



MEDIA RELEASE

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Homelessness crisis in Cairns in Vinnies spotlight during national week

More than 1000 people are homeless across Cairns and Vinnies are highlighting the crisis during National Homelessness Week (4-10 August) and ahead of their Vinnies Community Sleepout Cairns next week.

Vinnies State President and Cairns resident Dennis Innes says the annual week and fundraiser should serve as a wake-up call to the Cairns community to take action to address growing homelessness rates in regional areas.

“More than a thousand people are without a home and we need to act, no-one should be homeless in Far North Queensland,” he said.

“What better time to sign up to sleepout and help us raise funds to save people from sleeping rough than during National Homelessness Week.

“Every dollar raised at the Sleepout will go towards affordable housing solutions that help get people off the street.”

Mr Innes said Vinnies is committed to confronting homelessness in Far North Queensland and is housing 56 people, having recently transitioned a number of services over from Ozcare to be under the Vinnies banner.

“We now run the homeless men’s hostel in Cairns which houses 18 people, as well as a homeless outreach program and a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre,” he said.

“Ozcare is a subsidiary of Vinnies and the transition allows us to improve our ability to respond to the growing homelessness crisis while allowing Ozcare to focus on its services to our elderly Australians.”

Since January Vinnies has supported more than 7,600 people in crisis in the region, and Mr Innes said the need for a hand up from the charity has never been greater.

“We are doing our best to help as many people as possible, but we need the public’s help to make sure more people don’t fall through the cracks,” he said.

“More and more, people are struggling with the cost of living and turning to us for help, whether that be to avoid homelessness or help with food, clothing, bills or other essentials.

“People can register to sleepout or donate to those who are participating via communitysleepout.org.au.”

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