



Social Futures
Northern Rivers Social Development Council

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MEDIA RELEASE: Northern Rivers Priorities – Planning to Prevent Persistent Poverty Rates

A new plan to be released today by the NSW Council of Social Service (NCOSS) will be presented to NSW Treasurer, The Hon Gladys Berejiklian. The plan, released to coincide with Anti-Poverty Week, reveals a path forward for the NSW 2017 Budget to reduce the experience of poverty and disadvantage in NSW.

The NCOSS plan identifies key funding priorities for our region including: investment in a cost of living package, mental health services for young people, early childhood education, a state-wide roll out of nurse-led home visits, oral health services and Phase 2 of the Social and Affordable Housing Fund.

Tony Davies, CEO of Social Futures said “the priorities highlighted in this plan are immensely important for communities in the Northern Rivers, particularly those related to social and affordable housing. While this region accounts for only 4% of the NSW population, 20% of the State’s rough sleepers are here in the Northern Rivers.”

Sandra Handley, Northern Rivers Regional Manager of YWCA NSW says “all of the seven local government areas in the Northern Rivers have rates of child poverty which are higher than the NSW average, which sees one in every seven children living in poverty.¹”

“Organisations and communities in our region are working together to respond to the challenges and issues identified in the submission. We need well-targeted investment to respond to those challenges and to reduce persistent poverty rates in NSW and within the Northern Rivers” states Handley.

NCOSS CEO Tracy Howe says the plan is the result of extensive consultation across the state with communities, services and with people experiencing poverty and disadvantage themselves.

Mr Davies said “the priorities in the submission reflect those of the Northern Rivers Social Change Collaboration – a group of organisations and service providers working together to improve community wellbeing in the region – including collective work to support better chances for children and young people, and attracting and facilitating investment in delivery of affordable housing in the Northern Rivers.”

Please contact us if you would like further information with regards to the issues of housing affordability and poverty or to hear individual stories from Northern Rivers’ residents.

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¹ Data sourced from NATSEM 2013, <http://www.natsem.canberra.edu.au/publications/?publication=poverty-social-exclusion-and-disadvantage-in-australia>

