

# Putting People First

Investing for the Social Advantage of Western Australians

WACOSS Pre-Budget Submission  
for the WA State Budget 2010-2011

Prepared by the Western Australian Council of Social Service  
for the WA State Government

October 2009



WACOSS Pre-Budget Submission  
*Putting People First*  
*Investing for the Social Advantage of Western Australians*

WACOSS  
City West Lotteries House  
2 Delhi St  
West Perth  
WA 6005

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# Contents

<b>WACOSS and the Community Services Sector</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>About this Submission</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>5-6</b>
<b>PART 1 - Priority Budget Recommendations</b>	<b>7-8</b>
Planning for Social Advantage <i>Strengthening the evidence base to plan for social advantage</i>	
Enhanced Community Service Capacity <i>Enhancing the capacity of community services across metropolitan, rural, regional and remote WA</i>	
The Fundamentals of Housing for All <i>Increasing the supply of social housing, crisis accommodation and homelessness services</i>	
Mental Health Services <i>Supporting people with complex needs through expanded mental health service funding</i>	
Alcohol and Other Drug Services <i>Reducing drug and alcohol dependence through expanded health treatment services</i>	
<b>PART 2 - Overview of Consultation Report</b>	<b>9-13</b>
About the WACOSS Pre-Budget Consultation Report	
Summary of Recommendations in the Consultation Report	
Serving the Community <i>Enhanced Community Service Capacity</i> <i>Sector Capacity and Relationship with Government</i> <i>Services for Rural, Regional and Remote WA</i>	
Cost of Living <i>Housing</i> <i>Essential Services</i> <i>Education</i> <i>Health</i>	
Social Inclusion <i>Aboriginal</i> <i>Families and Children</i> <i>Safety &amp; Justice</i> <i>Disabilities &amp; Carers</i> <i>Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities</i> <i>Diverse Sexuality and Gender</i>	
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>14</b>

## *WACOSS and the Community Services Sector*

The Western Australian Council of Social Service (WACOSS), is the leading peak organisation for the community, and represents three hundred member organisations and individuals, and over eight hundred organisations involved in the provision of services to individuals, families and children in the community.

WACOSS is part of a national network consisting of the State and Territory Councils of Social Service and the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS). Our national coverage strengthens our capacity to represent the interests of people in WA across the breadth of state and national agendas.

Each year WACOSS member organisations deliver services to hundreds of thousands of Western Australians. The services we provide include health, community services and development, disability, employment and training, aged and community care, family support, children and youth services, mental health and drug and alcohol treatment, indigenous affairs, support for culturally and linguistically diverse people, victims of violence and abuse, housing and advocacy.

We speak with and for West Australians who use community services, to bring their voices and interests to the attention of government, decision makers, media and the wider community.

## About this Submission

The WACOSS Pre-Budget Submission outlines the key priority recommendations for how the WA Government should allocate funding in the 2010-2011 State Budget to meet the immediate and pressing needs of the community and plan for the longer term social advancement of Western Australia.

This submission does not provide recommendations across the entirety of Government expenditure in the State Budget, and hence does not serve as a complete shadow budget for WA.

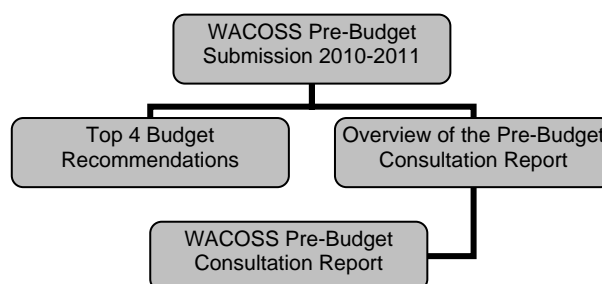
Primarily, this submission focuses on the investment needed to sustain current services and the new or expanded service needs for the community, in service areas which are delivered by the not-for-profit sector. The submission provides recommendations across the full spectrum of social services delivered by the not-for-profit sector.

With respect to State Government delivered services, this submission only provides recommendations on those areas where the outcomes have a significant impact on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals, families and children, particularly those living on low-incomes. These areas include State Government delivery of social housing, public transport and some aspects of the health budget.

Built upon the expertise and experience of the not-for-profit community services sector, this submission is derived from broad consultation with representative peak bodies and agencies from across the community, including consultations in regional centres in the South West, South Coast, Mid-West, Pilbara and Kimberley.

