

# What if it was me



## WA STATE ELECTION 2017 POLICY PLATFORM

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## **WA Peaks Forum Statement for the 2017 State Election**

The WA Peaks Forum is an independent group of non-government human services sector peak bodies who work together to identify common policy priorities, undertake strategic planning, create joint initiatives and advocate to government for the best interests of human services, services users and the wider WA community.

The WA Peaks Forum affirms that a strong, independent and diverse community sector is fundamental to the wellbeing and vibrancy of the Western Australian community. The community service sector's role in caring, supporting and advocating for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our community has never been more important.

WA community services are trusted by and provide direct support to over half a million Western Australians every year. The WA Peaks Forum provides a united voice for the diverse range of community services to achieve better community outcomes and improve public transparency.

In the 2017 Western Australian Election, The WA Peaks Forum seeks a commitment from all parties to work with the community services sector in accordance with the following principles. We call on all parties to sign up, to address these principles their policy platforms, and commit to how they plan to put them into practice.

### **WA Peaks Forum Statement of Principles**

#### **Improved community outcomes for all Western Australians:**

- Prioritise services and support that meet the needs and aspirations of our most disadvantaged and vulnerable citizens.
- Involve service users and community organisations in the co-design, development and evaluation of services.
- Support programs and services that are evidence-based and funded to deliver measurable outcomes that are directly relevant to the needs and aspirations of service users.
- Plan to deliver better long-term outcomes for those most at risk and reduce the growing cost of crisis and acute services by investing in targeted and effective prevention and early intervention strategies.
- Provide community services that are culturally secure and responsive.
- Improve consumer access to whole-of-government information on service availability, access and outcomes.

#### **A strong, independent and diverse community sector is crucial to a fair and inclusive society:**

- Defend and maintain the role of the community services sector as an independent advocate for the disadvantaged and vulnerable.
- Support greater collaboration, coordination and service integration across the community services sector by ensuring that competitive service tendering and procurement processes are only used as appropriate and are carefully and transparently managed.

- Recognise, value and acknowledge the contribution that a diverse community services sector makes to the Western Australian community.
- Build the capacity of Aboriginal community-controlled services to deliver more effective and responsive services, develop an Aboriginal human services workforce strategy, and mandate targets for Aboriginal employment in service contracts and contracting with Aboriginal businesses.

#### **Partnership and collaboration:**

- Support genuine partnership, consultation and collaboration across sectors in the planning for the delivery of community services.
- Include and support regional community services as partners in regional planning and the development of regional policy.
- Progress structural reforms to support place-based service integration and collective impact by enabling joint commissioning, funding and reporting.
- Resource regional community service networks to deliver improved community outcomes through better service coordination and referral.
- Ensure that consumers, carers and families are actively engaged in service design and evaluation.
- Encourage contracting policies that foster collaboration and support partnerships to build the capacity of local community-based services, particularly in Aboriginal communities.

#### **Sustainable funding and contracting with the not-for-profit sector:**

- Commit to longer-term sustainable service funding models, with clear timelines and processes for the renegotiation of contracts to ensure service continuity and staff retention.
- Ensure funding and indexation models support the payment of fair and equitable wages to sustain existing service levels and quality.
- Resource research, evaluation and innovation in the development and delivery of services that are flexible and responsive to changing community need.
- Ensure data is available and shared between government agencies and community services for research, planning, evaluation, integration and development initiatives.

#### **Reducing the administrative burden:**

- Reduce red-tape and unnecessary reporting requirements.
- Invest in the development of shared frameworks and data systems to enable cross-program reporting on cohort and population outcomes.
- Enable the rationalisation of multiple service contracts so that providers delivering integrated services have a mechanism to have contracts amalgamated.
- Implement consistent and simplified service agreement and reporting requirements across-Government agencies with common geographic and population measures.

## WA Peaks Policy Platform

### Smart Justice

1. Repeal **mandatory sentencing** laws
2. Provide alternative options for **fine defaulters** to reduce imprisonment for unpaid fines
3. End the **indefinite detention** of mentally impaired accused by reforming the *Criminal Law (Mentally Impaired Accused) Act 1996*
4. Consolidate **community legal service funding** into a single, transparent program which procures services under the Delivering Community Services in Partnership policy
5. Commit to a **Social Reinvestment** strategy that increases the use of diversion and rehabilitation strategies and invests in community-based early intervention

### Healthy Communities

1. Maintain a comprehensive, long term plan that is fully resourced to address mental health and alcohol and other drug education, prevention, treatment and support in Western Australia
2. Refocus investment to **prevention, promotion, earlier intervention** and community-based services, including secure homes and supports
3. Accelerate **system reform**, placing consumers and families at the centre and enabling recovery
4. Commit funding for the operation of an **Aboriginal residential rehabilitation** service in the Southwest
5. Fund a **patient coordination role** within the ACCHS sector to manage, coordinate and provide support to patients required to travel to Perth for medical reasons.
6. Implement the results of the Holman Report and increase **funding for Aboriginal health** programs that have demonstrated excellence.
7. Commit to the prevention of **violence against women** as a priority in Western Australian health planning.

### Housing and Homelessness

1. Develop a **community housing** policy and growth strategy that provides greater strategic direction to enable specialisation, innovation and investment
2. Secure **long-term funding certainty for homeless services** to enable the development of integrated service models that improve long-term outcomes for homeless people
3. Ensure that 27% of the dwellings delivered as part of the State Affordable Housing Strategy's 2020 target are **public and community housing** (a net increase of 2,700 houses)
4. That government land and housing developments include a minimum of **15% affordable housing** targeted at low-to-moderate income households
5. Co-design a **shared assessment framework** and **tenancy support system** in partnership with the community housing and service sector
6. Gradually replace property based **stamp duties** with a broad-based progressive land tax over ten years, with exemptions, deferral and concessions for low income earners

### Children and Young People

1. Pilot a **place based pooled-budgeting** model to commission integrated early years, youth and family services in three trial sites
2. Build the capacity of **Aboriginal community controlled services** to deliver therapeutic healing, intensive family support and child protection services
3. Trial intensive transitional support models for **young people leaving state care** and detention

