aaeh australian alliance to end homelessness

Solving Homelessness
How we can end homelessness in Australia

Report by Mr David Pearson

2021 Churchill Fellow awarded to study overseas efforts to end homelessness by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust

Interim Report - May 2022

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David Pearson, 28 May 2022

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(Image: Public Art Installation, Downtown Seattle, USA)

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Acknowledgement of Country

I acknowledge the Kaurna people on whose lands I live and work, and pay my respect to elders past and present. In a spirit of reconciliation, I also acknowledge that homelessness is a concept brought to the lands now known as Australia through the process of colonisation and that this has left a lasting legacy of disparity and inequity.[1] Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are also more likely to experience housing insecurity, ill health and homelessness than non-Aboriginal people. For example, the forcible removal from traditional homelands continues to this day to undermine access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to secure and stable housing.[2] Greater focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander homelessness is needed and recommendations in that regard are made in this report.

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge how incredibly grateful I am to a range of people and organisations for enabling, encouraging and supporting the Churchill Fellowship that made this report possible. Including:

- The Winston Churchill Trust and the Churchill Fellows Association of South Australia.
- The other Churchill Fellows who encouraged and supported me to apply and assisted with the planning for my trips.
- Everyone I met whilst travelling - the organisations and individuals who were incredibly generous with their time and knowledge.
- A special thanks to the entire team at Community Solutions (CS) - in particular my friend and colleague Rian Watt. To Tim Richter and Marie Morison at the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH), Deb DeSantis and Liz Drapa at the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) and the ever-helpful Lydia Stazen at the Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH).
- The AAEH board, staff and collaborators - and particularly our Chair Karyn Walsh who is always available and willing to chat, share and strategise.
- AAEH Board Member and 2007 Churchill Fellow, Felicity Reynolds, whose report "Programs That Assist Vulnerable And Complex Chronically Homeless People" has been the foundation from which I have built my own fellowship, but also helped inspire the creation of the AAEH, the organisation I lead today.
- I also wish to acknowledge my endlessly-supportive partner in life, Dr Jill MacKenzie, for not just supporting but encouraging me to take the time to dive ever deeper into the world of ending homelessness.
- And last but not least all of those people with lived experience of homelessness who so generously spent time with me and shared their insights and stories.

Trigger Warning

Please note that this report discussed suicide and mental illness which may be triggering for some readers.

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[1] Anderson, P (2020) *Lowitja O'Donoghue Oration*, Don Dunstan Foundation
"Lowitja O'Donoghue Oration: 2020 Pat Anderson". Don Dunstan Foundation. Retrieved 13 February 2022
[2] Australian Human Right Commission (2022) *Education: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples*
https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/education/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islanders-australias-first-peoples

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"Homelessness is not a moral failure of people, it is a moral failure of society - it is immoral to choose eviction over extreme wealth inequality".
- Donald Whitehead - National Coalition for the Homelessness, USA

To end homelessness you need an "unwavering belief that this is possible...[and] a voracious appetite to learn".
- Jake Maguire - Community Solutions, USA

"This is literally a life or death issue, we need to act with a sense of urgency, but simultaneously take the long term view. Short-term solutions aren't helping anyone".
- Jeff Olivet, US Interagency Council on Homelessness

"You could make many homelessness responses twice as effective if you managed the system better, but the inclination is always there to fund direct services, it's inefficient. If you want to shift the dial, fund the improvements to the systems"
- Norman Suchar - U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

To end homelessness "you need to join up government policy and community-led organizing".
- Laurel Blatchford - Former Chief of Staff at the US Department of Housing and Urban Development

"Just as with climate change, we focus on the net reduction, not the programs that might get us there. The outcome of ending homelessness is what is most important".
- Philip Welkhoff - Gates Foundation, USA

"My proudest possession is the key to my home".
- Julie - Resident, Mercy Housing, Chicago, USA

Acronyms Guide

AA	Alcoholics Anonymous
AAEH	Australian Alliance to End Homelessness
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACI	Anchor Communities Initiatives (A Way Home Washington)
ACORN	Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now
AHVTT	Australian Homelessness Vulnerability Triage Tool
AIHW	Australian Institute for Health and Welfare
API	Associates for Process Improvement
AtoZ	Advance to Zero
A3HN	Australian Health, Housing and Homelessness Network
BIPOC	Black, Indigenous, and People of Color
BNL	By-Name List
CA	Coordinated Access
CAEH	Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness
CCCLM	Australian Council of Capital City Lord Mayors
CHP	Community Housing Provider
CLT	Community Land Trust
CoCs	Continuums of Care
CRA	Commonwealth Rent Assistance
CS	Community Solutions
CSI	Centre for Social Impact
CSH	Corporation for Supportive Housing
DESC	Downtown Emergency Service Centre (Seattle)
FEMA	US Federal Emergency Management Agency
FUSE	Frequent Users Systems Engagement (CSH, USA)
FZ	Functional Zero
HARC	Homelessness Advocacy, Research, and Collaboration Lab (Chicago)
HHS	US Department of Health and Human Services
HMIS	Homeless Management Information System
HRS	Homelessness Response System
HUD	US Department of Housing and Urban Development
IGH	Institute of Global Homelessness
IHI	Institute for Healthcare Improvement
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, or questioning
NA	Narcotics Anonymous
NHHA	National Housing and Homelessness Agreement
NIMBY	Not in my back yard
PDSA	Plan, Do, Study Act cycle
PSH	Permanent Supportive Housing
PIT	Point in Time Count
RBA	Results Based Accountability
SHLN	Supportive Housing Leadership Network
SHS	Specialist Homelessness Service
USA	United States of America
USICH	United States Interagency Council on Homelessness
VA	US Department of Veterans Affairs
YABs	Youth Advisory Boards
VI-SPDAT	Vulnerability Index - Service Prioritisation Decision Assistance Tool
WIFM	What's in it for me

Introduction

Ending homelessness is possible. This is not something I *believe*, any more than I *believe* in the human-induced nature of climate change. I *recognise* climate change is happening because scientists have demonstrated it with data. I similarly *recognise* that ending homelessness is possible because through the course of my Fellowship I met with a growing number of communities who are demonstrating that it is possible.

(Image: Community Solutions, USA)

Throughout the course of my fellowship, I asked everyone I met two simple questions - whether they be philanthropists, academics, CEOs, social workers, heads of government agencies, or people previously or currently living on the streets.

I asked
- **Is ending homelessness possible?**
- **Based on your experiences, what are the three most important things you think it would take to end homelessness?**

All answered the question 'is ending homelessness possible' in different ways, some hesitated or didn't answer for quite some time, but almost all eventually said 'yes'. In fact all but one person, out of everyone I met and through every conversation thought that ending homelessness was possible.

What they believed it would take was a combination of the following, in order of frequency:
- Leadership - firstly community leadership, then political
- Data - reliable, quality, real-time, person-centred
- Collaboration
- Funding / investment
- Better integration of health and other support services with housing
- Permanent supportive housing
- Curiosity, improvement and an ongoing willingness to learn
- More affordable housing, better income support and reducing inequality.

About this Report
This report is part one of two, covering the first stage of my Fellowship to the United States of America. A second report will cover the final stage, including Canada, England, Scotland and Finland.
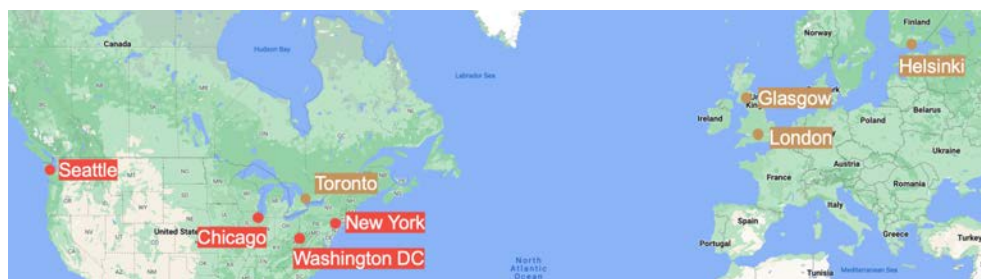
(Image: Google Maps, modified)

This report provides some background about me, the Fellowship, the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness and our work.

In the final report, I intend to share common themes and insights from the entire fellowship as well as some recommendations for action based on what I have learned. I have shared notes from the various meetings, conversations and visits I had and from which the recommendations are/will be drawn.

