

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Service delivery systems and homelessness

Associate Professor Michael Darcy and Dr Neil Hall from the School of Social Sciences and Psychology and Ms Stephanie Brennan from Wentworth Community Housing in partnership with Penrith, Blacktown, Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury City Councils have been awarded a UWS Research Partnership grant to examine the ways in which service provider practices and service delivery systems may unintentionally cause or perpetuate homelessness.

'Homelessness is frequently thought of as a problem of older men and sometimes young people in the inner cities, but our research shows a far more complex picture' explains Associate Professor Darcy. 'Reasons for homelessness are multifaceted, and the experience of homelessness differs between groups of people. In a scoping study conducted in the Nepean Blacktown area, the lack of affordable housing across the public, community and private sectors was identified as a key regional issue. This was found to lead to service 'blockages' all along the provision line from crisis to post-crisis services. Service providers reported a lack of appropriate emergency accommodation, and other issues revolved around a failure of service co-ordination between government agencies, gaps in service delivery, most notably in regard to a lack of holistic service provision and long-term case management.'

The research team will use a combination of administrative data from Centrelink, NSW Police and other agencies, and qualitative interviews with currently and recently homeless people. Following collation and analysis of these data sets, deliberative focus groups will identify ways in which service delivery systems and practices can be improved to avoid perpetuating homelessness.



The outcome of the research will support the Nepean Blacktown Regional Taskforce on Homelessness in development of a Regional Plan to End Homelessness.

Project Title: Service delivery systems and the unintentional causation and perpetuation of homelessness in the Nepean/Blacktown Region
Funding has been set at: \$20,000
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