4. Create incentives for employers to **hire young people** in order to address youth unemployment in key regions and area
5. Develop a **LGBTIQ youth health and wellbeing strategy** to train health and community service providers to provide appropriate support
6. Implement comprehensive primary prevention **whole-of-school sexuality and respectful relationships education** programs

#### Family and Domestic Violence

1. Appoint a designated **Minister for the Prevention of Violence Against Women** and establish a Committee of Cabinet
2. Widen the remit of the *Family and Domestic Violence Unit* to become the **Office for the Prevention of Violence Against Women** and to be located in the Department of Premier and Cabinet
3. Significantly increase **funding for frontline services** including refuges, advocacy services, community legal centres, and safe at home programs
4. Implement the recommendations from the **Enhancing Laws Concerning Family and Domestic Violence Inquiry**, including non-legislative recommendations
5. Introduce a **Family and Domestic Violence Protection Order Act** and provide the training and resources required to ensure its effective application
6. Introduce family and domestic violence provisions to the **Residential Tenancies Act** that quickly and fairly change lease agreements to keep families safe and reduce the risk of homelessness
7. Sexual and respectful relationships education

#### Poverty and Inequality

1. Commission an independent cross-government inquiry into the targeting, adequacy and impact of **social concessions** by the Economic Regulation Authority
2. Develop an **Aboriginal human services workforce development strategy** that provides incentives and support to increase Aboriginal employment in human services contracts
3. Increase funding for metropolitan **financial counselling services** and co-design an integrated financial counselling model for regional areas
4. Trial a more **flexible model of financial assistance** for those in hardship that enables the prioritisation of where hardship grants are spent
5. Fund Energy Consumers Australia to provide **consumer representation and research** in WA energy markets in transition to national market membership
6. Introduce a **15% consumption tax on net wagering revenue** of betting companies offering services in Western Australia and use proceeds to support financial counselling and addiction service for those harmed by online gambling

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### The Problem

The current 'tough on crime' approach is failing to make Western Australian communities safer. WA has the second highest imprisonment rate in the country, only after the Northern Territory.<sup>1</sup> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders comprise 38 per cent of the adult population in Western Australian prisons, despite making up less than 4 per cent of the state's population.<sup>2</sup> Aboriginal adults are 18 times more likely to be in prison than non-Aboriginal adults in WA, with Aboriginal youth 39 times more likely to be in detention than non-Aboriginal youth.<sup>3</sup> Young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds also face discrimination and poor outcomes, with young recent African humanitarian migrant communities often reporting undue attention from the authorities.

By getting smarter and focusing on strengthening families and communities, and supporting members of our community who are returning from prison, we can increase community safety. Western Australia should follow the holistic, evidence based approach of Social Reinvestment – based on the three complementary pillars of *healthy families, smart justice and safe communities*.

Social Reinvestment includes a justice reinvestment approach whereby money that would be spend on building more prisons and justice services in the future is invested into community-based diversion and rehabilitation programs to reduce the need for them. More than that, it recognises that investing in improving the wellbeing of people most at risk of future imprisonment through targeted prevention and early intervention strategies and creating more positive opportunities and life choices is more effective and less expensive than the growing cost of the continuing cycle of re-imprisonment.

### Mandatory Sentencing Laws

There is no evidence that mandatory sentencing contributes to ongoing community safety. Mandatory sentencing disproportionately impacts Indigenous peoples, young people, persons with a mental illness or cognitive impairment, and those from low-income backgrounds. It adds to the overall high cost of imprisonment without any evidence that it provides an effective deterrence to offenders.<sup>4</sup>

The mandatory sentencing regime significantly contributes to Western Australia's high levels of incarceration and the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in our prison populations. The two most common charges in WA are acts intended to cause injury and unlawful entry with intent – both of which are charges for which there is mandatory sentencing provisions.

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<sup>1</sup> ABS (2015) 4517.0 – Prisoners in Australia

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Aboriginal Affairs (2015) *Progress Against Closing the Gap*, Western Australia

<sup>4</sup> p 13

## ***Fine Defaulters***

The number of Aboriginal people in Western Australia imprisoned for fine default has increased by 480% between 2008 and 2013. Alternative schemes exist in other jurisdictions that enable vulnerable and disadvantaged fine defaulters to cut-out their fines by undertaking rehabilitation, treatment and/or education and training.

Currently, in Western Australia, people who do not pay their court-imposed fines may be imprisoned at a cut-out rate of \$250 per day. What this means is that for every day spent in prison, \$250 worth of unpaid fines is written off. The amount of the fine is never recouped. Alarming, this option costs taxpayers \$345 per day. It has been estimated that the total cost of imprisoning fine defaulters in 2013 would have been approximately \$4 million. The option of fine default is one of a number of alternatives intended to encourage fine defaulters to pay their outstanding fines. These include drivers licence and vehicle licence suspensions; seizure of property and goods; and community work. However, for vulnerable and disadvantaged people the failure to pay outstanding fines is rarely a choice. Instead, it is typically the result of poverty, mental and/or physical illness, disadvantage and other complex life circumstances such as family violence and substance abuse. Imprisonment is highly likely to cause further disadvantage and trauma such as risks to physical and mental health including death (either directly from imprisonment or from being transported long distances in custody); negative associations within the prison environment; disruption to family and children; and the possibility of children being removed by child protection authorities. The option of imprisonment does nothing to address the underlying problems or prevent offending.<sup>5</sup>

## ***Indefinite Detention of Mentally Impaired Accused***

Our legal system in Western Australia needs to catch up with changing community attitudes and international human rights commitments, in line with other jurisdictions. *The Criminal Law (Mentally Impaired Accused) Act 1996* (the CLMIA Act) enables the legal administration, care and disposition of people with a mental impairment in Western Australia who have been found either mentally unfit to stand trial or not guilty due to unsound mind.<sup>6</sup> There is significant community concern about the indefinite detention of people found to be mentally unfit, with many cases of individuals being incarcerated or having their liberty deprived for periods far in excess of the maximum sentence of the offence of which they are accused. The United Nations recently upheld Marlon Noble's case to be a significant abuse of his human rights, considering it a violation of article 15 of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* and concluding the WA Government had an obligation to change the Act.<sup>7</sup>

In its current form, the CLMIA Act undermines the progressive mental health and disability reforms implemented by the Western Australian Government and community services sector. A commitment was made to reform the Act at the last election, which now seems highly unlikely to be before and progress through the Parliament prior to the 2017 Election. A reformed Act needs to ensure sufficient support and appropriate legal counselling to minimise the need to be found unfit, and provide a declared place for those with a mental illness who are detained under the Act. It is crucial that support is provided to all mental impaired accused to facilitate release and to ensure that when released that support is sufficient to ensure public safety while their lives are not unnecessarily restricted.