Given the change of Federal Government during the first stage of my Fellowship, I have included recommendations for the Australian Government in this report for a number of reasons:

- It is where the largest change can happen.
- It is the overwhelming focus of my Fellowship given I lead a national organisation.
- The new Federal Labor Government has committed to developing a National Plan on Housing and Homelessness.
- The National Housing and Homelessness Agreement[3] is currently being reviewed by the Productivity Commission.
- These recommendations can help inform both the new national plan and the revised National Agreement.
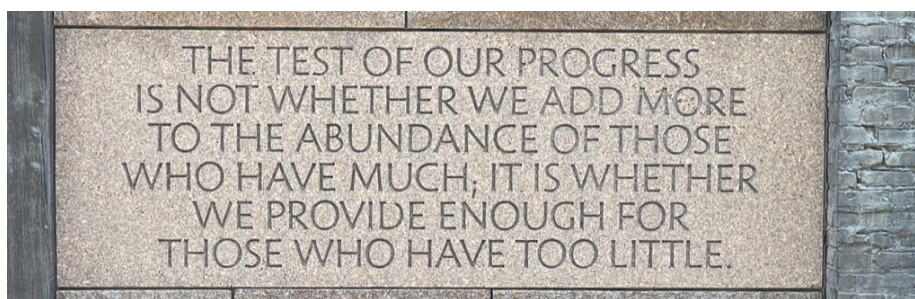
(Image: Franklin D Roosevelt Memorial, Washington DC, USA)

What can we learn from the United States?
I recognise that it seems strange to look to the United States for inspiration on how to solve homelessness. When I told people I was visiting the US to learn about efforts to end homelessness, some were outright dismissive of the idea that there is or was anything we could learn from the US about ending homelessness. They believed that the home of Skid Row[4] and the nation enduring abject poverty at a scale unparalleled in the developed world was not the kind of place that Australia could learn much from.

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[3] The National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) is the mechanism by which the Commonwealth Government provides around $1.6 billion each year to states and territories to improve Australians' access to secure and affordable housing.

[4] Skid Row, an area near downtown Los Angeles, contains one of the largest ongoing populations of people experiencing homeless in the United States.

(Image: Australia / USA Map Comparison)[5]

I obviously disagree, having chosen the United States as the first place to visit on my Fellowship. The reality is that what unites Australia and the USA is far greater than what separates us - and I certainly learned a great deal. Australia is a lot more like the USA than many in Australia recognise.

This report sets out what we can learn from the USA about what to do, and what not to do. During my visit, I was able to meet with communities that have actually ended homelessness for particular cohorts - for example, Arlington Country, Virginia in relation to veteran's homelessness.

There were, however, a number of key take-outs from my time in the US that really stood out:

- Ending Homelessness - it is part of the lexicon. People talk about ending homelessness so much more than in Australia. The language of ending homelessness, or what it means (to make it rare, brief and non-recurring), is very much part of government strategy and policy documents, organisation strategic mission statements, and even in the names of a vast number of organisations. National Alliance to End Homeless played a central role in changing the conversation - especially through their call for communities to develop local Community Action Plans and for associated technical support. An ending homelessness strategy is important because when communities align around that common goal, it transforms the way we think and act. Of course, we need more investment in housing and homelessness, but an ending homelessness strategy puts the focus on things like collaboration, data prevention and systems change - all of which are also needed if ending homelessness is to be possible. Australian communities and governments need to adopt strategies that seek to <u>end</u> homelessness.
- Permanent Supportive Housing - The US has a system of permanent supportive housing (PSH). Australia does not. We have a small number of facilities that operate as separate services, that have by and large struggled to maintain the 'supportive' part of PSH. Discussion regarding housing and homelessness in Australia focuses almost entirely on the need for more social housing - for which there is a clear need. Too little consideration is given to what type of housing is needed in advocacy and policy discussions in Australia. Conversely, in the US the need for more permanent supportive housing - that is housing that comes with support (quite often onsight) seems to be a much more dominant part of policy and advocacy efforts. If we are to end homelessness in Australia we need a permanent supportive housing system.
- Health and Homelessness - as the US health system has so many inequities and barriers to access, and because the homelessness service system is such an integral part of the social safety net in the US - healthcare has been

[5] Blog Website, accessed 30 May 2022, https://blog.done.gr/snifsnif/comparisons

integrated into homelessness services in a way that would be the envy of many communities in Australia.

Background

The following sections provide further background on me, the AAEH and its work. A large focus of my Fellowship was meeting with people and organisations, and testing assumptions and strategies that underpin my work in Australia as a leader of the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness, as well as the Advance to Zero Campaign, and the Advance to Zero Methodology on which the campaign is based. For further information about my itinerary and who I met, see Appendix A. For further background on a number of the concepts in this report, see Appendix B.

The Churchill Fellowship

In late 2021, I was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to explore how communities around the world are seeking to reduce and end homelessness. Churchill Fellowships are awarded by the Churchill Trust and they provide financial assistance to Australians from all walks of life who want to further their search for excellence overseas.

Many fellowships and scholarships currently available in Australia have a narrow focus and are awarded according to a rigid set of criteria. The Churchill Trust, however, has a broad focus and awards Churchill Fellowships based on the individual merit of each applicant and their project, whatever their passion, specialisation or qualifications may be.

My fellowship enabled me to focus on the very broad goal of what it takes to end homelessness.

More information about Churchill Fellowships can be found at:
www.churchilltrust.com.au

About Me
- I recognise that ending homelessness is possible and that it is not normal or something we should accept.
- I have worked towards this goal in a range of roles in the community, government, university, and philanthropic sectors, including currently as the CEO of the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness where I am working to build a national movement of communities seeking to end homelessness in Australia - starting with rough seeping.
- In 2020 I received a Kenneth Myer Innovation Fellowship which enabled me to take on the role of inaugural CEO of the AAEH.
- I am also a Senior Advisor with the Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH).
- Before holding these roles I was the Executive Director of the Don Dunstan Foundation,where I helped lead the establishment and development of the Adelaide Zero Project, a nation-leading initiative seeking to end rough sleeping homelessness in the inner city.
- Prior to this I was the Senior Policy Adviser to several South Australian Premiers and Commonwealth Government Ministers in a range of portfolio areas including mental health, health, housing, homelessness, child protection, education, innovation, the arts, treasury, planning and urban development, public sector reform and others.
- I have a Bachelor of International Studies and a Bachelor of Media, with Honours in Politics and Public Policy from the University of Adelaide.

- I am currently also a director of the Adelaide Fringe Festival, Chair of the Fringe Festival Foundation, and Deputy Chair of Community Bridging Services SA.
- In 2019 I was recognised as one of the top 40 Under 40 leaders in South Australia.
- I live in the inner city of Adelaide, Australia, and am married to Dr Jill MacKenzie and father to Sophie MacKenzie-Pearson.

The AAEH

- The Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (AAEH) is an independent champion for preventing and ending homelessness in Australia.
- We recognise that the scale of homelessness in Australia is both preventable and solvable and that despite the common misconception, we can end homelessness in Australia.
- While Australia is one of the most prosperous and livable countries in the world, many individuals and families continue to be trapped in a cycle of homelessness, often transitioning from unstable accommodation to emergency shelters to rough sleeping. This can continue for many years resulting in a state of chronic homelessness.
- We are a community of practice that has, since 2013, supported organisations and local communities to work collaboratively to end homelessness in Australia, starting with this group of chronically homeless people.
- We work across sectors, industries and levels of government to ensure everyone has access to the housing and support they need so that any future incidents of homelessness that do occur are rare, brief and a one-time occurrence.
- This is how we define an end to rough sleeping, and we measure this - through our Advance to Zero Campaign: by seeking to achieve functional zero homelessness by supporting communities to demonstrate, with real-time data, that their housing and homelessness system is able to support more people into permanent housing than are coming into that system - not just at a point in time, but over time.
- Through the Advance to Zero Campaign and our Training And Advisory Services, we support Australian communities to individually and collectively end homelessness.
- Our work is evidence-based and informed by a global network of expertise and knowledge built up by some of the most innovative, credible and successful international efforts to end homelessness.
- We are modelled on the highly successful National Alliance to End Homlessness in the USA and the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness.
- We also work closely with an organisation called Community Solutions to train and coach a range of Australian communities as well as a range of other leading international organisations like the Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH), OrgCode (Canada), The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (USA and Australia), and many others.
- We recognise that ending homelessness cannot be achieved by any one individual, organisation or level of government. It required collaboration, data and coordinated effort from a broad range of organisations and individuals.
- We seek to bring together all of those who share a commitment to ending homelessness through a series of Allied Networks that work with

practitioners, policymakers, academics, corporate and community leaders across industries and sectors.

- These networks seek to support greater collaboration, to build an increased understanding of the complex and interconnected causes of homelessness, to support shared advocacy and to raise awareness that homelessness is solvable.
- Ultimately, the AAEH exists to bring community, business and government together to inspire action for an end to homelessness in Australia.