A detailed exploration of the priority issues, including research, references and a complete list of recommendations can be found in the *WACOSS 2010-2011 Pre-Budget Consultation Report*, available online at [www.wacoss.org.au](http://www.wacoss.org.au)

The relationship between this Pre-Budget Submission and the Consultation Report is shown in the diagram below.



# *Executive Summary*

## ***WACOSS Pre-Budget Submission***

The WACOSS Pre-Budget Submission 2010-2011, Putting People First, provides the WA community sector's recommended approach to investing State Budget spending for the social advancement of Western Australia and the wellbeing of its people.

WACOSS is committed to helping people participate in their communities and live healthy, productive lives. The community services sector has a unique and distinct role to play. As the representative voice for the community services sector, we play a critical role in ensuring that all Western Australians have access to the services and opportunities they need, from their basic needs such as housing, energy, water and food, through to the education, family support and employment opportunities they need to contribute to the social advancement of WA.

Government funding and investment decisions can best reflect community values by learning from the experience of individuals, families and children, about how they are faring in the community and using that knowledge to make decisions that benefit society as a whole. WACOSS considers the State Budget a reflection of the Government's commitment to understand and respond to the needs of the community. The investment priorities made in the budget reflect the goals the WA Government sets for the wellbeing of the State.

Investing for the social advancement of WA requires us to recognise the diverse needs of individuals, families and children in the context of the State Budget. While this is a challenging balancing act, WACOSS' Pre-Budget Submission provides some clear direction about how to prioritise investment. It outlines strategies for short term goals; areas of immediate need in the community. It also details longer term investment strategies, such as preventative services that ensure the investment of State Government resources delivers the best benefit for the people of WA in the most cost efficient manner.

## ***Investing for Social Advantage***

This submission and the full consultation report are based on the premise that investing in the social advantage of Western Australians benefits individuals, families and children, and contributes to the social advancement of the State. Social advantage refers to maximising the benefits for people of the social investments made by the State. Strategic social investment directly results in increased social capital, and improved outcomes for individuals, families and children, that is, their social advantage.

In modern advanced economies market forces alone do not provide for an equitable provision of the services and supports that people need. Government, together with business and philanthropic organisations, plays a key role in ensuring equality of access to the services and support that underpin the wellbeing of the community, and improve people's social advantage.

This submission provides a signal for Government that action is needed to ensure that all Western Australians have the means to enjoy a basic, common quality of life. WACOSS trusts that this submission will guide the strategic decision making of the WA Government in preparing the WA State Budget 2011-2011, informed by the non-government sector's analysis of the investment priorities for community services which will improve the social advantage of Western Australians. The total value of all the recommendations is \$1,053,170,307.

## **Part 1 – Priority Budget Recommendations**

Part One contains a snapshot of the top four priority recommendations for investment in the social advancement of WA.

The first recommendation has a long term focus, representing the clear need for the Western Australian community to build its capacity to plan effectively for the future.

- *Planning for Social Advantage*: This recommendation calls for WA to strengthen its capacity to plan effectively by investing in the coordination of community data. Such data would serve as an invaluable resource in determining crucial short and long term social service planning and investment decisions of government, business and the community.

The next three recommendations have an immediate focus, representing the priority needs of the Western Australian community which require urgent investment in services to support the most vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals, children and families in our community.

- *Enhanced Community Service Capacity*: There is an urgent need to close the funding gap which is threatening the viability of many services being delivered in the community not-for-profit sector.
- *The Fundamentals of Housing for All*: Calls on the Government to increase the availability of safe, affordable and accessible housing for those in housing stress and experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- *Mental Health and Alcohol and other Drugs*: Increase funding to the not-for-profit sector to grow the capacity for mental health and alcohol and other drug health treatment and preventative services.

## **Part 2 – Overview of Consultation Report**

Part Two provides an overview of the entire Pre-Budget Consultation Report, from which the top four recommendations are drawn. The Consultation Report provides an overall strategy for achieving three things for WA:

- *Serving the Community*: Building on the current capacity of services delivered by a sustainable not-for-profit sector.
- *Cost of Living*: Supporting people to have the means to enjoy a basic, common quality of life; and
- *Social Inclusion*: Providing services for a diverse range of individuals and families that support them to meet their own needs.