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<sup>5</sup> Social Reinvestment WA, <http://www.socialreinvestmentwa.org.au/img/policies/Policies-and-Targets-for-Reform-SRWA.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Under the CLMIA Act, 'mental impairment' means intellectual disability, mental illness, brain damage or senility. *Criminal Law (Mentally Impaired Accused) Act 1996*, Section 8 [http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main\\_mrtitle\\_228\\_homepage.html](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main_mrtitle_228_homepage.html)

<sup>7</sup> Marlon, who was detained for 10 years, had his case upheld by the UN Committee on the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* in September 2016.



### ***Legal Service Funding***

Community Legal Centres play a critical role in ensuring access to justice for low income and vulnerable people and in reducing the longer term costs of our legal system. Unresolved legal issues can cause significant social, financial and health problems (including mental health). Greater investment in programs that provide people with the information and advice they need at an early stage can prevent problems from getting worse, help keep people out of court and reduce the risk of unnecessary financial hardship. On this basis, the Productivity Commission recommended a \$200m national increase in legal service funding in 2014. Instead these services now face a 32% cut in funding via the National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services on 1 July 2017, following a 7% cut in State funding in the 2015/16 WA Budget.

The funding of CLCs is complicated, unpredictable and lacks transparency, with funding coming from a range of sources including public purpose and legal contribution trusts. Given the commencement of a new National Partnership Agreement on 1 July 2015 which saw all Commonwealth CLC assistance distributed through the WA Government, this is an ideal opportunity to consolidate existing programs and funding allocation processes to create a single, legal assistance program with transparent and predictable funding allocated on the basis of identified legal need. This would improve the sustainability of legal service provision, support service planning and continuous improvement, and reduce the unnecessary reporting burden. Funding through the new program should be increased in line with the Productivity Commission recommendations.

### ***State-wide Aboriginal Interpreter Service***

There is no state-wide Aboriginal language interpreter service in Western Australia, and the only Aboriginal interpreter service in Western Australia (the Kimberley Interpreting Service) is under resourced. While access to Aboriginal interpreters during all stages of the criminal justice system is crucial for protecting rights and ensuring that Aboriginal people are not unnecessarily or unjustly imprisoned, it is also essential for maximising successful engagement in programs and services. If an Aboriginal person who is unable to adequately speak or understand English participates in a rehabilitation or training program without access to an interpreter, he or she is unlikely to participate effectively or make any significant therapeutic or rehabilitative gains.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, people from CALD backgrounds need to be ensured access to justice including interpreter services.

### ***Justice Targets***

The Western Australian government must advocate for and support the inclusion of justice targets in the Closing the Gap framework. There are no specific direct targets related to the Safe Communities building block and it is imperative that federal, state and territory governments be required to report against specific justice-related targets. This will encourage more accurate data collection and recording and a greater focus on implementing effective strategies to reduce the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system. Justice targets should include, among other things, reducing the rate of imprisonment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to a level that is commensurate with their population level and likewise to reducing the disproportionate rate of child protection removals and rates of family and domestic violence in communities.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

## Healthy Communities

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5. Fund a **patient coordination role** within the Aboriginal community health sector to manage, coordinate and provide support to patients required to travel to Perth for medical reasons.
6. Implement the results of the Holman Report and increase **funding for Aboriginal health** programs that have demonstrated excellence.
7. Commit to the prevention of **violence against women** as a priority in Western Australian health planning.

The last decade has seen a dramatic shift in community awareness and understanding of the circumstances of people living with health issues in our community, and a fundamental change in attitudes to treatment and care. There has been a significant move towards community-based services and recovery models, together with a focus on prevention and early intervention strategies. These become increasingly important as the cost of tertiary services and chronic illness continue to rise. Our planning for future services and support systems can transform the lives of many of our most vulnerable.

People with mental illness, those with alcohol and drug issues and their families should expect to have opportunities for meaningful work, to achieve a secure income, and have safe and secure housing in our community as should we all. However, it is estimated that by 2025, between 1,474 and 1,867 Western Australians who have mental health issues or alcohol and other drug problems will be homeless.

We must fund the *Better Choices Better Lives*, the 10-year Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs plan, in order to achieve its intent of shifting investment away from acute care towards prevention and earlier, community based services, coupled with an increase in consumer and carer involvement, choice and control. While we absolutely need to ensure access to services and support for those in acute need, we are increasingly aware that if this is all we are doing, then the costs of our service system will continue to rise. We need to become more effective at reducing the need for tertiary services and demonstrating the value of earlier interventions.

### Mental Health

'Mental health' is a state of well-being in which an individual realises their potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to the community. Every year, one in five Australians experience some form of mental illness, with higher rates for young people. Almost half of us will experience mental illness at some point in our life. People experiencing mental health problems continue to be active and productive contributors to our community, with or without support and treatment.

People with severe or enduring mental health problems are amongst the most marginalised people in Western Australian communities. Many live with poverty, unemployment or underemployment, fragmented supports, physical health problems, and insecure or inappropriate housing. A small but significant minority continue to be subject to inappropriate service responses that limit their rights, respect, choice and control in our mental health and justice systems. When people with mental health problems can access appropriate supports, most will recover and lead productive and fulfilling lives.

## **Alcohol and Other Drugs**

Every year, thousands of people, families and communities experience harm related to their own or someone else's use of alcohol and other drugs.

The specialised services provided by the alcohol and other drug sector in Western Australia are proven, apply evidence-based practice and make a meaningful difference.

In tight economic times, it is a social and fiscal imperative that we prioritise initiatives based on long-standing community need, such as an Aboriginal alcohol and other drug residential service in the Southwest.