The Advance to Zero Campaign

- The Advance to Zero (AtoZ) Campaign is a ground-breaking national initiative of the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (AAEH) that supports local collaborative community efforts to end homelessness, starting with rough sleeping - one community at a time.
- Using a range of proven approaches from around the world, communities are supported not just to address individual instances of homelessness, or even reduce overall homelessness, but to end it.
- The Campaign itself is a collaboration (or what's sometimes called a Collective Impact initiative) between a broad range of communities, organisations and individuals that are all committed to making homelessness rare, brief and a one-time occurrence - how we define an end to homelessness.
- The Advance to Zero (AtoZ) Campaign utilises a methodology that has been developed by the various partners of the AAEH across Australia and brings together knowledge of what is working from efforts around the world.
- The Campaign supports community-based efforts to build public support for ending homelessness and political support for renewed Commonwealth, State and Local Government investment in the type of housing, support services and healthcare needed to end homelessness in each community.
- A key way in which this is done is though supporting communities to collect consistent data (in their community, and across Australia) through a common assessment tool that can providing guidance in ending individuals homelesness, but also the community wide data needed to support community advocacy and government planning.

How it works

- The AAEH supports communities participating in the Campaign through a series of six-monthly improvement cycles, where communities work together, build capacity and share knowledge, tools and lessons.
- The Campaign is supported by a series of Allied Networks focused on particular sectors like health, business or veterans, places like states and territories, or service models like the Common Ground and Youth Foyer communities of practice.
- With our international and domestic partners, the AAEH provides training, coaching and other infrastructure or tools based support through these improvement cycles.
- Whilst the Campaign starts with rough sleeping, it does not finish there. Some communities also focus on all chronic homelessness, families, veterans and others.

- Our strategy, based on what has worked overseas, is to break the problem up - to focus on a cohort and in a place.
- Importantly, the strategy does not seek to count up to the goal of housing more and more people but to change the system and count down to the goal of making homelessness rare, brief and a one-time occurrence.
- It is by focusing on this system change outcome and putting the individual needs of the people experiencing homelessness at the centre of that system, that we can actually end homelessness.

Background: Counting Up to Counting Down
- The AtoZ Campaing is modeded on the sucessfull Built For Zero Campaings in the USA, Canada and elsewhere. These efforts were very much informed by the lessons from the 100,000 Homes Campaign run by Community Solutions.
- The key lesson of that campaign was that despite reaching their target of housing 100,000 people preoviously sleeping rough - they weren't able to reduce homelessnes by anywhere near 100,000 people.
- They realised that rather than just processing people through broken systems quicker, they need to change the way those systems work. Put another way, they realised that they were counting the wrong way - rather than counting up to the goal of a set number of people being housed, they needed to count down to the goal of ending homelessness.
- The AtoZ Campaign builds on the early work of communities across Australia, with the support of the AAEH, that south to mirror campaigns similar to the 100,000 Homes Campaing.
- They conducting connections weeks and measured progress by setting targets to demonstrate the impact of housing people was having on reducing homelessness.
- Connections week's are community campaigns that identify by name who is homeless, what their health and housing needs are and then sought to meet them in order to end their homelessness.

The Advance to Zero Methodology

We know that ending homelessness is possible because more and more communities are demonstrating it around the world all the time. The Advance to Zero Methodology has been developed to help guide efforts to end homelessness in Australia, based on what is working around the world and what we've learned from efforts so far in Australia.

The methodology is driven by a shared vision to end all homelessness, starting with rough sleeping.

A Shared Vision A→⁰

To end all homelessness in Australia, starting with rough sleeping, by ensuring that when it does occur it is rare, brief one-time.

Homelessness is a complex problem. In recognition of this, our efforts to end homelessness must be able to respond to this complexity. That's why we have identified four different 'approaches' that should be taken to the problem and eight proven solutions as set out below:

Four Approaches to Ending Homelessness			
A Housing First approach.	A person-centered, strengths based approach.	An evidence based systems change approach.	A place-based Collective Impact approach to collaboration.

- **Housing First** - the commitment to provide immediate access to housing with no housing readiness requirements, whilst simultaneously working with people to promote recovery and wellbeing.
- **Person-centred and strengths-based** - a commitment to put the person sleeping rough at the centre of the service system, to build on their strengths to support an end to their homelessness. Listening to the voices of people with a lived experience of homelessness is central to this approach.
- **Evidence-based systems change** - a commitment to seek to change the entire system of support for people experiencing homelessness, not just individual services, and to do so based on what the data and evidence show the people in that system need.
- **A place-based Collective Impact approach to collaboration** - Commitment to work together in a specific place and in a coordinated way that holds everyone involved accountable to reach our shared goal of ending street homelessness.

In addition, there are eight proven solutions that need to be implemented in a way consistent with each of the four approaches to ending homelessness, these solutions are:

Eight Proven Solutions	
Assertive Outreach	Continuous Improvement
Common Assessment	Data-Driven Prevention
A Real-Time By-Name List	Data-Informed System Advocacy
Coordinated Systems	More of the Right Housing & Support

- **Assertive outreach** – street outreach efforts are essential to helping to identify and support people who feel unsafe or otherwise unable to come into traditional services - including through the use of Connections (or Registry) Weeks.
- **Common Assessment** - Supporting these efforts is a common assessment tool (i.e. the VI-SPDAT) that enables the collection of data on individual needs so that they can be assessed and recommended for support in a consistent, evidence-informed way.
- **A real-time, quality, by-name list** – of people experiencing homelessness and their individual needs, provides a shared understanding, or quality data, to inform who needs support, whether efforts are working, how to best target resources, and how to improve the service system as a whole. It enables scarce housing and support to be triaged according to local priorities and it enables a prevention focus, better advocacy and the implementation of the Housing First approach.
- **Coordinated systems** – a community-wide coordinated approach to delivering services, supports and housing that is strategic and data-driven to allocate resources and deliver services equitably, efficiently, and effectively. This includes having structures, and documented practices, for housing allocation, case conferencing and system-level troubleshooting.
- **Continuous improvement** – is about building problem-solving capability across a system through an ongoing process of learning, testing and

adopting new ideas and ways that build on the successful efforts to drive reductions in homelessness through cycles of improvement. It is about shifting mindsets.

- Data-driven prevention – the use of data and continuous improvement practices to reduce the 'inflow' of people entering into rough sleeping through a range of prevention and early intervention measures.
- Data-informed system advocacy – using data to campaign for changes in policies and practices of government and organisations and of the attitudes and behaviours within the community to effect broad-based calls for social change that are needed to prevent and end all homelessness.
- More of the right housing and support – using real-time data from the by-name list to support better systems planning and advocacy to get access to more of the right housing and support needed to support people exitinghomelessness to sustain their tenancy - particularly permanent supportive housing for those with the most acute needs and chronic experiences of rough sleeping.

We understand that this is a lot for any one community to process. That is why we have developed five improvement cycles to support communities wanting to end homelessness to break up the problem and start the journey.

It starts with seeking to build what we generally call a Zero Project, a Collective Impact initiative that helps to implement this methodology step by step over time through a series of improvement cycles. In Queensland, these Zero Projects are generally called Zero Campaigns, and in New South Wales they are called End Street Sleeping Collaborations. As communities work their way through each improvement cycle, a range of support tools, coaching, training and other resources have been or are being developed. These include:

	- Action Planning - where communities develop a collaborative action plan to help get key stakeholders on the same page, set targets, allocate tasks, agree to next steps and build an improvement team who is responsible for getting to zero.
	- Quality By-Name List - where communities work to build a comprehensive real-time, by-name list of people experiencing rough sleeping homelessness in their community.
	- Reduce to Zero - where communities use a range of solutions, tools and approaches - including triage, improvement science and data-driven advocacy to drive monthly reductions in homelessness.
	- Sustaining Zero - for communities that have achieved functional zero, they seek to sustain it.

- **Zero for All*** - communities expand their focus to new target populations and greater geographical areas to continue the campaign drive toward ending all homelessness.

* = not necessarily sequential

Why Rough Sleeping

The Advance to Zero Campaign, just like the Built for Zero Campaigns in the USA and Canada, focus on rough sleeping. This is not because this type of homelessness is more important than any other type of homelessness - but because we are trying to demonstrate that ending homelessness is possible in Australia.

To do that, learning the lessons from overseas, we have sought to focus our efforts, on a cohort or type of homelessness and in a place.

We recognise that we need to start somewhere, and if everything is a priority, then nothing is a priority.

Communities don't need to work exclusively on rough sleeping, some focus on rough sleeping and chronic homelessness (i.e. people who have a long-term experience of homelessness), some focus on rough sleeping and families, or rough sleeping and youth.