Rising living costs in Western Australia have meant that for a significant part of our population, the ability of people to meet their own basic needs cannot be taken for granted. Following these recommendations, which reflect the needs of the community, will ensure that the Government invests State revenue to the best advantage of Western Australians.

The recommendations are designed to ensure vulnerable and disadvantaged Western Australians will have the means to enjoy a basic, common quality of life, and to secure the accessibility and affordability of essential services, including housing, energy, water, health and education. The recommendations also cover the range of services that individuals, families and children access to support them to meet their own needs. These include language and translation services, legal services and supports for victims of crime and abuse, people with disabilities, children, seniors and people of diverse sexuality and gender.

# Part 1 - Priority Budget Recommendations

WACOSS provides the following top four priority recommendations in this submission for investment by the Government in the 2010-11 State Budget, totalling \$802 million of investment. The first recommendation relates to the establishment of an initiative with medium to long term benefits. The remaining three represent areas that require immediate attention and investment.

## **Planning for Social Advantage**

*Strengthening the evidence base to plan for social advantage*

*Create an accessible, integrated data set of social wellbeing indicators in WA. This will enable community, government and business analysts to determine and measure baselines and targets for the social advantage of individuals and the community. It should be coupled with an investment fund for not-for-profit organisations for research and development of innovative policy, program and service delivery models which will assist in meeting the planning objectives we set for Western Australia.*

Investment \$11.4million

WA has a great potential to develop a relatively untapped resource base through the better coordination and application of its data on the social wellbeing of WA. Decision makers and policy developers, within the Government, the public and private sector and the community, would benefit greatly from improved data management and analysis to inform their planning and decision making. Access to reliable and credible data, across a collective group of social wellbeing performance indicators, is a critical starting point for improving WA's long term social advantage.

Integrated data from community service providers could serve as useful performance indicators of pressure points and priorities for early intervention and service delivery. This would apply to affordability issues for critical services, including food, fuel, transport, energy and water, and accessibility issues including for housing, financial counselling, emergency relief, child care, mental health and drug and alcohol services. Coupled with an integrated data set, WA would benefit from a mechanism for consumer engagement that provides the capacity to test the performance indicators arising from coordinated data analysis, with the lived experience of people in the WA community, in particular as consumers of social services.

## **Enhanced Community Service Capacity**

*Enhancing the capacity of community services across metropolitan, rural, regional and remote WA*

*Provide a 30% increase in funding to service providers in the community services sector state-wide as well as an additional index of 20% to recognise the higher costs for service providers operating in rural, regional and remote WA. This increase is necessary to ensure adequate, equitable wages for staff and secure the viability of social services for the Western Australian community.*

Investment \$198 million

The current model for funding community services is unrealistic and unsustainable, as it does not allow service providers to pay equitable salaries to their staff. The consequent inability to attract and retain employees is a constant threat to the viability of community services. The under-funding of community services, and the consequent inequitable salaries for their employees, must be addressed.

The community services sector is at a crossroads. The current under-valued approach to delivering services is not sustainable. Community service organisations cannot continue to pay their staff up to 30% less than comparable employees in the public sector, and there is limited capacity to improve the situation within current funding levels. Unless the undervaluation of the sector is corrected, the viability of many community services can not be assured.

Furthermore, the cost of providing services in regional areas is anecdotally reported to be at least 20% higher than for metropolitan based services, and this should be reflected through the introduction of an additional regional service index. Access to services for people living in rural, regional and remote parts of WA is critical to maintaining healthy liveable communities.



## **Housing - A Fundamental for All**

*Increasing the supply of social housing, crisis accommodation and homelessness services*

*Invest in the social housing system to increase public and private accommodation options in the housing continuum, and increase the social housing stock by 20,000 dwellings by 2020.*

Investment \$568 million

The highest priority need of vulnerable individuals, families and children in WA is housing. Having a safe and affordable home to live in is essential for anyone to be able to participate in the social, economic and cultural life of a community. This fundamental human need is the reason why access to housing continues to be reported by community service providers as compromising their capacity to meaningfully support people to overcome other diverse forms of disadvantage.

There is an increasing scarcity of social housing across WA, and insufficient funding for crisis and supported accommodation to meet the demand for services. Accelerating numbers of people that can not attain housing in the private market are now missing out on this vital safety net. The public housing waiting list has rapidly increased to over 21,000 applicants. In addition, another 3,500 applicants are on the priority wait list, many of whom are families with children.

