
Media Release

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Sheed welcomes COVID-19 state government funding for homelessness

Independent Member for the Shepparton District has welcomed a \$6 million commitment from Minister for Housing Richard Wynne to help the plight of people experiencing homelessness during the Coronavirus crisis but has expressed concerns the not-for-profit charity sector is suffering staff losses.

"I am extremely concerned by the plight of the homeless during this crisis," Ms Sheed said.

"The Shepparton District was particularly hard hit by homelessness before the Coronavirus pandemic and I am seeing some very worrying trends emerging as the crisis unfolds.

"Shortages in crisis accommodation and emergency food services were apparent prior to the COVID-19 spread. Now volunteer staff, many of them elderly, are being sent home, services are being stretched to breaking point and donated food supplies are becoming erratic. We need a very deliberate government response to assist these incredibly vulnerable members of our community."

While making up less than 10 per cent of people experiencing homelessness, Ms Sheed said she was particularly concerned about the plight of rough sleepers.

"These are the most vulnerable. They are generally in poor health. They have limited access to medical care and they cannot self-isolate. If COVID-19 gets into this population the results will be dire."

Ms Sheed also called for community assistance.

"We know local organisations in the Shepparton District such as FoodShare were struggling before the pandemic and now even more so.

"Donations are desperately needed. Look after yourselves and your own family first, but if you have the capacity, please consider donating any excess stocks of canned foods and hygiene supplies to our local charity organisations.

"Together, we can get through this crisis and together we can lessen the impact on the homeless."

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