Whilst the statistical categories of rough sleeping, couch surfing, overcrowding and others are important, from the perspective of the people experiencing homelessness, they are often meaningless because people move between all of these types of homelessness on a regular, sometimes daily basis.

Ultimately we want to end all homelessness, but we want to start by lifting the social safety net off the street in Australia. That's the standard we are trying to set through the AtoZ campaign - to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring.

In addition, we also focus on rough sleeping because:
- It has been increasing, and it's visibility has been increasing in most capital cities across Australia, raising community and political awareness about homelessness and the need for solutions for all forms of homelessness.
- It can reduce a person's life expectancy by up to 30 years, leading to deaths of people living on the streets from often preventable illnesses.
- It is more costly to governments to leave the problem of chronic rough sleeping unaddressed than it is to provide permanent housing. In fact, it is $13,100 cheaper per year, per person.
- The overrepresentation of First Nation people and people with a disability in the evidence been collected creates an urgency and a call to action
- It is the most prominent form of inequality in our community - when we leave this unaddressed, it starts to pull communities apart. When larger and larger groups of people start to sleep rough, it creates conflict in local communities that often lead to a 'hardening' of community attitudes and

often counterproductive policy responses.

Commonwealth Government Recommendations

The following recommendations are a result of the Churchill Fellowship, the many conversations I had, the varied resources I read along the way and of course my ongoing work leading the AAEH. They are self evidently not the result of any ongoing or detailed consultation process - which I acknowledge I would ideally like to conduct. For now, this is beyond the scope of this Churchill Fellowship (though it is something the AAEH intends to address in time).

Support community-led efforts to End Homelessness

Measurement
- You can't change what you don't measure and in Australia, we don't really measure the amount of homelessness that exists.
- The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) estimates homelessnessevery five years in the census - but it is an estimate as there is no explicit question about homelessness in the census.
- Homelessness services are required to report to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) on the effectiveness of their efforts at helping the individuals who access their services, as well as the number of people they turn away. This can be up to 260 people a day.[6]
- Various state and territory governments in Australia conduct what are called point-in-time (PIT) street counts, which are a measure of the number of homeless people on a specific day (hence the point-in-time reference). This type of counting is known as "taking a snapshot" of the situation.[7] They do not, however, identify people by name and there is a lot of variation in how these PIT counts are conducted.
- None of these efforts add up to what many call 'actionable intelligence' about what is going on in their community regarding homelessness.

The By-Name List
- Community Solutions in the US have advocated the adoption of real-time by-name lists because homelessness is a dynamic problem, which changes night to night, from person to person (See Appendix B for more information about by-name lists).
- Developing a real-time, quality, by-name list of people experiencing homelessness and their individual needs provides a shared understanding to inform who needs support, whether efforts are working, how to best target resources, and how to improve the service system as a whole.
    - A 'quality' by-name list (BNL) in this context means that you have the vast majority of providers feeding into the list, you have it shared, and community-owned, and you have had the list certified as quality by the AAEH, utilising our by-name list scorecard. A by-name list is not just a static list of names that one or even a handful of agencies have, or even a dynamic list that only a handful of agencies have.
- Such a BNL enables scarce housing and support to be triaged according to local priorities and it enables a prevention focus, better advocacy and supports the implementation of the Housing First approach (see Appendix B

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[6] https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/dec/11/homeless-services-turn-away-260-people-daily-due-to-lack-of-accommodation
[7] https://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/monitoring-progress/point-time-counts

for more background).

- Ultimately, it gives a real-time feedback loop as to whether a community's improvement efforts to end homelessness are working - not just at an individual or service provider level, but across a community/system.
- The AAEH is supporting over 25 communities to develop by-name lists in Australia - an important element of these by-name lists is that they have been driven and continued to be 'owned' by the community.
- In order to build a quality BNL there needs to be trust and consent from the people experiencing homelessness. This is much easier to get if the data is owned by a community collaboration that has the sole purpose of ending homelessness, as opposed to governments which include law enforcement, child protection and other agencies that have the powers of compulsion.

Utilise the Advance to Zero Methodology

- The AAEH has supplemented what we have learned from Community Solutions about by-name lists and other solutions with knowledge from around the world, including through this fellowship, about what it takes to end homelessness.
- This knowledge is summarised in the Advance to Zero Methodology or Theory of Change, with further information in the background section of this report.

Recommendation 1: The Commonwealth Government support the rollout of the Advance to Zero Methodology through the renegotiation of the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement.

- AS Norman Suchar, from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, told me: "you could make many homelessness responses twice as effective if you managed the system better, but the inclination is always there to fund direct services, it's inefficient. If you want to shift the dial, fund the improvements to the systems."
- Commonwealth Government financial support is urgently needed because efforts to implement the system-wide AtoZ methodology to date have largely been funded through:
  - time-limited philanthropy;
  - some, generally once off, local government grants;
  - within the existing already stretched resources of the specialist homelessness services (SHS), and;
  - a limited number of state government grants, usually once off.
- None of this is sustainable or is a solid foundation from which to build the foundations for the long-term efforts required to demonstrate that ending homelessness is possible.
- In addition, the evidence from around the world is that innovation is better achieved through community efforts then prescribed by government.
- Consideration should be given to the Commonwealth directly funding local Zero Projects, rather than passing the funding through the States and Territories.
- If we are serious about ending homelessness then we need to fund it, and this need not, and should not, come at the expense of other efforts to deal with the broader problem of overall homelessness, or the even broader problem of housing unaffordability in Australia.

Recommendation 2: The Commonwealth Government urgently directly support financially community-led efforts, utilising the Advance to Zero Methodology, in Australia.

A National Homelessness and Health Equity Policy

Throughout my Fellowship, it seemed apparent to me that health services are much more integrated into housing and homelessness services in the USA than they are in Australia. There is no doubt many reasons for this, chief amongst them in my experience was the fact that the homelessness systems acts as a much bigger part of the social safety net in the USA as they don't have as equitable access to healthcare or as comprehensive an income support system as Australia. As a result, there are some outstanding examples of integrated health and homelessness services.

Homelessness needs to be seen as a health issue as much as it is a housing issue. This was the case before the COVID-19 pandemic, and it's particularly the case now. The failure to better integrate our health and homelessness responses is one reason why people who sleep rough are likely to die up to 30 years earlier than those with stable housing and is why an estimated 424 people die whilst experiencing rough sleeping homelessness in Australia each year.[8]

Based on my Fellowship experiences and the existing work of the AAEH and its Australian Health, Housing and Homelessness Network (A3HN), the following have been developed.

Recommendation 3: The Commonwealth Government Department of Health develop a National Homelessness and Health Equity Policy, that supports:
   A. A taskforce – on health equity, housing and homelessness to develop a national policy response in collaboration with State Governments, Primary Healthcare Networks and the community sector. Included in this policy should be a nationally consistent commitment of no exits into homelessness for people who are discharged from institutional care, including hospitals.
   B. Funding for health and homelessness services – Funding needs to be provided, through Primary Healthcare Networks, for assertive intervention services embedded in community homelessness services in every state and territory. Such funding needs to be provided with maximum flexibility to fill the medical and outreach service gaps in local communities and to respond to the unique health needs of the people experiencing homelessness in them. Homelessness doesn't occur in normal business hours and so we need to make sure that community-based primary health care and psychiatric responses are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year - to complement and reduce pressure on acute services (i.e. hospitals).
   C. A national network – The Commonwealth Government should support the AAEH to operate the Australian Health, Housing and Homelessness Network (A3HN) that brings together a broad range of health, community organisations, professionals and people with a lived experience to better integrate these sectors, to build capacity, problem solve and support the efforts of communities seeking to end homelessness from a health perspective. Such networks have proven very effective in the USA and Canada - in particular in bridging the health data to the table to support efforts to reduce homelessnes repeat presentations at emergency departmnets and avoidable hospitalisations.
   D. Funding certainty – Funding uncertainty is a big barrier to the effectiveness of service delivery both in the communities I visited and in Australia. Existing

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[8] https://aaeh.org.au/assets/docs/MEDIA-RELEASE_-%E2%80%98Housing-is-healthcare%E2%80%99_-Renewed-calls-for-urgent-Australian-Government-action-on-rough-sleeping-homelessness.docx.pdf

funding arrangements between Primary Healthcare Networks and health, homelessness and vulnerably housed services should be secured with a baseline commitment for a five-year period, rather than the short-term, ad hoc funding arrangements that so many are subject to. This will give services the certainty they need to operate with much greatest effectiveness.

