



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **700 homeless in Toowoomba and Darling Downs during National Homelessness Week**

Vinnies is calling on the community to show more support for its efforts to help the homeless ahead of National Homelessness Week this week (4-10 August).

National Homelessness Week is an annual week coordinated by Homelessness Australia which raises awareness of people who are homeless.

“We need to act - no-one should be homeless in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs,” said Vinnies Toowoomba region Executive Officer Kathie Brosnan.

“And yet 700 people are still without a home.

“We now run the homeless men’s hostel in Toowoomba as well as homeless outreach and resident support programs in Toowoomba which used to be run by Ozcare and currently house 50 people,” she said.

“This 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.”

With Vinnies having already helped more than 10,000 people who were need of some type of assistance, in the region so far this year, Ms Brosnan said the need for a hand-up from the charity has never been greater.

“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 and other essentials,” she said.

“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.

She said the charity raised almost \$5000 last month from the generous donations of locals at the Vinnies Community Sleepout at USQ Toowoomba.

“We are grateful for all the support we received for our recent Sleepout event, but there is still time to donate and make a difference to help people avoid sleeping rough.

“Every dollar raised at the Sleepout will go towards refurbishments to affordable housing we have acquired in the region which will help get people off the street once works are completed.”

Having recently transitioned a number of homelessness services from its subsidiary Ozcare, Ms Brosnan said the charity is committed to tackling the homeless crisis head-on beyond the 237 plus people it already houses in the region.

“Donations can be made to Vinnies Community Sleepout USQ Toowoomba until 21 August at [communitysleepout.org.au](http://communitysleepout.org.au).

**ENDS.**

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