

Media Statement

For immediate release

National plan needed to end poverty

Q Shelter, Queensland's peak body for solutions to housing need and homelessness, is calling for a national plan to end poverty in Australia.

As reports into cost-of-living pressures proliferate, piecemeal measures don't go far enough to change the circumstances of the growing number of people in dire need.

Executive Director, Fiona Caniglia, said: 'Measures to address housing affordability and homelessness would go much further if they were part of a broader plan to address the systemic causes of poverty, with an agenda for real change.'

'An end-poverty plan would bring together specialised policy and investment on housing to ensure enough supply to meet demand, and enough subsidised housing for people who are vulnerable,' Ms Caniglia said.

'In countries like Canada and Ireland, nationally coordinated approaches to poverty reduction are making a real difference.'

'Agreed definitions of poverty in those countries are the basis of defining critical policies, actions and investment. Integrated measures are delivered across different levels of government. Most importantly, progress is monitored and measured to prove that changes are having an impact.'

'We have an opportunity to propose this approach as the Albanese Government investigates the nature and extent of poverty in Australia,' said Ms Caniglia.

'A plan like this needs to be bold. It would consider the many different responses that already exist. We have a very strong foundation in Australia through various income support measures, social inclusion activities, and ways in which universal services such as health, housing, and education are delivered.'

'An integrated approach across all levels of government, and involving the private sector, community services sector, and broader community at large, will ensure significant impact for people who struggle across more than one area of disadvantage.'

The Commonwealth Parliament Community Affairs References Committee released its interim report this month from its inquiry into 'The extent and nature of poverty in Australia'. It was encouraging to see such strong contributions from the housing and homelessness sector in the first phase of the inquiry, given housing insecurity is such a key element contributing to poverty in Australia. 139 submissions received.

Q Shelter's latest policy statement, '[Better Together](#)' highlights the successes in Ireland and Canada, and urges decision-makers in Australia to take a similar approach.

This type of approach would strive for generational change that identifies extreme vulnerability from the earliest age. It would provide intensive support to prevent exposure to adverse events and guarantee a safe childhood, in which children have secure attachments and participation in

education. Secure housing is critical to supportive and secure childhoods. At the same time, structural elements would ensure enough housing supply as well as high-quality universal access to critical services such as health and education.

Ms Caniglia stated simply, 'We live in an amazing country, however the fault lines are growing between people who thrive and people who are struggling to participate in all the opportunities that living in Australia brings.'

'Every delay in taking this approach allows structural poverty to become even more entrenched. We have the opportunity now to change our trajectory.'

Q Shelter believes that there is still much more work to do on poverty prevention in Australia, and that by doing so, we will prevent alarming rates of housing insecurity and homelessness. Q Shelter is ready to work with all levels of government to develop a plan to locate such solutions upstream, to avoid more work at the crisis end.

ENDS

Media comment

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About Q Shelter

For over 35 years, Q Shelter has worked as a peak body to improve housing outcomes for Queenslanders. Over this time, we have remained an unwavering voice for solutions through advocacy, strategic engagement and capacity building.

Besides influencing solutions and policy, Q Shelter provides professional development and shares resources to assist other organisations to be effective, so that our combined capacity to respond to housing need is strengthened.