E. Funding equity – The Commonwealth Government should widen policy settings to allow medical practitioners to bill under Medicare for street-based and outreach consultations - but also ensure these services are integrated into community-wide efforts to end homelessness.

F. A deaths data reporting framework - A range of corunties around the world have been more successful than Australia in enumerating the number of people who have died whilst experiencing homlessness. The Australian Institute of Healt and Welfare (AIHW) should be commissioned to develop a nationally consistent homlessness deaths data reporting framework.

G. Chronic Definition - No common definition of what constitutes chronic homlessness exists in Australia. The National Homelessness and Health Equity Policy should define or committ to defining one.

H. A Special National Cabinet meeting – Recognising the urgency of this task, the Federal Government should call a special National Cabinet meeting of health and homelessness ministers to consider, support others and drive the implementation of the National Homelessness and Health Equity Policy.

Intergovernmental and Interagency Coordination to End Homelessness

- Homelessness is not the problem, it is the result of the problem. Homelessness is what happens when other government service systems let vulnerable people down. Child protection systems, income support, the veteran's support systems, mental health, corrections, disability, aged care, migration the list goes on.
- This is a refrain that I heard time and again during my fellowship, and through my travels throughout Australia.
- Homelessness is such a complex issue that no government can solve it alone. They need to work with other levels of government (Commonwealth, state and local) and they need to work across the various arms of that level of government.
- To improve these systems, we need to engage them, across government. The Commonwealth Government needs to play a role in this and it needs a mechanism to do so.
- In the United States the Interagency Council on homelessness, established by the White House provides that mechanism there. Australia needs something similar.

Recommendation 4: The Commonwealth Government establish an Interagency Council on Ending Homelessness, to support the engagement of Commonwealth service delivery agencies relevant to ending homelessness, including in disability, aged care, primary health, veterans, social security, etc. It should be supported by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Recommendation 5: The Commonwealth Government make having state based, across government, and intergovernmental coordination mechanisms in place a requirement of funding as part of the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement funding.

Reduce to Zero: Ending Homelessness Flexible Fund

- Money matters. In the USA they have a plethora of government voucher programs and initiatives across federal, state, regional and local government agencies. They also have a substantially larger philanthropic sector and a well-established business culture of corporate giving than Australia.
- So much investment in health, human services and homelessness goes into responding to need, rather than solving problems.
- The role of brokerage or flexible funding has been essential to a range of communities around the world and Australian communities seeking to end homelessness - they need greater access to such funding to enable the innovations, improvements, and solutions needed to drive reductions in homelessness - particularly in relation to prevention.
- Organisations like All Chicago for example have been successful in collecting funding through a range of sources and directing them through brokerage funds to support the system change efforts needed to drive reductions.
- The National Alliance to End Homelessness has also advocated for these types of funds, as what drives people to sleep rough is varied, but often very small issues, and a small amount of flexible funding can go a long way in helping prevent the catastrophic consequences that even a short experience of rough sleeping can cause.

Recommendation 6: The Commonwealth Government establish a 'Reduce to Zero: Ending Homelessness Flexible Fund' to support efforts to drive and sustain reductions in people experiencing homelessness through the Advance to Zero Campaign - with a particular focus on prevention and diversion activities.

Permanent Supportive Housing

- One of the most impressive parts of my visit to the United States was visiting the many Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) services. For more information about permanent supportive housing see Appendix B.
- The US truly has a supportive housing system, rather than just a collection of supportive housing facilities - which exists in Australia and many of which have struggled to maintain the 'supportive' part of supportive housing.
- In Australia we had a wave of permanent supportive housing built as a consequence first of the Social Inclusion efforts of the South Australian Rann Government, and then the Rudd Government's 'The Road Home' homelessness policy and investments.
- From time to time, some new services have been built by state governments, but one of the most surprising things for me, after witnessing the maturity of this type of housing in the US, is how friendless permanent supportive housing seems to be in Australia.
- There are no peak bodies who focus on advocating for this type of housing at a national level, there are very few organisations and individuals who even seem to understand what it is and how it differs from general social housing.
- Most of the public servants and sector leaders who were involved in the initial waves of building supportive housing in Australia have moved on to other roles. What little discussion there is regarding permanent supportive housing seems to focus on if the supportive housing should be on scattered site or single site models. All of this needs to change.
- Supportive housing is the type of housing that we know is needed to end the experience of those who have a long term, or chronic experience of homelessness and multiple and often intergenerational needs arising from poverty and trauma.

- Not everyone who has slept rough needs this type of housing, but for those who do, it not only saves lives, literally, it is also cheaper for taxpayers. The Corporation for Supportive Housing in the USA has done a lot of work to demonstrate this.
- Other groups such as the New York Supportive Housing Network have done a lot to build the network of these types of services because a really important part of the model is that while they are permanent, the goal should be to, overtime, graduate out of these types of expensive services and into social housing or private rental. This requires services working together as a system, rather than just individual agencies.

Recommendation 7: The Australian Government ask an agency like the Productivity Commission to determine what the level of unmet need for supportive housing is in Australia and most importantly, what it would take to end chronic rough sleeping homelessness.

Recommendation 8: The Commonwealth Government establish a Permanent Supportive Housing Fund for capital and services to meet the immediate needs of those experiencing chronic homelessness, tying such investments to communities across Australia that are seeking to end homelessness. The Government should also investigate the creation of a Commonwealth Rent Assitance (CRA) top-up for people who have an experience of chronic rough sleeping homelessness to ensure we can prevent future instances of chronic homelessness from occurring.

Recommendation 9: The Commonwealth Government support the AAEH to establish a National Permanent Supportive Housing Network, to guide the development of local supportive housing systems in Australia, build understanding, improve practice, and help to ensure that when we do build PSH that they stay permanent supportive housing.

A National Housing and <u>Ending</u> Homelessness Plan
- We need a national plan on housing and homelessness. Not since the Rudd Labor Government released 'The Road Home' policy have we had this. However, what goes in it is really what matters.
- Ending homelessness needs to be the ambition, because what else is acceptable? The US Government has adopted policies of 'ending' homelessness. As the Built for Zero campaign has demonstrated, seeking to end homelessness has a hugely positive impact on how we see the problem and seek to address it.

Recommendation 10: The Commonwealth Government ensure that 'ending homelessness' is the ambition of the new housing and homelessness plan they have committed to developing.

- The plan also needs to include all of the recommendations above. This is what I think it will take to demonstrate that ending chronic rough sleeping homelessness in Australia is possible.
- To sustain an end to chronic homelessness and to support efforts to end all forms of homelessness, the above recommendations will not be enough - broader structural change is also required.
- What else needs to be considered in relation to the development of a National Housing and Ending homelessness Plan is to:
  - Build and upgrade more Social and Affordable Housing – to do this ultimately greater investment is needed. Many reports and proposals have outlined how more investment would support many thousands

of jobs and expand Australia's social housing by 30,000 homes.[9] Housing ought to be a right in Australia, just as access to health care or aged care is. It currently is not because we lack sufficient housing and support.

○ Make Income Support Livable – It is broadly understood, and has been conclusively demonstrated, that the current rate of the JobSeeker payment, in particular, is not enough to stay above the poverty line and to avoid being driven into homelessness. Australia's social safety net should allow people to afford to put a roof over their heads and food on the table. The COVID-19 JobSeeker top-up should be reinstated.

Recommendation 11: The Commonwealth Government consider how to deliver greater investment in social housing and income support as part of the development of a national plan on housing and homelessness.

- Finally, there are a range of other structural factors that impact homelessness in Australia, which require greater consideration. This includes things like how child protection systems drive young people into homelessness, outdated drug and alcohol policies, and how other 'upstream' systems fail. This issue will receive greater focus throughout the rest of my Fellowship.
- The most significant other structural factor - that I did spend some time engaging with in the USA - is the need to tackle systemic racism and to Close the Gap in the indicators for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Australians.
- My Fellowship highlighted how a strong and sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and community-controlled sector - delivering high-quality services to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the country, is essential to efforts to end homelessness.

Recommendation 12: the Commonwealth Government needs to consider how as part of the National Plan and the renegotiated National Agreement they can redouble efforts, as committed to in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, to build the Aboriginal Community controlled sector, in particular those organisations that work on preventing and ending homelessness.

- Alongside the need to grow and support the Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO) sector, is the need to better support and grow the ATSI workforce in the existing homelessness response system's services.

Recommendation 13: the Commonwealth Government support the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ending Homelessness Network to provide a space for peer-to-peer support, develop training resources, sharing of best practices, and the development of advice and recommendations on ways to grow and better support the ATSI workforce within the existing housing, homelessness and other related sectors.

