



MEDIA RELEASE

Toward Home Alliance welcomes findings of review of South Australia's homelessness system

The Toward Home Alliance (THA) welcomes the release of the South Australian Homelessness System Review and the opportunity to strengthen the state's homelessness system.

Toward Home is one of the five alliances supporting people at-risk of and experiencing homelessness in South Australia¹. THA receives approximately 18% of the state's \$91m of specialist homelessness funding annually, and supports approximately 23% of people at-risk of and experiencing homelessness who access Specialist Homelessness Services in South Australia every year. As an alliance, THA provides:

- Crisis accommodation for 63 adults and 32 young people on any given night;
- Tenancy support to people living in 250 transitional and supported housing properties,
- Assertive outreach to people experiencing rough sleeping 365 days a year; and,
- Case management to approximately 1500 people at any point in time.

The Alliance system aimed to embed collaboration by design. Whilst THA embraced these principles and ways of working, the Review indicates that this has not transpired effectively or equitably across all alliances and specialist homeless services.

The Review's findings need to be clearly situated within the funding reality and current environment. Nationally, recurrent expenditure on Specialist Homelessness Services increased at an average of 47% since 2018, whereas South Australia's growth in real expenditure has only increased by 8%². In parallel, Adelaide was ranked the 4th least affordable housing market in the western world³, and has seen year-on-year rental increases, totaling 81% between 2015 and 2025⁴. People need support from services for longer, which has also resulted in the cost of support per person increasing by 20% since 2018. As the Report states, "*Funding has not kept pace with increasing complexity of*

¹ in addition to 16 Directly Contracted Services.

² Di Girolamo, N., Dobrovic, J., Rust, A., Ross, S. & Pilkington, R. (2026). Review of the South Australian SHS-Funded Homelessness System. BetterStart Group, Adelaide University and Jindawayni Consulting. https://dhs.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/200918/Review-of-the-South-Australian-SHS-Funded-Homelessness-System.pdf

³ Cox, W. (2026). Demographia International Housing Affordability: 2026 Edition. Centre for Demographics and Policy, Chapman University. <https://frontiercentre.org/wp-content/uploads/Demographia-International-HousingAffordability-2026-Edition-1.pdf>

⁴ Azize, M. (2025). Out of Reach: Australia's rental crisis and the decline of social housing. Everybody's Home, Melbourne. <https://everybodyshome.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Out-Of-Reach-2025.pdf>

need, workforce pressure and rising costs, resulting in a system operating at or near capacity while relying on services to absorb unmet demand and risk”.

Frontline services across the state are working well beyond recommended caseloads, whilst navigating more complexity than ever. As South Australia’s homelessness sector moves into a co-design phase with government, it’s important that the learnings of the last five years continue to inform and further our shared work and common agenda - to end homelessness.

The Review’s remit was South Australia’s entire homelessness system; as such, strengths within individual alliances and services were not profiled. For THA, these include:

- **Aboriginal funding parity:** Ongoing commitment to Aboriginal case management funding parity, being the first and only generic homelessness service in Australia to do so.
- **Wright Place:** Activation and ongoing operation of a 10-bed short-term accommodation site for women experiencing homelessness over the age of 45.
- **\$1m per annum additional investment:** Additional \$1m annual financial and in-kind investment by NGO partners, beyond contract to address service gaps and strengthen frontline work.
- **New Brief intervention responses:** Activation of new brief intervention responses to ensure that those who are eligible for a service can receive one.
- **Shared infrastructure and co-location:** Intentionally building a connected, supported and multi-disciplinary homelessness workforce, including shared co-located sites for staff from different organisations to work collaboratively.
- **Multi-disciplinary and collaborative Assertive Outreach:** THA’s Assertive Outreach response across the CBD, Onkaparinga and Mt Barker is delivered through five THA partners - The Salvation Army, Hutt St Centre, Baptist Care, Sonder, and Aboriginal Family Support Services. This collaborative has made it possible to respond more flexibly to community needs, and extend limited resources and service scope further.
- **Commitment to governance:** Quality, formal and consistent governance has enabled shared-risk holding, authentic collaboration and collective decision making, genuine problem-solving, lateral collegial support and best for client/community outcomes.
- **Workforce retention and culture:** Quality staff attraction and above sector average retention of staff both within services and as an Alliance. This has been supported by shared resources, Alliance-wide training and proactive collaboration.

THA’s submission to the Review can be found here: <https://towardhome.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/THA-submission-DHS-homelessness-system-review-Nov-2025.pdf>

THA is committed and looking forward to engaging constructively with government and our sector partners about where to from here, and continue to build on the considerable knowledge, capability, relationships and innovation within South Australia’s homelessness system.