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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**7 FEBRUARY 2022**

### **Homelessness in Australia can be ended by commitment from governments, new report finds**

**The Centre for Social Impact (CSI), the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (AAEH) and Neami National have launched a comprehensive new report that demonstrates how solvable homelessness is in Australia.**

**The *Ending Homelessness in Australia: An evidence and policy deep dive* report presents evidence from the largest community-based database on rough sleeping and homelessness in Australia and puts forward a five-step national plan to end homelessness once and for all.**

The report presents findings from the Advance to Zero homelessness database, covering over 20,000 people experiencing homelessness in Australia's cities – including many who had been rough sleeping for long periods of time. The key findings include:

- On average, people had experienced homelessness for 3.8 years with around 40% of respondents reporting many years of homelessness.
- The prevalence of long-term serious medical conditions and diagnosed mental health conditions were significantly higher than those seen across the general population, especially in terms of hepatitis C, cancer, post-traumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia and depression. The majority of rough sleepers reported both chronic medical conditions and diagnosed mental health conditions. Serious brain injury or head trauma is very high among those experiencing homelessness, particularly among veterans.
- A large proportion of respondents reported they had been in out-of-home care and/or juvenile detention as children and adolescents, reflecting long periods of lifetime vulnerability.
- The average annual ambulance, accident and emergency department and in-hospital cost of rough sleepers, who access these forms of healthcare, is estimated at over \$42,000 per year.

Professor Paul Flatau, Acting CEO of the Centre for Social Impact and lead author of the report, said that the report provides a clear path forward for what is needed to end homelessness in Australia.

“The report highlights the deep health and social impacts of homelessness on people's lives and underlines the need for programs that not only rapidly house those experiencing



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homelessness, but also provide long-term supportive care for those with high health and social needs.”

As well as providing a deep dive analysis of the current state of homelessness in Australia, the report recommends a series of actions to end homelessness in Australia, starting with the implementation of a national end homelessness strategy, an increase in social and affordable housing options and commitment from all levels of government.

“In Australia, we only estimate the number of people experiencing homelessness every five years in the census, which doesn’t provide us with enough meaningful data to drive change. This report is critical in illuminating where and how we should be focussing our efforts to end homelessness,” said David Pearson, CEO of AAEH.

“However, communities around Australia cannot end homelessness without greater government commitment and investment. We are hopeful that the findings will serve as a call to action for decision-makers, and a reminder that ending homelessness isn’t just necessary, but possible.”

Shane Jakupec, Regional Manager at Neami National, states that the report is a critical addition to research in the homelessness sector.

“The report confirms what we know from practice – that governments and services must work together across jurisdictions to tackle this issue. It also highlights the critical importance of ongoing support once people are housed to prevent further homelessness.”

**Read the *Ending Homelessness in Australia* report on [CSI's website](#).**

**-ENDS-**

**For media enquiries or to arrange interviews with Professor Paul Flatau (Centre for Social Impact), David Pearson (Australian Alliance to End Homelessness) or Shane Jakupec (Neami National), please contact:**

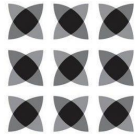
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**About the Centre for Social Impact:**

The [Centre for Social Impact](#) (CSI) is a national research and education centre dedicated to catalysing social change for a better world. CSI is built on the foundation of three of Australia’s leading universities: UNSW Sydney, The University of Western Australia, and Swinburne University of Technology.

**About the Australian 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



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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.

**About Neami National:**

[Neami National](#) is a not-for-profit provider of recovery-oriented clinical mental health and psychosocial services, community-based homelessness, housing and suicide prevention services. Our vision of full citizenship for all people living with mental ill-health and emotional distress guides our practice that centres human rights, genuine relationships and understanding people in context. Neami works in partnerships to facilitate a joined-up mental health and social support system that is flexible, responsive and sustainable.