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[9] Building the Recovery, Community Housing Industry Association, May 2020, https://www.communityhousing.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/MediareleaseSHARP.pdf?x59559

Insights and Meeting Notes

The following section provides the notes from the various meetings and visits I undertook throughout my fellowship. These are my notes and have been used to inform the recommendations in this report. They were taken during and immediately after each meeting, reflecting broadly the basis of the conversation as well as insights and ideas they brought up for me. They should not be taken as a transcript of what was said or who said it. Instead, they help give greater context and background to the various recommendations either made or inspired by these conversations.

Chicago

Molly Brown - DePaul University

- Title: Professor of Clinical Community Psychology; Director of the Homeless Advocacy Research Collaboration Lab.
- Date: 9 May 2022

Continuums of Care (CoCs)

- The role of continuums of care, or CoC's was discussed and how we don't really have the concept in Australia - we have gateway services, i.e. phone lines to call and get access to support.
- The gateways in Australia can also be disconnected from the agencies providing the outreach or the case management - though every state has a different arrangement.
- Zero projects are a community-driven version of what CoC's are trying to do, whereas CoC's are required by government. There are lots of challenges with CoC's. For more background on continuums of care, see Appendix B.

Housing First

- We discussed the strong views that exist regarding housing first. Some argue for a particular model, with a particular caseload, others argue there needs to be greater flexibility.
- For more background on housing first, see Appendix B.
- Is housing first a framework, a policy, a service model, a philosophy or a systems change effort? Ultimately we agreed it is primarily a philosophy, and that when it comes to the service model debates, there needs to be flexibility.

HARC Lab

- The HARC (Homelessness Advocacy, Research, and Collaboration) Lab, is largely self-funding and has a very small team.
- Their advocacy work is driven by two core beliefs:
    - The root causes of homelessness are housing unaffordability, economic injustice, structural racism, and inadequate healthcare.
    - Access to safe, affordable, and accessible housing is a human right.
- They work with other advocacy or community organising groups to support advocacy. For example, Organization Neighborhoods for Equality: (ONE Northside) is a mixed-income, multi-ethnic, intergenerational organisation that unites our diverse communities. They seek to build collective power to eliminate injustice through bold and innovative community organising and accomplish this through developing grassroots leaders and acting together to effect change.

- The Center for Social Impact (CSI)[10] in Australia is a key partner of the AAEH and has nodes in Western Australia and South Australia that have been central to efforts to end homelessness in those two states.
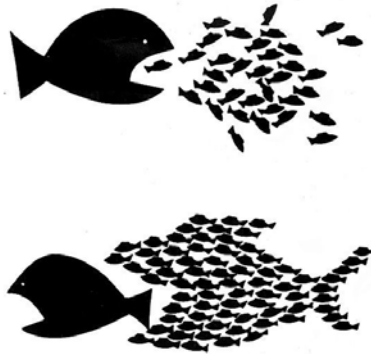
(Image: Don't panic, organise image, One Northside: Organising Neighbourhoods for Equality)[11]

Co-Lab
- There is significant community concern about homelessness, and without a way to channel that into integrated efforts to end homelessness, a lot of the time people will set up their own initiatives that can often pull in different directions. The HARC Lab is an effort in channeling that.
- Creating a Collaboration Laboratory (or Co-Lab) modelled on the HARC Lab in Chicago could be a great way for the Australian movement to build capacity and channel community enthusiasm for action into existing integrated efforts to end homelessness.
- The Co-Lab could have a series of nodes in the various Allied Networks of the AAEH including the Western Australian Alliance to End homelessness, the South Australian Alliance, the End Street Sleeping Collaboration in NSW, etc.
- It could be a place for interdisciplinary groups of students from various universities to come together to work on and support efforts to end homelessness - with a particular focus on communications, data analysis, improvement and advocacy.
- It could also be a place for volunteers from across the community to come together to learn about how they can support efforts to end homelessness and take action.
- Such efforts need to be supported. Universities provide the perfect place for this type of activity, as they have the classroom infrastructure to support collaborative working places, but organising and ongoing support of participants are needed. A business case for the idea needs to be developed.

Recommendation 14: The AAEH and its allied networks consider the creation of state-based Co-Lab's to build the capacity of community efforts to end homelessness.

The VI-SPDAT
- Ultimately, I could write a whole report just on the VI-SPDAT and the very strongly held views on it from various quarters.
- For more background on the VI-SPDAT and the replacement tool that the AAEH is seeking to develop with OrgCode, the Australian Homelessness Vulnerability Triage Tool (AHVTT), see Appendix B.
- The AAEH, along with OrgCode, the co-creators of the VI-SPDAT, train service coordination groups to make decisions and not delegate decision making to

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[10] https://www.csi.edu.au
[11] http://onenorthside.org/resources/

the scoring component of the tool. We also find consistent data collection incredibly useful for advocacy/system planning purposes.
- We argue that the challenge with cultural appropriateness and structural racism is with society, our practice, broader policy settings and not solely with the tool itself. All of these things need to be taken into account when making allocation decisions.

Accuracy Issues
- Molly's view was that a key challenge with the tool is self-reporting. Her research has found that homeless people with mental illness generally produce reliable and valid self-reports; however, self-reported psychotic symptoms and substance use issues are less reliable and often underreported. Valid in this context means that it measures what it claims to measure and reliable in that the results of the assessment are consistent.
- Molly highlighted the concern that underreporting vulnerabilities through the use of the VI-SPDAT may unintentionally limit an individual's opportunities for housing and support services by producing lower scores.
- Others argue that self-reporting may have some outliers but generally it is an accepted form of reporting with acceptable levels of accuracy and that the data should be supplemented with the observantions and knowledge or practitions.
- Molly explained how her research has demonstrated that inaccurate reporting on the VI-SPDAT also has implications at the systems level, as the instrument is used to ensure the costliest housing services, such as permanent supportive housing (PSH), are delivered to those with the greatest housing needs.
- We discussed this as an ongoing challenge irrespective of the VI-SPDAT use in Australia given we don't have continuums of care or coordinated access systems in the same way the US does.
- The issue of 'street level bureaucracy' was discussed. This is the concern raised that having service providers administer the tool may impact the assessment process - in particular, that service providers have a strong will to advocate for clients, which may be at odds with organisational and/or systemic goals.
- All of these issues highlight for me the importance of providing better support and training resources on the use of the tool, and future versions in Australia.

Different use of the Tool in US vs Australia
- Another related concern is the tool's usefulness as a predictor of housing stability.
- My view is that the tools are not intended to do that, that's a function of housing departments, service coordination/housing allocation groups.
- I recognise the challenge however in the US, particularly in large communities, when you never have the time to get to know every person coming before the service coordination group, that it's human nature to delegate to the use of the tool, and it's scoring.
- This was a key insight for me into the difference in how the tool is used in the US to how it is used in Australia. In the US has been used to help inform who gets access to supportive housing.
- In Australia the vulnerability score has not determined who gets housing – it is an indicator of need and urgency for housing and healthcare, disability and other support services. It is used as part of a first step in accessing housing and support and providing quicker pathways to accessing it.

- It is also worth noting that people experiencing homleessness do not have to participate in the survey it is voluntary and when explained how it assists most people consent.

Alternatives
- A key question I put to Molly and others was do we seek to improve the tool, or move away from it - as is occurring in the USA?
- Much of the criticisms of the tool ignore the fact that there isn't really an alternative, and for those that have been developed, they are not necessarily any better in addressing all the concerns that are raised with the VI-SPDAT.
- The leading alternative that some point to is the Vulnerability Assessment Tool - developed and used by the Downtown Emergency Centre in Seattle. Daniel Malone is the key contact there.
- There are a range of people who have raise concerns with this tool too.
- Ultimately there is no one tool that is going to help us end homelesness, it's got to be used in the context of overall efforts to end homelessnes, hence in Austraia we've developed the Advance to Zero methodology.

VI-SPDAT Summary
- Molly's key provocation to me in these discussions was thinking about the power dynamics, and how we are making sure that we are privileging the voices of those with lived experience and particularly those who are subject to systemic racism.
- ''How are we making sure their voices and perspectives are driving decision-making - rather than service providers, policymakers, and people and organisations who have strong perspectives on this?"
- The advice of people like Molly has been very helpful for me throughout my Churchill Fellowship in informing the efforts of the AAEH in seeking to develop new and improved tools for use in Australia.

