

7 August, 2019

A YEAR ON AND OLDER PEOPLE ARE STILL AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS – ACSA

In Homelessness Week 2019, spare a thought for older people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Last year Aged & Community Services Australia (ACSA) warned of the increasing risk of homelessness of older Australians, and a year on we are still seeing the trend continuing.

ACSA CEO, Pat Sparrow said, “With the rapid ageing of the population in coming decades, and the number of Australians aged 75 years and over is expected to increase three-fold over the next 20 years, we need a range of solutions to ensure that older Australians have safe and secure housing.

“We know there is a rapidly emerging cohort of older people at risk of homelessness. This dire situation has been created by a confluence of four major factors:

- An ageing population
- Decreasing levels of home ownership and increasing retiree mortgage debt
- Severely reduced public housing expenditure
- A rapid increase in the numbers of older people living in insecure and expensive private rental market that is ill equipped for ageing-in-place.

“During Homelessness Week we pay tribute to not-for-profit aged care providers who do invaluable work providing aged care services for those disadvantaged members of the community who might otherwise have no access to housing, let alone aged care services,” Ms Sparrow said.

“We are asking the government to increase the homeless supplement by a mere \$10 per day.

“Homelessness Week this year has the theme ‘Housing Ends Homelessness’ and ACSA would encourage all levels of government to develop and adopt a cohesive National Older Persons Housing Strategy.

“Such a strategy would focus on enabling older people to access secure and affordable housing and make housing adjustments and choices that enhance ageing in place, wellbeing and lifestyle.”

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ACSA is the peak body for Australia's not-for-profit, church, charitable and community-based aged care providers.

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