



MEDIA RELEASE

20 May, 2019

QUEENSLANDERS ARE FEELING MORE AND MORE ISOLATED SAYS CHARITY – WITH 1 IN FOUR NOW SAYING THEY'RE "LONELY"

New statistics show around 430,000 Queenslanders are living in poverty and 1 in 4 Australians are feeling isolated and lonely.

Launching Vinnies 2019 Winter Appeal, State President Dennis Innes said Queenslanders are feeling this way due to the effects of poverty.

“For too many Queenslanders, poverty is leading to extreme loneliness and sadness. For many older Australians struggling to make ends meet leaves them feeling like they have been forgotten,” he said.

“A recent report found that 190,000 Queensland households are in rental stress, meaning they are spending more than 30 per cent of their income just to keep a roof over their head, many of these are older women, who are fast becoming one of the groups most vulnerable to homelessness.

“When people are spending such a large portion of their income on rent, it means less money for bills, less money for food, clothing and other essential items.

“Struggling like this leads people who are already feeling lonely and depressed to shiver through the winter, fearful that a large power bill could push them over the edge into homelessness.

“When people are struggling they turn to Vinnies for help. We will always be there for them but we can't do it alone, we need the public's support this winter.”

Mr Innes said though loneliness can't be solved by money alone, assistance with food and financial support to help with bills and rent can ease the stress and anxiety people face, while Vinnies volunteers help alleviate the feeling of isolation poverty creates.

“Our Vinnies volunteer members have already assisted more than 80,000 Queenslanders so far in 2019, they visit in pairs with people in their own homes and provide vital companionship to many who are vulnerable and struggling,” he said.

“There are thousands of elderly Queenslanders living in the pain that poverty causes; each day of their life is defined by loss and loneliness, with nothing to look forward to. But we have the power to change this. With the public's help.

“Winter is a very difficult time of year if you are homeless or you can't pay for your heating or other essentials. We rely on generous donations from the community to our Winter Appeal each year to help people in need.

Help end the pain of poverty by making a generous donation today, visit www.vinnies.org.au/winterappeal or call 13 18 12.

Interviews available: Dennis Innes, State President, St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland

* Figures from The Australian Loneliness Report, November 2018 and <https://www.gcross.org.au/raising-awareness-poverty-queensland>;
https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/politics/queensland/south-east-queensland-feels-the-rental-squeeze-20190501-p51j4x.html?fbclid=IwAR3KXXZpa1ovEDdwNI3alt5j9r6DVDgdli_jhbdsg8IBhy8RY1HEytr4DAE

ENDS.

Media contact: Vinnies Queensland Communications Officer Joshua Paterson.
Phone: 0408 675 567 | Email: joshua.paterson@svdpqld.org.au