Achieving the State Government's aspirational target of 20,000 new social housing dwellings is absolutely critical, and will require continued investment through progressive State Budgets, especially in regional, rural and remote areas.

## **Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Services**

*Supporting people with complex needs through expanded health treatment and prevention service funding*

*Provide increased funding for additional mental health and drug and alcohol services, delivered by the not-for-profit sector, with an emphasis on providing services for vulnerable and disadvantaged West Australians in the community and corrective services facilities.*

Investment \$24.5 million

There is growing community concern about the prevalence of mental health problems and dependence on alcohol and other drugs. The increasing complexity of delivering social services in WA is largely associated with mental health issues and the use of alcohol and other drugs. Services which can undertake dual-diagnosis and treatment of issues associated with both mental health and alcohol and other drug use, provide a foundation for good practice in service delivery for people with complex needs.

Rehabilitation from drug and alcohol dependence, and positive outcomes with mental health are practical and achievable for people if they are supported with the opportunity to access treatment services. Investment in increasing the capacity of the community sector to deliver both treatment and prevention services, in addition to sustaining the current level of government funded and delivered services, would not only assist the affected individuals, families and children, but would also relieve the growing associated costs pressures.

The economic costs associated with licit and illicit drug use in Australia are estimated at \$56.1 billion. It is estimated that the return on the investment of as little as \$4 million per annum on prison treatment programs may result in savings of at least \$10 million per annum. With WA's prison population continuing to grow beyond its capacity, and increasingly populated by people with mental health and alcohol and other drug use problems, investment in health treatment services in corrective services facilities would assist to turn around this costly social trend.

WACOSS welcomes the Government's current focus on the development of a Mental Health Strategy for 2010-2020, as it is critical to have a planned long term approach to these issues. However, WA already has a good knowledge base of mental health service priorities, on which to base current investment decisions while the strategy is being developed. The Mental Health Strategy for 2004-2007, for example, clearly called for greater mental health accommodation services and this continues to be a critical need worthy of funding priority. Service provision also needs to be expanded to fill the gaps in delivering services to Aboriginal people and seniors.

# Part 2 - Overview of Consultation Report

## **About the WACOSS Pre-Budget Consultation Report**

Part Two of this submission provides an overview of the outcomes of our consultation process, as detailed in the full Pre-Budget Consultation Report, which is available on the WACOSS website.

The WACOSS Pre-Budget Consultation Report identifies fifty four budget recommendations, based on the input received through our consultation with the community sector. This submission, 'Putting People First,' provides an overview of all those recommendations, which include the top four priority recommendations detailed in Part One.

This overview summarises each of the recommendations under the corresponding headings of each chapter of the Consultation Report, which is arranged in three parts; *Serving the Community; Cost of Living; and Social Inclusion.*

## **Summary of Recommendations in the Consultation Report**

### **SERVING THE COMMUNITY**

#### ***Building on the current capacity of services delivered by a sustainable not-for-profit sector.***

The not-for-profit community services sector plays a unique and valued role in serving the needs of the Western Australian community. WACOSS recommends building on the current capacity of a sustainable not-for-profit sector in order to improve the equity, efficiency and effectiveness of services now and into the future.

#### **Enhanced Community Service Capacity: \$166,118,081**

*WACOSS' consultations with not-for-profit organisations in 2009 have revealed that one issue continues to be of paramount importance to the sector; the inadequacy of current funding levels, and the subsequent inability to pay adequate and equitable salaries to staff. There is also a need to reform the relationship between Government and the community services sector, so that services can be delivered effectively to the people who need them. WACOSS recommends;*

A 30% increase in funding to service providers in the community services sector, to ensure adequate, equitable wages for staff and secure the viability of services.

#### **Sector Capacity and Relationship with Government: \$11,968,000**

*Publicly funded social services can be delivered more efficiently and effectively by not-for-profit providers than by Government in many instances. In order to facilitate a shift towards greater levels of partnership with the not-for-profit sector, the sector must also be supported to improve its efficiency, effectiveness and capacity. Western Australia needs to strengthen the evidence base it uses to plan for the delivery of social services in the community, and set goals about the future social aspirations of our State. The relationship between Government and the sector must be strengthened. WACOSS recommends;*

Create an accessible, integrated data set of social wellbeing indicators in WA. This will enable community, government and business analysts to determine and measure baselines and targets for the social advantage of individuals and the community. It should be coupled with an investment fund for not-for-profit organisations for research and development of innovative policy, program and service delivery models which will assist in meeting the planning objectives we set for Western Australia. Increase the proportion of publicly-funded community services that are delivered by not-for-profit organisations; develop a high level consultative forum for the social services industry including the Government and non-government sectors; reforming the policy for the funding and purchasing of community services; and develop a pilot program for a 'pre-qualification' scheme for not-for-profits seeking WA Government funding.

