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St Vincent de Society says we can't afford to turn a blind eye to poverty

The St Vincent de Society says that the latest poverty report by ACOSS, which indicates that 1 in 7 Australians are living below the poverty line, should be of great concern to all Australians.

Figures from the Australian Council of Social Services showed that over 2.5 million Australians are living below the poverty line. In NSW, 900,000 people are living in poverty, higher than any other state or territory.

Significantly NSW is the only state where poverty is more prevalent in the capital city than in regional centres; reflecting the pressure that escalating housing costs is placing on people's capacity to keep their heads above water.

Michael Perusco, CEO St Vincent de Paul Society NSW says, "The reality is that increased housing costs along with high energy bills are keeping people in poverty and causing many more to turn to charity for help, often for the first time in their lives."

Ray Reynolds, President St Vincent de Paul Society NSW says that the Society is in a unique position to understand the effects of poverty.

"Every day our 5000 members across NSW are visiting people in their homes and witnessing firsthand the real hardships that people are facing. The story they are telling us is a bleak one and we can't continue to pretend that poverty is not a growing issue in this country," said Mr Reynolds.

Anti-Poverty Week 2014 is being held from 12-18 October. For more information about Anti-Poverty Week or to register an event visit www.antipovertyweek.org.au.

Media Contact: Yolanda Saiz | [0417 446 430](tel:0417446430) | yolanda.saiz@vinnies.org.au