, there is significant work to be done.

WA Council of Social Service CEO Louise Giolitto says “there’s no denying that McGowan has become Premier at a time when WA is facing some serious social and economic issues.”

“We have the highest levels of inequality and unemployment, as well as the worst gender pay gap of any state in Australia. Living costs continue to be a significant burden in people’s lives, with wages falling and jobs being lost.”

“More and more people are doing it tough. We can’t afford to wait until WA is flush with money again in order to do something about it. Difficult economic times are exactly the moment at which it is most important for whoever is in government to invest in our community services.”

“I think many Western Australians are looking to their government to be bold and courageous in tackling social and economic inequality in this state. In order to do that, we need to see improved collaboration across government departments and with the community sector.”

“The community services sector has had a positive and engaged relationship with the shadow cabinet and we look forward to that continuing with them as the government.”

One of the first issues that the incoming government will need to deal with will be the significant funding uncertainty facing the community services sector with the end of a swathe of contracts approaching rapidly and the future of the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) up in the air.

“Losing funding for these services will mean job losses, a decrease in available services, and more people experiencing significant hardship.”

“Restoring the State Budget must follow an inclusive course that does not look for repair at the cost of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our community.”

“We need to see a serious investment in social housing in this state. We need funding for financial counsellors to be reinstated and increased. We need to make sure everyone is able to access high quality health and legal services, regardless of where they live or what they earn.”

“If we don’t do these things, we will see disadvantage and inequality become further entrenched in our state, which will cost us all so much more in the long run.”

“We would also like to thank Colin Barnett and his team for working so cooperatively and opening up channels of communication with the community services sector during their tenure in government, and we are pleased the Labor government is committed to continuing this work.”

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