## **Services for Rural, Regional & Remote WA: \$32,211,226**

*Recent years of economic boom have put more pressure than ever on the cost of providing services in regional WA. The economic downturn over the past year has done very little to relieve those pressures, and regional service providers are in great need of additional funding in recognition of the higher cost of providing services beyond the metropolitan region. WACOSS recommends;*

An additional indexation amount of 20% should be applied above the current indexed funding level for services delivered in rural, regional and remote areas. This is recommended on top of the additional 30% payment to ensure service viability.

## **COST OF LIVING**

### ***Supporting people to have the means to enjoy a basic, common quality of life***

Rising living costs in Western Australia have meant that a significant part of our population struggles to meet their own basic needs. WACOSS produces a Cost of Living Report each year which tracks the price of basic goods and services for individuals, families and children.

The following recommendations summarise the investment required to support people to have the means to enjoy a basic, common quality of life ensuring the accessibility and affordability of all the essentials in life.

### **Housing: \$567,950,000.**

*Housing is a fundamental human need and a human right. Access to safe, affordable and appropriate housing is the foundation on which social participation and wellbeing rests. The following recommendations aim to improve access to housing and homelessness services for vulnerable West Australians. WACOSS recommends;*

Invest in the social housing system to increase the cumulative supply of public and community housing by at least 1,700 units; contribute to a strategic approach to the greater role of community housing providers in the social housing system; undertake an audit of lands to maximize opportunities for cost effective social housing development; put in place a number of initiatives to improve the private rental market; and increase the participation of Aboriginal people in establishing and managing community housing organisations through a strategic policy framework. Finally, we must invest in a social housing for key workers in the community across regional WA.

### **Essential Services: \$109, 818, 000**

*Essential services such as energy, water and transport are necessary to maintaining a decent quality of life. Unpaid utility bills ultimately lead to disconnection from essential services, resulting in adverse emotional, financial, health and safety impacts on consumers. In the context of the rapidly increasing cost of essential services and significant ongoing reform in the area of energy and water markets, it is imperative that the needs of disadvantaged consumers be represented. WACOSS recommends;*

Funding a not-for-profit organisation to provide energy and water household audits and retrofits to consumers experiencing financial hardship; administration of the Hardship Utility Grant Scheme (HUGS) to be undertaken by a Centralised Rebates and Concessions Unit; introduce a new eligibility process to the HUGS to allow consumers to make HUGS applications in their own right; provide funding for the HUGS Hotline to be evaluated and reinstated to ensure equitable access for all consumers; and provide funding for energy efficiency retrofitting of Western Australian Community Service Organisations

*Rebates and concessions are vital for essential service consumers who are on low incomes or experiencing disadvantage. Consumer representative organisations play a pivotal role in informing Government, retailers and regulators about the impacts of their decision making on consumers. Significant variations in concession policy exist between different agencies, which make it difficult for people to access their entitlements and overly complex for government to deliver them. WACOSS recommends;*

Providing funding for the formation of a Centralised Rebates and Concession Unit for WA to streamline access and planning. This Unit should also review the Regional Price Index annually to provide a more accurate assessment of the cost of living in regional WA, and to ensure that concessions and rebates for people in rural, regional and remote areas are adequate. Finally, WACOSS recommends funding the establishment of a Consumer Research Fund to foster and develop greater knowledge of the experience of WA consumers, and to better inform decision making frameworks.

*Transport has also been identified as an essential service in that it is fundamental to economic and social participation. A well-connected, safe, affordable transport system improves the wellbeing of all West Australians. It reduces reliance on private transport, which yields benefits for the environment. An effective transport system connects people to housing, services, education and employment opportunities. WACOSS recommends;*

Expand the public transport system in Western Australia, focusing on travel within and between suburbs (inter-nodal transport); increase the accessibility of train and bus services; and invest in dedicated safe, secure and accessible walking and cycling routes in the suburbs of Perth, and in the public promotion of the alternatives to car use.