Chicago Homelessness Sector Leaders Dinner
- 9 May
- In Attendance (from left to right in the below photo):
    - Doug Schenkelberg, Executive Director of the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless
    - Dr. Molly Brown, Professor of Clinical Community Psychology; Director of the Homeless Advocacy Research Collaboration Lab; DePaul University
    - Carolyn Ross, CEO of All Chicago
    - Steve Brown, Senior Director, Social & Behavioral Health Transformation & Advocacy; Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences
    - Mark Angelini, CEO of Mercy Housing
    - Lydia Stazen, Executive Director, Institute of Global Homelessness

Capitalism and Racism
- In the US right now we're in an inflation crisis but inflation has been high in the housing market and the health system for years. We don't measure this - we need to.
- The history of racism in the US housing and homelessness policy is strong and ongoing. 'The colour of law' details how U.S. policies mandated segregation and undermined the ability of African American families to own homes and build wealth.

(IGH Organised Dinner with homelessness sector leaders, Chicago, USA)

- Despite the promise of the New Deal[12] - which opened up a lot of low-income financing options for housing - it included provisions preventing access to finance for African Americans.
- To this day, black and white people generally don't live in the same neighbourhoods. Schools also remain largely segregated, despite the Supreme Court issuing its famous ruling in 1954 desegregating schools (Brown versus Board of Education). This is because housing is still largely segregated - due in no small part to the racist provisions in the New Deal.
- Capitalism has taught us to criminalise those who are living in poverty. Our challenge is to mobilise and amplify the voices of people with lived experience.
- Homelessness is about money and poverty. Money matters in life, until you hit a certain level of income, at which point it starts to matter a lot less.

(Image: New Deal section of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, Washington DC, USA)

- A common theme across the organisations represented was an effort to take capitalism out of the system, address racism directly, and build more supportive housing as a public good.

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[12] The New Deal was a series of programs, public work projects, financial reforms, and regulations enacted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the United States between 1933 and 1939 to overcome the effects of the great depression.

Public attitudes
- One of the best ways to address homelessness would be to put drugs in the water that increases empathy - not a serious suggestion, but highlighting the fact that we've lost empathy in society.
- The more that we normalise people living in abject poverty in front of us in our cities and communities every day, by allowing it to continue, the more we harden the collective hearts of our culture.
- Tackling stigma needs to be a much bigger part of our efforts to end homelessness.
- Stigma is a consequence of what capitalism and colonisation have taught us.
- We can't allow the culture wars to divide us. We need to support efforts to strengthen and rebuild the community.
- Better supporting the voices of people with a lived experience to share their stories is important. The Chicago Coalition for the Homeless has established a speakers bureau.

Health and Homelessness
- 80% of the health needs are determined by the social determinants of health - something the medical system can't easily deal with.
- Homelessness is not and should not be an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meeting - we need to stop labelling people - getting them to tell us how bad their homelessness is.
- Part of the AA process is standing up and admitting you are an alcoholic in front of your peers. There are therapeutic reasons for this when it comes to substance use. There's no reason to do this when it comes to accessing housing, yet our systems force people to declare this. It is stigmatising and traumatising.

The VI-SPDAT
- The VI-SPDAT tool is in the early stages of development when you compare it to the development of tools in use in the health sector.
- Give it time, to see what other tools develop, others have and they haven't necessarily been any better than the VI-SPDAT in terms of concerns raised regarding racial equity.
- In the meantime, improve practice and listen to the voices of people with lived experience.
- In particular, consider the power imbalances in the system. When determining if and how to use a tool like this, consider the arguments on both sides, and consider the privilege and power positions of the people making the arguments.
- There are elements of the tool that need to be updated - i.e. it was developed using the Charlson index which is now obsolete. The Charlson Comorbidity Index was developed to predict the risk of death for patients with specific comorbid conditions. Comorbidity is the simultaneous presence of two or more diseases or medical conditions in a patient.
- Whilst debates continue about the VI-SPDAT, communities need a tool to use every day, and the disruption that would be caused by moving away from the VI-SPDAT would arguably do more harm than addressing the perceived and real failings of the tool. See Appendix B for more background.

Finding the Properties
- All Chicago works directly with 'mom and pop type landlords', they don't seem to have as high a culture of relying on real estate managers in the USA as we do in Australia.

- They made a call to only work with properties where there is direct contact with the owners - i.e. to go around the real estate agents.
- They allocate case managers who liaise with the owners to act as a buffer, helping prevent evictions and helping to get vulnerable clients an opportunity for housing that they might otherwise not get.
- On moving in, they help liaise with organisations like the Chicago furniture bank to assist with set up.

Collaboration
- We all agree we want to get to zero, how we do it is the key question - Collective Impact is a big part of the answer.
- Collective Impact is a structured form of collaboration that brings together communities to advance equity by learning together, aligning, and integrating their actions to achieve population and systems-level change.
- See Appendix B for further background on the Collective Impact Approach.
- Collective Impact is a contested concept. There are those who take a view that it must be done a certain way or else it's not Collective Impact, and there are others who believe it's a useful framework to be informed by.
- Chicago leaders recommended remembering that collaboration is a means to an end - ending homelessness - it's not an end in itself.
- So don't let the need to build a collaboration get in the way of ending homelessness, you don't always need every provider or stakeholder, you need just enough to achieve your goals.
- To build Collective Impact we can't rely on government, they can't solve this by themselves, and even when they engage in Collective Impact, they can't lead it.
- Their accountabilities and structures are too strongly geared towards the short term, and to the whole problem, not parts of it.

Is it possible to end homelessness
- Yes

The top three things needed to end homelessness:
- Mark Angelini, CEO of Mercy Housing
  - Stop criminalising poverty
  - Mobilise and amplify the voices of people with a lived experience
  - Investment - we need the funds to solve this problem
- Dr. Molly Brown, Professor of Clinical Community Psychology; Director of the Homeless Advocacy Research Collaboration Lab; DePaul University
  - Take capitalism out of the system
  - Address racism
  - More supportive housing
- Steve Brown, Senior Director, Social & Behavioral Health Transformation & Advocacy; Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences
  - Strengthen the mental health system
  - Support earlier intervention
  - Address the social determinants of health
- Carolyn Ross, CEO of All Chicago
  - Rapidly rehouse people experiencing homelessness for the first time
  - Use Collective Impact to rebuild community
  - Tackle stigma
- Doug Schenkelberg, Executive Director of the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless
  - Build the political will, this starts with the community
  - Funds - including secure local flexible funding sources

- o Ensure homelessness is a priority for other systems - corrections, hospitals, etc.

Guy - Lived Experience - Chicago Streets
- 9 May 2022

On the first night of my fellowship, I had a chance meeting with a man sleeping rough. His story was so similar to mine - with a huge divergence. I had family and privilege to fall back on - he had neither.

- I discovered that we are both the same age, both have a four-year-old daughter, and our mums both died of cancer when we were young.
- Where our lives differ is Guy has been on the streets for eight months, was not on any lists, and doesn't think he'll survive another winter in Chicago.
- His father suicided when he was seven and he has a history of family violence.
- His wife took up prostitution to make money, then got addicted to drugs she took to cope and eventually left him. Around the same time, his brother overdosed.
- He turned to alcohol and was charged with driving under the influence. This resulted in him losing his job as a forklift operator.

(Image: Chatting with Guy on the street - my first night in Chicago, USA)

- He is scared all of the time, of the cops, of the public who are frequently not just cruel but sadistic in what they do to the homeless, particularly young people.
- He feels like his "only options at times are suicide or to rob a bank".
- Guy is worried that he won't survive another winter on the streets of Chicago, given he lost almost half his body weight last winter.
- He remains hopeful however that he'll find the strength to join a Narcotics Anonymous (NA) group and that the future might bring change, maybe even housing and the chance of a new beginning.

Note: Guy agreed to share his story with me and gave me permission to share it. He was also happy for me to take the photo to help raise understanding of how hard life is on the street.

Jake Maguire - Community Solutions
- Title: Principal
- Date: 10 May 2022

Methodology vs Theory of Change

- We discussed the changes and progress of the Australian and US movements to end homelessness, including the continued improvement of the Advance to Zero Methodology. We discussed how it might be better framed as a 'theory of change' rather than a methodology.
- Whilst US communities have demonstrated that ending homelessness is possible, this is yet to be demonstrated in Australia. The term methodology implies a recipe that can be followed and you get the same outcomes. Baking a cake is a simple problem and lends itself to simple solutions like a recipe. Ending homelessness is a complex challenge that is constantly changing.
- There are a number of stakeholders in Australia who don't want a change to the language in relation to methodology vs theory of change, as it is starting to get traction, and others who think it's more a framework than a traditional theory of change.

VI-SPDAT
- Some take the view that in large cities no matter how much training you provide, there is a psychology involved with people deferring decision making to the scoring component of the tool. Dealing with this is a challenge.

