

Australian Alliance to End Homelessness Media Release

MEDIA RELEASE

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**Policy change needed to address rough sleeping
homelessness this festive season**

As we approach the Christmas break, the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness is calling for policy change on top of charity efforts this festive season to end homelessness in Australia for good.

AAEH chief executive David Pearson says that ending homelessness is possible in Australia and that this festive season is opportune for real change, but only if every level of government, local, state and federal steps up and genuinely commits to making it a reality.

“The Christmas season is truly a magical time of year. Many Australians dig deep and donate what they can spare – socks, food, toys – to support those in our community who are struggling. But if we really want to see change, we need government to back the efforts of a growing number of communities who have already committed to end rough sleeping homelessness,” Mr Pearson said.

“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. No matter who it is or where they are sleeping – on couches, in cars, motels or on the streets – everyone deserves a safe, affordable and secure home.

When people have a home – not just a place to sleep – we see they become more active members of the community and build confidence, resilience and skills in all aspects of their lives.”

Scott Richards is one of the many Australians who the AAEH network has supported transition out of the cycle of rough sleeping homelessness and into secure housing. Mr Richards was a rough sleeper for a number of years following a separation with his partner.

Now has a long-term home which allows him to safely care for and spend time with his daughter. Having a home has given Mr Richards the confidence to progress with his career and share his experience so that others experiencing homelessness can seek help and turn their lives around. He now works as a peer support worker in Adelaide supporting people currently sleeping rough.

“The AAEH has been saying it all year, we need a HomeSeeker package and commitment from government that ends rough sleeping homelessness and supports the growth of our communities. A HomeSeeker program will help build back better from COVID-19 and reverse devastating and rising trends of people experiencing homelessness,” Mr Pearson concluded.

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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.