#### **Education: \$4,605,000**

*Access to a positive educational experience is a vital part of being socially included. All Western Australian children and young people must be able to attend school and achieve the necessary learning base that will enable social and economic participation. The following recommendations focus on providing education alternatives for young people who are at-risk of dropping out of the school system. WACOSS recommends;*

Allocate funding for a pilot program to deploy youth workers in WA State High Schools, working along-side existing student support services; allocate further funding to provide education and parenting support for young parents, particularly mothers, in Western Australia; and ensure that public high schools across the State take an active role in supporting same-sex attracted young people in their school environments and practices.

#### **Health: \$50,700,000**

*All Western Australians have the right to access the health services they need to live a full and happy life and to participate actively in their communities. However, the rising cost of living is impacting the ability of West Australians on low and fixed incomes to access health care. WACOSS' latest cost of living research shows that from 2007 to 2009, household expenses have increased by \$105 per week, or 17.7%. Compare this with an increase in income of just \$41 per week, or 5.15%, and healthcare is in danger of falling off the priority list for many families. WACOSS recommends;*

Reform the delivery of health services to Aboriginal people through targeted budget allocations for health services. This includes support for a recruitment drive in regional areas for Aboriginal allied health professionals. Also, provide funding for additional mental health services, with an emphasis on providing services for vulnerable and disadvantaged West Australians; increase funding for AOD and associated mental health treatment services in the community; increase funding for AOD and associated mental health treatment facilities in corrective services; invest in a review and re-alignment of oral health services in Western Australia; and invest in ambulatory reform to improve the health outcomes of Western Australians.

## **SOCIAL INCLUSION**

***Providing services for a diverse range of individuals and families that support them to meet their own needs.***

Equitable access to a range of services is essential to ensure individuals, families and children are able to meet their needs and participate fully in the economic and cultural lives of their communities. WACOSS recommends initiatives to improve the social wellbeing of diverse individuals, families and children which would assist them to live as self-reliantly as possible.

### **Aboriginal: \$2,100,000**

*Working with Aboriginal communities and investing in infrastructure and services, can reduce the social and financial costs associated with poor health, crime, lack of education and family breakdown, immediately and in the future. Equally important however and indivisible from the above, is a need to address the historical and cultural dimensions of disadvantage. To improve outcomes for Aboriginal West Australians, WACOSS recommends;*

Establish state-wide Healing Centres, based on the models being developed by the Western Australian Aboriginal community; provide core funding for the establishment of a community-based "Reconciliation Council" in Western Australia that would be a catalyst for major reconciliation initiatives; and provide funding to establish an Indigenous Language Interpreting Service, modelled on the Kimberley Interpreting Service, in the Pilbara and Goldfields.

### **Families and Children: \$99,300,000**

*Investing in the early years to support families and children pays off for years to come. Preventing problems and intervening before each crisis point will reap numerous benefits for the community. WACOSS recommends;*

Ensure that every child health centre in Western Australia is staffed with a child health nurse; increase funding for children in the State care system, and provide adequate funds to resource and support all young people up to the age of 25 leaving care; support the provision of quality early childhood education for Aboriginal children, closely linked with child health services provided by Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations; establish an Office of Early Childhood in Western Australia; allocate funding for additional community and not-for-profit childcare centres across the State; and re-instate the total value of ex-gratia payments to applicants of the Redress WA scheme.

### **Safety and Justice: \$2,650,000**

*Properly functioning systems of safety and justice are at the heart of developed democracies. A key role of the state is to ensure that people feel safe in their communities and protected by a justice system that is effective, accessible and accountable. This requires a balance of approaches which not only provide disincentives to crime but actively address the issues which can lead to crime. WACOSS recommends;*

Establish a Primary Prevention Plan to eliminate violence against women; support women and children escaping domestic and family violence on temporary visa status; invest in a Sustainable Women Partnership: A Building Block Model; significantly increase funding to the Community Legal Services Program to extend the availability of services; increase the availability of legal services in regional areas through the development of a metro-based pool of lawyers; and increase funding for sexual and violent offender treatment services in correctional facilities.

