

Australian Alliance to End Homelessness Media Statement

MEDIA STATEMENT

Friday 11 December 2020

**Response to Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
report - David Pearson, CEO of Australian Alliance to End
Homelessness available for comment**

In response to the [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's \(AIHW\) Report](#) released on Friday, CEO of the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (AAEH) offers the following comments:

The data released by the AIHW shows that some 260 people were turned away from homelessness services every day during the 2019-20 financial year.

This devastating news, just before Christmas, shows that a heartbreaking number of people are being turned away from services because of a lack of housing and support. These figures have increased again this year for the third year in a row.

What this data shows is that the way homelessness service systems are operating are fundamentally broken. Our specialised homelessness services can't deal with this problem on their own. To fix this we need national leadership to improve these systems and ensure that no Australian is left behind on the streets.

The best Christmas present that people on the street need is for national leadership to fix the systems that trap people in cycles of homelessness, ill health and poverty.

The Commonwealth is responsible for National Disability Insurance Scheme and Veterans services, and yet the AIHW data shows that 6,400 NDIS participants sought help from homelessness services in 2019-20, while 1,400 clients self-identified as a defence force veterans.

Greater Commonwealth leadership and investments is needed to reverse the alarming trend set out in this AIHW data.

Ending Homelessness is possible - communities around the world are demonstrating this - but only if every level of government, local, state and federal steps up and genuinely commits to making it a reality.

The AAEH re-iterates our call for a HomeSeeker program to help build back better from COVID-19 and reverse this devastating and rising trend of people experiencing homelessness being turned away from support.

To set up an interview with Mr Pearson, please contact:

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About the Alliance to End Homelessness

[The Australian Alliance to End Homelessness](#) (AAEH) is an independent champion for preventing and ending homelessness in Australia – starting with rough sleeping homelessness. The AAEH supports Australian communities to individually and collectively end homelessness. Specifically, we work with local communities at all levels to ensure everyone has access to safe and sustainable housing services and that any incidents of homelessness that do occur are rare, brief and non-recurring.