



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ISSUES

MEDIA RELEASE

REPORT INTO HOMELESSNESS AMONGST OLDER PEOPLE AGED OVER 55 IN NEW SOUTH WALES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

20 October 2022

The Legislative Council's Standing Committee on Social Issues today handed down its report on homelessness amongst older people aged over 55 in New South Wales.

The Hon Scott Barrett MLC, Chair of the Committee, said 'Homelessness amongst older people is a particularly sad story, yet unfortunately the rate of homelessness amongst this cohort are increasing. Consequently, the 'face' of homelessness across the state is changing to include older people, particularly women, who are sleeping in increasingly precarious situations, such as couch surfing among friends and family or sleeping in their cars.'

The Chair said: 'While a confluence of factors drive homelessness amongst older people, the primary drivers are financial difficulty, housing crisis and housing affordability stress. Moreover, the committee found that the shortfall in social and affordable housing is the single greatest challenge for people who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. To this end, the committee has made a suite of recommendations to improve the quantity and quality of social housing across the state.'

Mr Barrett continued, 'Stakeholders told the committee the homelessness service system is incredibly complex and that trying to traverse its many facets is overwhelming for older people. To alleviate some of these issues, the committee has recommended a multifaceted approach to service delivery, including that the NSW Government consider the establishment of a funded specialist housing information and support service for older people that comprises both an early intervention and crisis response, similar to the 'Home at Last' model in Victoria. It has also made a suite of recommendations designed to streamline and improve the service delivery system, and to improve prevention and early intervention services, including Link2Home.'

The Chair concluded: 'This inquiry has resulted in a consensus report, reflecting not only the importance of this issue but the common goal of this committee to ensure action to improve the lives of older people at risk of or experiencing homelessness into the future.'

Information about the inquiry, including the committee's report, is available on the committee's [website](#).

For further information please contact Committee Chair, Hon Scott Barrett MLC, on 02 9230 3728.

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