## **Disabilities and Carers: \$2,950,000**

*People with disabilities are recognised as being among the poorest and most vulnerable in our society. Many are unable to access health and education services, participate in the workforce or be actively involved in their communities. As a result they are likely to face an increased risk of poverty and social exclusion. In order to achieve better outcomes for disabilities and carers in WA, WACOSS recommends;*

Provide increased funding for individual and systemic advocacy services in the disability services sector; provide free public transport for carers in receipt of a Centrelink Carers Payment; increase flexibility in access to HACC funded transport services for carers; and undertake a review of the Carers Recognition Act 2004 to ensure that it comprehensively covers all aspects of being a carer.

## **Seniors: \$650,000**

*Australia's population is growing but it is also ageing. Like many other developed countries, life expectancy in Australia is rising while fertility rates diminish. Seniors are uniquely important and valuable members of our community. Although accounting for just 20% of the adult population, Western Australian seniors provide nearly 40% of unpaid caring, nearly 25% of unpaid volunteering and 68% of unpaid child minding, at a value of over \$1.1billion. For seniors in WA, WACOSS recommends:*

Fund a comprehensive program for Active Ageing to improve the health of seniors; and provide funding for the development of a ten extra Men's Sheds in Western Australia.

## **Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Services: \$1,650,000**

*Culturally and linguistically diverse people in all stages of their life, from infants to adults, need services specific to their unique needs. Principles of Substantive Equality need to be embraced by the State Government to ensure equal treatment of all people, regardless of their background, and a recognition that sometimes people need to be treated differently in order to reach an equitable outcome. WACOSS recommends;*

Statutory Departments should adhere to the Office of Multicultural Interests' *Western Australian Language Services Policy 2008*; the Substantive Equality Unit within the Equal Opportunity Commission should be provided with more funding to adequately undertake its work in promoting fair dealings for all; two new Intensive English Centres should be established to reduce transportation costs for students undertaking studies; and an ethno-specific family and children's services unit should be established.

## **Diverse Sexuality and Gender: \$500,000**

*Social exclusion has significant implications, and people with a diverse sexuality and gender experience a range of poorer health outcomes than the general population. This includes higher rates of suicide, mental illness and drug and alcohol use. To make sure people of diverse sexuality and gender, especially young people, are supported in the community, WACOSS recommends;*

Increase funding to the range of services available for people of diverse sexuality and gender and improve broader community education about issues relating to sexuality & gender to reduce discrimination, abuse and social disadvantage.

# Acknowledgements

Each year, WACOSS consults widely with the not-for-profit community services sector on the preparation of its Pre-Budget Submission. Peak organisations and other key stakeholder representatives in the non-government community services sector play a critical role in the preparation of the WACOSS Pre-Budget Submission by providing data and information about the key service pressures in the community and assisting to establish priorities.

WACOSS gratefully acknowledges the contributions, ideas, thoughts and recommendations submitted by each of the following contributing organisations.

Anglicare  
ATLAS  
Bloodwood Tree  
Bringing Them Home Committee  
Carers WA  
Centrecare  
Chyialis Support Services Inc.  
Commissioner for Children and Young People  
Community Employers of WA  
Community Housing Coalition WA  
Community Legal Centres Association WA  
Council of the Ageing  
Ethnic Communities Council of WA  
Escare – Esperance Family Support, Youth and Financial Counselling Services  
Esperance Crisis Accommodation Support Inc.  
Gay and Lesbian Community Services  
Geraldton Community Drug Service Team  
Geraldton Resource Centre  
Health Consumers Council  
Joondalup Youth Support Services  
Kimberley Interpreting Service  
Learning Centre Link  
Men's Advisory Network  
Men's Shed Australia  
Mercy Community Services  
Mid West Community Services Network  
Mission Australia  
National Disabilities Services  
National Seniors Council  
Ngala  
Pilbara Association of Non-Government Organisations  
People with Disabilities WA  
Pilbara Community Legal Centre  
Pilbara Meta Maya  
Playgroup WA  
Port Hedland Port Authority  
Shelter WA  
Small Business Centre  
South West Aboriginal Medical Service  
Sustainable Transport Coalition  
Tenants Advice Service  
UnitingCare West  
Wangka Maya Aboriginal Language Centre  
Wanslea  
Western Australian Association for Mental Health  
Western Australian Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies  
Womens Council for Domestic and Family Violence  
Womens Health Centre  
Yorgum Aboriginal Family Counselling Service  
Youth Involvement Council



Ways to make a difference

|Social Policy & Advocacy| Organisation Development Services| Member Services|