## **Aboriginal Health**

Improving Aboriginal health must be a priority for the Western Australian Government. We call for Aboriginal community controlled organisations to be recognised and supported through funding by government as being the most effective pathway to closing the gap in health and life outcomes.

There is clear evidence that culturally secure community-based residential treatment programs are successful, with the completion of residential programs leading to reduced drug use and criminality, significantly improved psychological and physical health and increased involvement in work, education and training. Culturally-appropriate strengths-based programs delivered by Aboriginal community-controlled organisations are the most effective means of engaging with this at-risk population.

## **Women's Health**

Community based services and appropriate care pathways play a central role in promoting the emotional well-being of women, infants and their families and in ensuring that all women with mental health concerns get appropriate and timely care. Increased government investment will help services in Western Australia ensure more women, infants and their families receive the best care as outlined in the Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Model of Care.<sup>10</sup> This should include culturally and linguistically appropriate services which make a huge difference for expectant mothers from CALD backgrounds who struggle to understand and engage with mainstream health services.

Violence against women also has a serious impact on women's health. It is an entrenched social problem and a major public health crisis. Recently published research commissioned by Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety shows that intimate partner violence is prevalent—affecting one in three women since the age of 15.<sup>11</sup> Violence against women has serious impacts for women's health—contributing to a range of negative health outcomes, including poor mental health, problems during pregnancy and birth, alcohol and illicit drug use, suicide, injuries and homicide.<sup>12</sup> It contributes more to the disease burden of women than any other risk factor in women aged 18-44 years, more than well known risk factors like tobacco use, high cholesterol or use of illicit drugs.<sup>13</sup>

Improving women's health will also strengthen the wellbeing of children, families and communities, representing a high social return on investment.

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<sup>10</sup> Western Australian Department of Health. Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Model of Care - a framework. Perth: North Metropolitan Health Service, Western Australian Department of Health, Western Australia; 2016.

<sup>11</sup> Examination of the burden of disease of intimate partner violence against women in 2011: Final report / Julie Ayre, Miriam Lum On, Kim Webster, Michelle Gourley, Lynelle Moon. Sydney : ANROWS, 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

## Housing and Homelessness

1. Develop a **community housing** policy and growth strategy that provides greater strategic direction to enable specialisation, innovation and investment
2. Secure **long-term funding certainty for homeless services** to enable the development of integrated service models that improve long-term outcomes for homeless people
3. Ensure that 27% of the dwellings delivered as part of the State Affordable Housing Strategy's 2020 target are **public and community housing** (a net increase of 2,700 houses)
4. That government land and housing developments include a minimum of **15% affordable housing** targeted at low-to-moderate income households
5. Co-design a **shared assessment framework** and **tenancy support system** in partnership with the community housing and service sector
6. Gradually replace property based **stamp duties** with a broad-based progressive land tax over ten years, with exemptions, deferral and concessions for low income earners

The importance of housing in everyone's life is clear and obvious. The elements of secure housing include affordability, security of tenure, desirability and safety of location, and the condition of the dwelling unit itself.

By providing safe and secure housing, we not only provide people with the capacity to achieve better life outcomes (which is more than enough reason in and of itself), but through those better life outcomes the need for other services is significantly reduced, thus delivering significant savings to the state.

Housing in and of itself will not solve the problem or meet the multifaceted needs of inadequately housed, people experiencing homelessness, or mentally ill individuals. Nevertheless, it is one of the crucial missing links.

Research indicates that appropriate housing assistance provides a pathway to independence for those experiencing homelessness or in housing stress. Appropriate housing and supports, where required, enhances the health, education, and employment of individuals and families and enables economic participation in society.

Declining affordability also has implications for economic performance and labour market efficiency, social cohesion and polarisation of cities, environmental considerations and the creation and distribution of wealth through home ownership. Hence appropriate and adequate housing access is an issue that impact the whole community.

### ***A Community Housing Growth Strategy***

Community housing serves a crucial role across the state in the provision of stable housing and support for those transitioning out of homelessness as part of the social housing mix. In particular, it contributes to social development through the community's engagement in and with not-for-profit housing associations, provides flexible options that meet a diversity of needs, encourages innovation, and designs and secures joint ventures between public and private investors.<sup>14</sup>

The community housing sector needs greater clarity to enable it to plan, invest, partner and innovate. In order for this role to be undertaken effectively and in line with the Government's housing and homelessness aspirations, it is essential that a clear community housing and growth strategy is developed. A shared direction

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<sup>14</sup> Tony Eardley & Saul Flaxman (2012) 'The role of community housing organisations in meeting the housing and support needs of people who are homeless' *Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute*, Positioning Paper No. 147, p 26

and longer term strategic priorities need to be developed in partnership with the community housing sector to drive planning and investment decisions.

Such a strategy should be developed with the clear intention of increasing the capacity of Aboriginal community controlled organisations. The Victorian Government is gradually transferring 1448 properties from the Director of Housing to Aboriginal Housing Victoria, an Indigenous community housing provider, in order to advance self-determination for Aboriginal people.<sup>15</sup> Stock transfers could build on the Southwest Native Title Settlement, with capacity building support provided to develop effective Noongar community housing services in partnership with established community housing providers.

### ***Homelessness***

Homelessness leaves those experiencing it disconnected from family, friends and their community, and with a lack of control over their environment.<sup>16</sup> This creates significant barriers to participating meaningfully in society, contributing to our economy and to achieving better life outcomes. Every night in WA, there are estimated to be around 9,592 people who are experiencing homelessness, which is 42.8 people per 10,000.<sup>17</sup>

The lack of funding and certainty makes it significantly more difficult for service providers to develop safe and appropriate services that are specialised or better integrated with other services and supports (such as family support, mental health and AOD services, employment services, etc.) For homelessness services to be able to develop innovative service models that provide integrated wrap-around services for specific disadvantaged cohorts, it is essential that they are provided with 5 year minimum funding agreements.

If service providers are to address the deep systemic causes of homelessness and develop services, then they need to have certainty that programs they invest in developing and their organisation itself will be able to survive beyond one or two years. With NPAH programs not only providing essential support for those experiencing homelessness, but also having a significant impact on reducing the demand on the state's health services, it is clear that providing long-term funding certainty for homelessness services will have a profoundly positive impact on our community.

