



Housing First Homelessness Advisory Group

Communique No. 10

30 October 2024 Meeting

The Housing First Homelessness Advisory Group met on 30 October 2024. The Advisory Group meeting was chaired by Mike Rowe, Director General, Department of Communities. Leon McIvor, Deputy Director General, Housing and Homelessness also attended.

The Advisory Group discussed strategies to leverage philanthropic and private capital to end homelessness. The Advisory Group had a robust discussion on the potential contributions of philanthropy, exploring engagement methods, potential approaches, and their application in the Western Australian context.

In particular, the Advisory Group examined the untapped potential of private capital and examined international and domestic models. This includes best practices, lessons learned and strategies to mitigate risks and challenges associated with these initiatives. The Advisory Group also discussed the feasibility of adapting existing models elsewhere to Western Australia, considering the unique challenges and opportunities presented by the current housing market.

The Advisory Group recognised that the successful implementation of these initiatives necessitates a collaborative approach from all stakeholders. Additionally, the Advisory Group emphasised that a framework to incentivise philanthropic and private investment is required to support a government and across sector approach. The Group intend to provide advice to the Minister on ways to leverage and support philanthropy in Western Australia to end homelessness.

Michael Chester from Uniting WA shared “Jeff’s” Story to help the Group understand the experiences of an individual supported by Perth metropolitan area’s Homeless Engagement Assessment Response Team (HEART). Members discussed the barriers experienced by Jeff and how these could be addressed.

The Advisory Group also welcomed a representative from the Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD), Mr Michael Eckermann, Associate Director Economic and Labour Market Analysis. Mr Eckermann gave a presentation on workforce development skills and training levers and potential opportunities for the homelessness sector. Mr Eckermann shared forecasts and data which indicates undersupply of workers in essential occupations within the sector. Mr Eckermann also discussed the potential role of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in addressing these shortages and highlighted

the importance of adapting training programs to future needs, such as focusing on flexibility and combining elements from different qualifications to create tailored skillsets. The Advisory Group acknowledged the complexity of addressing workforce issues for the sector. The Advisory Group will delve deeper into workforce delivery strategies, including attraction, retention, and development for the homelessness sector, at their next meeting in December 2024.

The next meeting of the HFHAG will be held in early December 2024.

Further information about the Advisory Group can be found at www.wa.gov.au/organisation/departments/departments-of-communities/housing-first-homelessness-advisory-group or by emailing the Secretariat at hfhag@communities.wa.gov.au.