

## Reaching out to all rough sleepers in Newtown

16 October 2017

A monthly outreach program initiated by the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre (NNC) is aiming to eliminate rough sleeping in Newtown and ensure everyone is on a pathway to safe secure housing.

Starting this month, representatives from local agencies including Inner West Council, Sydney Local Health District, Mission Australia and NSW Police, will join forces to reach out to the local homeless population offering face-to-face assistance.

"Aiming for the magical zero is within our sights – by working together we believe we have the best chance of making a real impact on homelessness in our neighbourhood," explains Liz Yeo, CEO of NNC.

The program aims to provide every rough sleeper in Newtown with an individual pathway to appropriate accommodation, linking them with caseworkers who can provide support for essential services.

"Sometimes it's really hard to reach out for help as it can be intimidating navigating which services provide what. The outreach program ensures that support is offered to all those in need, as we'll be going to them with all the resources they need to get off the streets," continued Liz.

Inner West Council quickly jumped on board to participate in the pilot program, based on a similar model in the Ashfield area:

"We've had outstanding results over the past 12 months in Ashfield", said newly elected Inner West Council Mayor, Darcy Byrne.

"Through our annual street count program, our staff have a general idea as to where rough sleepers are setting up. With this information the group have been able to reach out to people who have been homeless for many years, so we're expecting a similar positive outcome in Newtown," continued Mayor Byrne.

Manager of the Community Strengthening Team at NNC, Elaine Macnish, who developed the initiative, hopes to run it until the need no longer exists:

"It's been well documented how our city's affordable housing crisis is forcing many people onto the streets. We may not be able to fix the big picture problem quickly, but there are ways we can ease the burden for people who are doing it most tough."

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre programs are funded by a combination of sources including grants and fundraising. New initiatives such as this outreach program are made possible through fundraising events like the recent Newtopian Dream sleepout and the upcoming [Newtown Festival](#).

Should you wish to support these kinds of local initiatives to tackle homelessness and advocate for affordable housing, please visit: <http://www.newtowncentre.org/donate.html>

### Newtown Neighbourhood Centre

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre exists to create a more inclusive, resilient, vibrant and self-reliant community. We are a not-for-profit incorporated association serving Sydney's inner western suburbs. The Centre works closely with boarding house residents through its Boarding House Outreach Service, and offers forums for boarding house owners twice yearly.

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