### ***State Affordable Housing Strategy***

Western Australia has seen a steady decline in public housing dwellings since 2012, dropping from 36,749 to 36,403.<sup>18</sup> While this can in part be explained by asset transfers to the community housing sector, Productivity Commission report figures indicate that total social housing growth in Western Australia has been relatively flat, with community housing stock in 2015 over 700 dwellings lower than it was in 2011.<sup>19</sup>

The Housing Authority has taken commendable steps to address the supply of affordable housing. The State Affordable Housing Strategy in 2010 committed the Authority to build 20,000 affordable homes by 2020. It achieved this target in 2015 and endorsed a minimum target of 30,000 by 2020.

While 27% of the first 20,000 dwellings built were social housing, this was not a net increase of 5,400 dwellings due to the amount of public housing retired or sold off during this period. As part of the Strategy, the Social Housing Investment Package is to provide 1,000 additional social housing dwellings by June 2017. This has not,

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<sup>15</sup> Martin Foley MP (2016) Media Release: *Landmark Moment for Indigenous Housing*, <http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/landmark-moment-for-indigenous-housing/>

<sup>16</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission (2008) *Homelessness is a Human Rights Issue* <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/homelessness-human-rights-issue>

<sup>17</sup> Homelessness Australia (2014) 'Homelessness in Western Australia' [www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au](http://www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au)

<sup>18</sup> WA Housing Authority (2016) p 214

<sup>19</sup> Productivity Commission (2016) Table 17A.3, p 2

however, prevented the continued decline in public housing stock, with 241 fewer public housing dwellings in 2015/16 than in 2014/15.<sup>20</sup>

We need a commitment that a net increase of 2,700 public and community housing dwellings is delivered by 2020 (or 27% of all new dwellings delivered as part of the State Affordable Housing Strategy), maintaining the rate of new social housing dwellings set between 2010 and 2015. It is crucial that any commitment to deliver new social housing is in *addition* to that which is necessary to maintain current stock levels.

### ***Tenancy Support***

Getting people into social housing is one thing. Ensuring that they can sustain that tenancy is another. Not all social housing tenants require specialist support, but we need a flexible system that provides support for those that do, regardless of what housing type they are in. Providing support for those entering, in and transitioning out of social housing not only improves outcomes for that person, but reduces pressures on and the costs of the public system.

Key to ensuring that a tenancy is sustained is ensuring that the tenant has the access to housing that is appropriate for their situation and is provided with access to the services that they need.

These supports need to be available from point of first contact to beyond the point where the tenant is transitioning out of social housing. The public housing system is not providing this currently, which means tenants are more at risk of losing their tenancies than they would be otherwise.

Community housing organisations conduct a full assessment of tenancy history, risk factors and support needs at the point of application. This enables early intervention for those who need support with their tenancies, improving outcomes for the tenant and reducing costs longer term.

By partnering with the community housing sector, the Housing Authority would be able to develop a shared assessment framework and joint waitlist that could be used to determine at the beginning who are the tenants for whom the public housing system and its current level of support is appropriate and effective.

For those for whom that level of support is insufficient, a targeted and integrated housing support system, co-designed with the community housing sector, would enable the provision of the intensive and specialist support they may require to transition into and stabilise their tenancy.

As the community housing sector already uses their own needs-assessment frameworks to assess the needs of potential tenants and has established relationships with other service areas, incorporating these systems and expertise into a shared framework and support system is crucial to its success.

### ***Stamp Duty and Land Tax***

Reforming land tax and removing stamp duty from the State's tax mix, would both improve the efficiency of the tax system and increase the revenue raising capacity of the tax base.<sup>21</sup>

Stamp duty is a highly inefficient tax, which distorts behaviour and decision-making by discouraging the sale of property.<sup>22</sup> A broad-based land tax, on the other hand, is one of the most efficient taxes. Unlike capital and labour, land is immobile and taxes on it do not affect supply or distort decision-making.<sup>23</sup> A broad-based land

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<sup>20</sup> WA Housing Authority (2016) p 214

<sup>21</sup> Australia's Future Tax System Review Panel (2010) *Australia's Future Tax System*, Final Report, Chapter C: Land and Resources Taxes, C2. Land Tax and Conveyance Stamp Duty. C2–4 Directions For Reform

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

tax model would provide a consistent and highly predictable source of revenue, unlike stamp duty returns which are both unpredictable and highly influenced by economic cycles.

To benefit from land taxes efficiencies, however, the WA land tax regime needs to be broadened to include owner-occupied housing. The exemption for owner-occupied housing is profoundly regressive, benefiting those in the top income quintile by almost \$2000, and those in the lowest income quintile by only \$400.<sup>24</sup> Even without a progressive rate scale, removing this exemption would disproportionately affect the top income quintile,<sup>25</sup> which would be a positive social and economic outcome.

The progressive rate scales should be based on the value of each property, rather than on aggregate holdings. By removing aggregation from WA's current land tax system, these reforms would enable an increase in rental affordability by creating the right conditions for institutional investment in private rental housing. Institutional investment introduces economies of scale, which would contribute to a reduction in rents.

A reformed land tax system would need to be sophisticated enough to include concessions, deferrals and exemptions for low income groups, such as pension and other income support recipients who are 'asset rich and income poor'.

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<sup>24</sup> John Daley and Brendan Coats (2015) *Property Taxes*, Grattan Institute, p 16

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p 25

## Children and Young People

1. Pilot a **place based pooled-budgeting** model to commission integrated early years, youth and family services in three trial sites
2. Build the capacity of **Aboriginal community controlled services** to deliver therapeutic healing, intensive family support and child protection services
3. Trial intensive transitional support models for **young people leaving state care** and detention
4. Create incentives for employers to **hire young people** in order to address youth unemployment in key regions and area
5. Develop a **LGBTIQ youth health and wellbeing strategy** to train health and community service providers to provide appropriate support
6. Implement comprehensive primary prevention **whole-of-school sexuality and respectful relationships education** programs

### The Problem

Children and young people are our investment in the future. Since family plays the critical role in their development and support, stronger families are crucial to creating better communities.

We urgently need to improve outcomes for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people in Western Australia. We can deliver better long-term outcomes by building connected, collaborative wrap around systems of support, comprised of services that are holistic and individualised.

