

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **PC Report Highlights Need for Homelessness Funding Certainty**

The Western Australian Council of Social Service (WACOSS) is urging the Federal Government to commit to long-term future homelessness funding under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH) in the wake of the troubling findings from the Productivity Commission's 2015 Report on Government Services (ROGS) released overnight.

The continued uncertainty regarding the future of NPAH funding, coupled with the recent cut of \$20 million for housing and homelessness programs under the Department of Social Services' grants program, are significant concerns for the community services sector and their clients.

"We're very concerned the Federal Government's decision to cut its DSS housing and homelessness grants, and its ongoing lack of commitment with regards to NPAH funding is signalling a step away from the provision of housing and homelessness assistance at a time where, as this report demonstrates; demand for housing assistance and homelessness services to many of the most vulnerable members of our community continues to increase." Ms Cattalini said.

The ROGS indicates that housing stress now impacts 40.7% of low income renting households in Australia (those in the bottom 40%), up more than 5% in the past 7 years. (To be considered in 'housing stress' a household must be spending more than 30% of their income on rent.)

The ROGS also shows that while 100,997 Western Australians are currently receiving Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) payments; even with this financial assistance, 43.3% of those recipients in Western Australia are *still* experiencing rental stress.

"What the ROGS report shows is that people in Western Australia living on the lowest incomes are continuing to struggle with the cost of housing in our state. Making sure that all Western Australians have access to affordable, appropriate housing is the integral foundation for achieving better life outcomes for all."

"The ROGSs report clearly demonstrates that demand for housing assistance and homelessness services is continuing to increase. We must invest in social and affordable housing and provide funding certainty for community organisations and most importantly the people who need housing and homeless services" Ms Cattalini said.

### **Media Contact**

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