We need to invest in more effective prevention and early intervention strategies and involve service users and community organisations in the co-design, development and evaluation of services.

### Place-Based Pooled Budgeting

Recent human service reforms in WA have concentrated on creating more integrated and responsive services to tackle issues of complex need and entrenched disadvantage. These reforms are focused in areas where there is already significant investment in services but we are failing to make a real difference.

The areas where there is the greatest potential for a collaborative approach to deliver significant outcomes are in place-based collective impact projects in early childhood development and care, and in youth services. While there is high-level commitment to these reform processes, and significant work has been underway there are significant challenges in funding cross-disciplinary integrated service models because of the way funding is tied up in individual programs and agencies.

We need a mechanism to allow the combining of resources across existing programs and departments to commission integrated services. We also need to support regional managers forums to understand how to co-design integrated services and how to use their contracting tools to support integrated outcomes.

### Aboriginal community controlled services

The number of Aboriginal children in care continues to grow, completely out of proportion to the population. As of June 2016, the overall number of children in care was 4,658, with 53 per cent of those children Aboriginal.<sup>26</sup> While efforts to reduce the growth of children in care have seen the number of non-Aboriginal children coming into care stabilising, these efforts are not proving successful for Aboriginal children.

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<sup>26</sup> Department for Child Protection and Family Support, *Annual Report 2015-16*, p 34



Aboriginal community controlled organisations are best placed to deliver therapeutic healing, intensive family support and child protection services.

Given the ongoing growth of the service and caring economy, high levels of community need for services and support, and the critical role that Aboriginal community-controlled services are likely to play in delivering better health and life outcomes for Aboriginal families, there is a strong argument for a greater focus on Aboriginal employment and training in health, education and community services.

### **Intensive Support**

Effective early intervention and prevention programs that work with vulnerable children and their families address underlying risk factors to reduce ongoing contact with the justice and child protection systems.

The State has a direct responsibility to support young people transitioning from state care and detention, and commencing their journey into adulthood. Young people leaving state care and detention often lack the informal network of families, friends and other social supports that can otherwise keep them safe or assist them in times of need. Children in care would benefit from targeted, intentional and practical assistance to build a network of informal supports around them well before they leave care, to support them to transition to adulthood.

An intensive transitional support model is required to reduce the fragmentation, lack of coordination and ensure continuity of care across our fragmented youth services sector in order to provide better life outcomes for these children and young adults.<sup>27</sup> Transitional support for children leaving care and detention can significantly reduce the longer term costs of crisis and tertiary services. We recommend a cost-benefit analysis trial of an intensive wrap-around intervention program providing transitional support.

### **Training and Employment**

Young people leaving school, university or TAFE looking for work are struggling to find employment, as employers look to employ people with experience. Many also feel underprepared and anxious about the employment process. This means that young people have an unfair disadvantage in the job market and may have to go above and beyond in order to get the experience they need to find a job. Young people who find work early have better long-term job prospects. Incentivising employers to hire young people reduces the risk of dependency on other government services.

Vocational education and training plays a critical role in developing the skilled and flexible workforce needed to meet the challenges of the future and sustain our state economy. An increase in TAFE fees since the removal of the cap on course fees in 2013 has made courses inaccessible for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. For those living independently or lacking family support, this increased cost has a significant impact on their day to day living. With no caps currently being applied to course fees, they may increase as less people enrol, making the courses even more inaccessible for young people.

### **LGBTIQ Young People**

LGBTIQ young people have the highest rates of suicidality of any population in Australia with up to 50% of transgender people having attempted suicide at least once in their lives. The elevated risk of mental ill-health and suicidality among LGBTIQ people is not due to sexuality, sex or gender identity in and of themselves but rather due to discrimination and exclusion as key determinants of health. Access to non-judgemental and supportive services and service providers is essential. Service providers who are open, understanding, do not stereotype or assume heterosexuality and are prepared to learn are valued and respected.

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<sup>27</sup> WACOSS, *Pre-Budget Submission 2016/17*, p 19

## Family and Domestic Violence

1. Appoint a designated **Minister for the Prevention of Violence Against Women** and establish a Committee of Cabinet
2. Widen the remit of the *Family and Domestic Violence Unit* to become the **Office for the Prevention of Violence Against Women** and to be located in the Department of Premier and Cabinet
3. Significantly increase **funding for frontline services** including refuges, advocacy services, community legal centres, and safe at home programs
4. Implement the recommendations from the **Enhancing Laws Concerning Family and Domestic Violence Inquiry**, including non-legislative recommendations
5. Introduce a **Family and Domestic Violence Protection Order Act** and provide the training and resources required to ensure its effective application
6. Introduce family and domestic violence provisions to the **Residential Tenancies Act** that quickly and fairly change lease agreements to keep families safe and reduce the risk of homelessness

In the last three years there have been 46 domestic homicides in WA. Many of these killings involved ongoing violence from a partner or ex-partner that was known to authorities, predictable and preventable. We all have a role to play in making our systems safer and reducing the high levels of violence against women and children within our community. The WA Peaks Forum supports the *#SafeSystemsWA campaign* to use a collaborative and coordinated approach to prevent violence and ensure our justice system is safe, supportive and responsive to those most in need.

Inadequate systemic responses increase risk to women and children. It is imperative that in Western Australia we do not make assurances that the system will provide the safety net that women and children need and then fail to deliver because resources are spread so thin. Strong leadership and political will is instrumental to improving the system for victims of violence, holding perpetrators accountable and, in time, preventing violence from occurring.

We call on all political parties to demonstrate accountability and leadership in preventing violence against women and their children by putting domestic and family violence at the top of the agenda and committing to establishing high level, cross-governmental leadership.

### Ministerial Responsibility

The *Safe Systems WA campaign* recommends designation of a Minister responsible for the prevention of violence against women, and establishment of a Cabinet committee, an independent advisory group and a senior officers group within the public service.

To make a change in Western Australia, domestic and family violence requires the leadership of the Premier. A cross-departmental approach must be driven by our State's newly elected leader and implemented by a dedicated Minister to drive the whole of government approach that is so urgently required. Moving the domestic and family violence portfolio to the Department of Premier and Cabinet would facilitate a more coordinated government approach to the issue and provide greater oversight, review and performance measures that ensures greater accountability at all levels .

### Navigating the Legal System

Currently the legal system is difficult to navigate at best, and at worst is a source of further trauma and injustice to survivors of violence. From poorly designed waiting rooms at court (that fail to keep perpetrators

of violence from opportunities to further coerce their victims), to inadequate legislation and policies/(or legislation and policy that could be adequate if they were actually interpreted as intended, or utilised to their full extent) there are many barriers to women accessing justice. Access to legal assistance is critical. There have been several Inquiries into family and domestic violence and women's access to justice on both state and federal levels over the years, however the majority of their recommendations have not been actioned in the timely manner necessary to create meaningful change.

A report from the WA Ombudsman examined 30 family and domestic violence fatalities over an 18 month period.<sup>28</sup> The investigation identified nine key principles that suggest a need for more flexible and responsive avenues for victims of domestic violence to access assistance. It found that victims' decisions about how they will resist violence and protect themselves may not always align with the expectations of state government and authorities, and yet when positive and consistent responses from departments and authorities occur, they can prevent and reduce further violence. The report put forward 54 recommendations which recognise collaboration between government agencies as critical and central to addressing family and domestic violence.

### **Legislative Change**

The *Safe Systems WA campaign* recommends that WA should introduce a *Family and Domestic Violence Protection Order Act* in line with the recommendations of the Law Reform Commission of WA and best practice in other jurisdictions.<sup>29</sup> It also recommends that the WA Family and Domestic Violence Strategy should be revised to better align with the National Plan.

Family violence is one of the leading causes of homelessness, and the WA Government should amend the *Residential Tenancies Act (1987)* in line with other jurisdictions, as outlined in the recommendations made by Tenancy WA.<sup>30</sup> These include an exclusion clause for persons protected or bound by a violence restraining order, enabling them to alter or terminate their interest in the tenancy. Also proposed are changes to enable the court to change who tenancies pertain to depending on circumstance, procedural protections for domestic violence related applications, and streamlined processes for changing locks.

Secure, appropriate and affordable housing is also critical for women and children recovering from domestic and family violence and yet every day, Western Australian women and children are seeking assistance from homelessness services. Current shortage of public housing is a fundamental structural obstacle to women escaping violence and re-establishing their lives. *The Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence (WA)* identifies lack of access to appropriate housing as the most pressing issue impacting on WA refugees and their capacity to support women transition out of refuge accommodation.<sup>31</sup>

### **Integrated and Effective Services**

We need to ensure adequate funding for prevention and intensive support services for women and children who are victims of domestic violence. Services for women and children who have experienced abuse are struggling to provide adequate levels of support for mental health, for resulting alcohol and drug misuse, and for culturally appropriate support to Aboriginal women and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. We call on the State Government to invest in expanded outreach and wrap-around service support as part of a more integrated response.

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<sup>28</sup> Ombudsman Western Australia (2015) *Report on Investigation into issues associated with violence restraining orders and their relationship with family and domestic violence fatalities*

<sup>29</sup> Law Reform Commission of Western Australia (2014) [Enhancing Family and Domestic Violence Laws](#)

<sup>30</sup> Tenancy WA (2014) *Submission to Law Reform Commission of WA Inquiry into Enhancing Family and Domestic Violence Laws*

<sup>31</sup> Written submission to WACOSS for the 2017/18 Pre Budget Submission dated 10 August 2016

There is an urgent need to provide additional investment to established domestic violence services and to increase the number, scope and diversity of services in metropolitan, rural and regional WA. Further investment is also needed in primary prevention and early intervention to prevent violence occurring and or escalating. As with many other challenging social problems, domestic violence prevention projects tend to receive sporadic project-based funding from governments. Investment in primary prevention, population health and integrated health promotion interventions and additional resources are required for research, monitoring and evaluation.

In direct response to the findings of their Royal Commission, Victoria has committed to fund 10 specifically trained financial counsellors to work with women escaping domestic violence. With the prevalence of financial abuse as an aspect of domestic violence, WA should look to develop a similar service.

Ongoing, integrated resourcing and funding across all jurisdictions is crucial in order to effect long-term change encompassing responses by police, courts and social services to prevent and stop domestic and family violence.

We can and must do better than this.

## Poverty and Inequality

1. Commission an independent cross-government inquiry into the targeting, adequacy and impact of **social concessions** by the Economic Regulation Authority
2. Develop an **Aboriginal human services workforce development strategy** that provides incentives and support to increase Aboriginal employment in human services contracts
3. Increase funding for metropolitan **financial counselling services** and co-design an integrated financial counselling model for regional areas
4. Trial a more **flexible model of financial assistance** for those in hardship that enables the prioritisation of where hardship grants are spent
5. Fund Energy Consumers Australia to provide **consumer representation and research** in WA energy markets in transition to national market membership
6. Introduce a **15% consumption tax on net wagering revenue** of betting companies offering services in Western Australia and use proceeds to support financial counselling and addiction service for those harmed by online gambling

The ACOSS *Poverty in Australia Report* suggests there are nearly 3 million people around Australia living in poverty, with 731,000 of them being children.<sup>32</sup> Child poverty has risen by 2 per cent over the last decade, to bring it to a rate of 17.4 per cent. That same period of time has seen a consistent and entrenched rate of poverty averaging around 12 per cent – providing clear indication that not enough is being done to tackle poverty.

Figures indicate that 240,000 Western Australians are living below the poverty line, with a further 150,000 at risk of financial hardship.<sup>33</sup> These figures are likely to be an underestimate, as they do not take into account higher living costs in Western Australia.

Without adequate support, living costs place significant pressure on a household's financial resilience. Poor financial resilience for low income households can mean that just one emergency or crisis related to their health, employment or living situation, could find them facing severe financial shock and becoming over-indebted.

Financial resilience is essential for households to make it through times of financial adversity or shock by accessing and drawing on internal capabilities and appropriate, acceptable and accessible external resources and supports.<sup>34</sup> Further, financial resilience is an essential factor in an individual 'workforce responsiveness'. That is, those who are unable to draw upon resources and support in a time of financial adversity have a lower capacity to weather periods of unemployment or underemployment, and insufficient capability to respond effectively to changing labour market conditions and secure work in a new or emerging field.

According to research undertaken by the Centre for Social Impact, nearly half (47%) of the Australian population has little or no savings. Without savings, the ability to raise funds in an emergency is low – requiring either support from family and friends, or the accumulation of debt.

On a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being severe financial stress and 4 being financial security, Australia has an overall financial resilience mean of 3.06. This places the mean in the 'low financial stress/vulnerability' band. Western

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<sup>32</sup> ACOSS (2016) *Poverty In Australia*

<sup>33</sup> Unpublished figures produced for WACOSS by the Social Policy Research Centre at UNSW and ACOSS

<sup>34</sup> Centre for Social Impact, *Financial Resilience in Australia*, August 2016

Australia has the second lowest level of financial resilience out of every state and territory, with a mean of 2.99.<sup>35</sup>

A person only receiving Newstart and associated supplements, including Commonwealth Rent Assistance, is living \$110 a week below the poverty line, with those on Youth Allowance \$150 below. With more and more Western Australian's having to rely on income support measures such as Newstart, all while average earnings are rising, inequality in this state will continue to widen.

Unemployment is not the only concerning labour force measure on the rise. The end of Western Australia's resources boom has seen a significant rise in the rate of underemployment and underutilisation of employees, and increasing casualisation of the workforce. Our unemployment rate hit 6.5% in November, the highest in the nation.

Changes in the composition of the Western Australian economy are seeing many former workers from the resource and construction industries requiring support from community services for the first time. While these workers have often been on high incomes, most have also been carrying high levels of debt, which can quickly become overwhelming. Often they rely on credit cards or pay day lenders as an interim solution while hoping to secure further employment – exacerbating the situation. Often by the time they seek professional help their debt levels are such that there is little option but to declare bankruptcy and lose it all.

### ***Social Concessions***

Western Australian needs a system of concessions that ensures those on low and fixed incomes or facing specific disadvantages are adequately compensated to enable their economic and social participation. We currently have a wide range of concessions which are poorly targeted and lack clearly defined outcomes. At the same time, the adequacy of these concessions for our most vulnerable has continued to erode, as living costs have risen faster than incomes for those in the lower quintiles. We need to target our assistance to those most in need at a level that will make a real difference to their risk of financial hardship.

### ***Aboriginal Workforce Strategy***

45.6 per cent of Aboriginal people in Western Australia were found to be employed in 2012-2013, which was a drop from 56.3 per cent in 2008 and 33.6 per cent lower than non-Aboriginal people. Those in full-time employment fell also to 32.1 per cent from 33.9., with a gap of 25.5 per cent – 3.8 per cent wider than in 2008.<sup>36</sup> Given the ongoing and projected growth of the service and caring economy, high levels of community need for services and support, and the critical role that Aboriginal community-controlled services are likely to play in improving access and engagement to deliver better health and life outcomes for Aboriginal families, there is a strong argument for a greater focus on Aboriginal employment in health, education and community services.<sup>37</sup>

### ***CaLD Workforce Strategy***

The state government has been funding a CaLD workforce development service which has consistently met or exceeded contracted outcomes. This program ends in June 2018 and given the disproportionate rates of unemployment and underemployment within certain ethnic groups, it is important that such a program continues beyond June 2018.

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Department of Aboriginal Affairs (2015) *Progress Against Closing the Gap*, Western Australia

<sup>37</sup> Noting health has shown some leadership, with both WA Health and WA Country Health recently developing workforce development strategies. See [WA Health Aboriginal Workforce Strategy 2014-2014](#) and [WACHS Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2014-2018](#).

### ***Financial Counselling***

It is crucial that in times of need, all Western Australians are also able to access regulated, non-exploitative supports such as emergency relief, financial counselling services and community legal centres that are able to help address stressful and complex situations.

Financial counselling services play a crucial role within the community service system. As other services tackle different areas of critical need, they will often identify financial problems that are creating ongoing barriers to securing life outcomes or recovery.

### ***Flexible Hardship Support***

Providing assistance to those who are struggling to pay utility bills is a vital service. That struggle, however, is only one of the ways in which financial hardship can present. Hardship policies are intended to assist customers to take control of their financial situation, but the narrow focus of the Hardship Utility Grant Scheme means that the funds do not necessarily target the most pressing issues for those facing financial hardship.

A flexible, brokerage approach to financial assistance, whereby financial counsellors would be able to work with clients to make informed judgments regarding their specific needs could enable improved outcomes for individuals and the development of greater independence. Clients, in conjunction with a financial counsellor, would be able to determine on a case-by-case, bill-by-bill basis where the hardship grant money was most needed and how it could be best spent, with the outcomes monitored by that counsellor. Without such assistance those in hardship increasingly rely on pay-day loans to make ends meet or respond to unexpected costs and crises - only to find themselves trapped in spiral of rising debt.

### ***Consumer Representation***

Disconnection from electricity, gas and water can have severe social and economic ramifications for individuals, families and communities. These essential services support fundamental human needs including food, hygiene and shelter as well as equipment that is critical to wellbeing and independence.

Fundamental to ensuring access to a reliable, safe, affordable access to essential services is effective regulation developed on principles of best practice consumer protection. Western Australia remains the only state in Australia without funded consumer research and representation in our energy and water markets.<sup>38</sup> Without it, we cannot expect to see best practice consumer protection or be sure that we are not paying too much for our power.

### ***Wagering Tax***

Western Australia has historically had a different relationship with gambling to other states as a result of the controls placed on the proliferation of electronic gambling machines or 'pokies'. The rise of online betting and gambling, however, has meant that access to gambling has become easier than it has ever been before.

The introduction of a 15% place of consumption tax on the Net Wagering Revenue of betting companies that offer services in that state would mean that the bookmakers' winnings are taxed where the bets are made, rather than the jurisdiction in which they hold their bookmaking licence. The introduction of such a tax in Western Australia would not only act to increase the revenue of the state (by an estimated \$10m in 2016/17),

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<sup>38</sup> WACOSS (2014) *Consumer research and representation in Western Australian electricity, gas and water markets*

but if linked to support for problem gamblers such as in South Australia, provides a stronger capacity for WA to cope with the consequences that follow from increased access to gambling and betting online.