Advocacy
- Political engagement takes time and effort. You have to fight to get this issue on the agenda, it shouldn't be that way, but it is. Resourcing and building the capacity for this work longer-term is important.
- Community Solutions have recently undertaken some unpublished research on this. They found that mayors believe they are held responsible for addressing homelessness in their cities, but feel they have little control.
- An overwhelming majority of mayors (73%) perceive themselves as being held highly accountable for addressing homelessness in their communities, but 81% feel that homelessness is outside of their control.
- A strong majority of mayors do not define policy success as reducing homelessness, and a surprising number do not have clear definitions for success. In fact, 60% of mayors do not define success by whether their cities are reducing homelessness.
- Mayors do not have access to the data that they need to solve homelessness, which is exacerbated by challenges in coordination across cities, counties, and nonprofits.
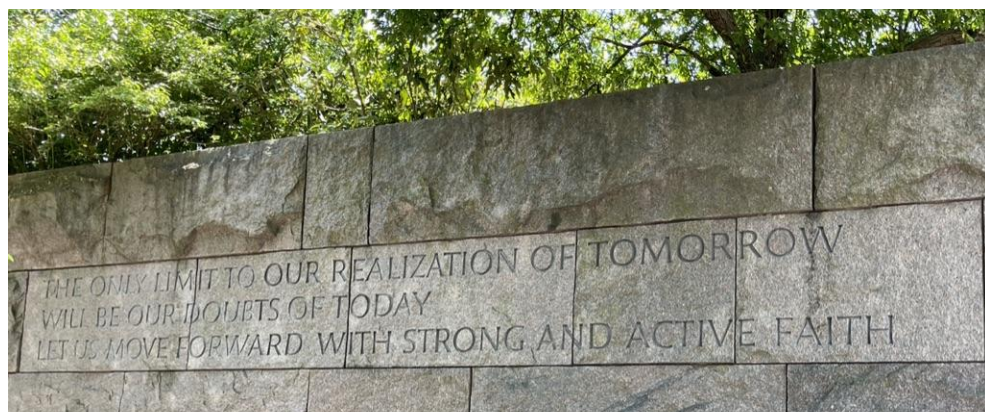
(Image: Franklin D Roosevelt Memorial, Washington DC, USA - reminded me of this conversation with Jake)

Is Ending Homelessness Possible?
- Absolutely.

The top three thing needed to make that a reality:

- Unwavering belief that this is possible - this prevents you from becoming an industry. The goal ought to be to do ourselves out of a job.
- Build understanding that no one can solve this problem alone - and so have ego (organisational and individual) about nothing else other than achieving the goal of zero homelessness.
- Having a voracious appetite to learn.

Liz Drapa - Corporation for Supportive Housing & La Casa Norte
- In Attendance:
  - Liz Draper, VP Field Operations & Consulting, Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)
  - Angelina Sidney, Property Manager (La Casa Morte - Pierce House)
- Date: 10 May 2022

Corporation for Supportive Housing
- Further background on Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) can be found in Appendix B.
- Some of the challenges of building a supportive housing system include governments going from famine to feast in terms of investment.
- The CSH helps communities deploy the funds, and make the argument that the money was needed, and reduce the risk that it is wasted.
- Quality can be a challenge, and then sometimes you push up against NIMBYism or not in my backyard perspectives. You need champions for this work.

(Image: At the conclusion of the visit to La Casa Morte*)*

Cost Benefit Analysis

- CSH does a lot of work to support communities to conduct cost benefit analysis as part of building the case for investment in permanent supportive housing.
- The process involved working out things like the amount, type and cost of the supportive housing that is needed in a community to reduce homelessness by a certain amount or to end it. They use by-name list data, but data from any and all systems they can access.
- CSH then works with communities to understand what this data is telling them and use that to help build a permanent supportive housing system that provides choice.
- One of the things they've found through this work that you need to be careful with is - the 'sicker' the people you focus on, the costs aren't going to shift that much (in the health system), because they are really sick.
- Ultimately the goal of these exercises is to get more non homelessness departments funding the support service for ending homelessness, i.e. health, corrections, etc.
- It's a systems/service planning exercise from government agencies perspective, and an advocacy exercise from the community services perspective.
- The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has said in the US that they do see supportive housing health services as important.
- More and more states have departments of supportive housing and have put in place legislation to create new taxes to build supportive housing.
- In Miami Florida this needs/cost benefit analysis work was helpful in successfully preventing a prison from being built and the resources being put into housing prevention work and permanent supportive housing.
- Policy makers often want to defund crisis services and shift the resources into prevention/permanent housing programs. This is very hard, it rarely happens, and almost never well. You need to establish a new system with a range of services most of the time before you can defund the old services. In the end you have to advocate for additional resources and then divert.

Recommendation 15: The AAEH work with the CSH to develop a Permanent Supportive Housing Needs Analysis toolkit for Australia, to help local communities do cost benefit analysis regarding the amount of permanent supportive housing their community needs to end homelessnes.

Debate about models
- There are some critics of single site supportive housing models (i.e a small, medium or large number of units/apartments as part of the one site) who believe that supportive housing should only be scattered site models (i.e general independent living in the suburbs, or everyday housing - with drop-in support rather than on site support).
- Single-site permanent supportive housing is sometimes called congregate living, which is a bit of a misnomer because in permanent supportive housing each person should have their own room, with their own bathroom and kitchen. Congregate implies they are all living together in a shelter type setup.
- Liz's response to this debate is - surely we should give people choice. A choice they all too often don't have. Many people who have never experienced homelessness choose high density living, so why not provide that same choice to those who have? A sense of community is fundamentally important to a lot of people who have experienced homelessness for long periods.
- It is obviously significantly cheaper, and thus many more people can be helped with single site, rather than scatter site support model. That said, this

shouldn't be the primary driver in deciding which permanent supportive housing model is most suited, it should be individual choice and suitability to their needs.

- One of the things that differentiates Australian permanent supportive housing and that in the US is that the 'social mix', it doesn't mean the same in Australia as it does in the US, as their wages are so much lower.
- So, for example in a single site model you don't have 100% occupancy of people who've experienced homelessness with a high level of care needs (often called high acuity) on a site, you have a social mix of people who are low acuity, people who are seeking affordable housing (who are working in low paid industries etc).
- Some of this relates to housing first debates and what precisely constitutes housing first. Some say that there needs to be a very specific case load (i.e. the number of people to support workers).
- Liz, as a range of others I met with, took the view that we need to not be absolutist when it comes to housing first. This was a common theme.
- See Appendix B for further information about Housing First.

La Casa Norte's - Pierce House Visit
- They partner with the Howard Brown service to offer a Federally qualified Health Center on the first floor. This is next to their community food pantry and food program, with a community center space on the 2nd floor and supportive housing on the top floors.
- The community food pantry is basically a mini grocery store that people can come and shop at and pay next to nothing for the items - providing a non-stigmatising experience. When I visited, food was being distributed as parcels because of COVID-19 restrictions.
- They house young adults (single, pregnant, and parenting) in the supportive housing program that uses Chicago Housing Authority vouchers and Federal 'Continuums of Care' permanent supportive housing subsidies.
- The services on the ground floor are for the whole community, not just residents.
- The site is locked and residents can only access their own floor.
- Each resident has their own lease. Case managers, and some service coordination is located on the second floor. They can pop up to the rooms to chat, meet in the common areas, or the meeting rooms on level two.
- It's a housing first model - you don't have to 'work a program' to get housing.

(Images: La Casa Morte - Pierce House, new room being set up, living area of the same room and food parcels lined up to be distributed to community)

Do you think that ending homelessness is possible?
- Both: Yes

The top three things needed to make that a reality:

- Political will particularly at the city level - Mayor can get things moving, they can line up business folks, rally resources, break down barriers.
- You need the housing authorities on board. They are the biggest provider.
- Be relentless on housing not shelter - getting in, the cash for brokerage is there, the paperwork is there. Make it easy.
- Housing first, but have a choice. Some people want a structured environment, you need that choice. Some people want to live in a big building, with a strong sense of community - just as they had a community on the street. It is possible to provide choice.

Community Solutions Discussion
- In Attendance:
  - Rosanne Haggerty, President and CEO
  - Jessica Venegas, Principal Strategic Partnerships
  - Melanie Lewis Dickerson , Portfolio Lead
  - Rian Watt, Strategy Lead, International & Initiative Large Scale Change
  - Dawn Moskowitz, Strategy Lead, Catalytic Projects
  - Ramina Davidson, Strategy Lead, Zero for All Proof Points
  - Regan Harvey, Project Manager for Large-Scale Change, Strategic Communities
  - Aras Jizan - Portfolio Lead (Data)
- Date: 11 + 12 May 2022

Background on Community Solutions & Functional Zero
- Community Solutions is a nonprofit that leads Built for Zero, a movement of more than 80 cities and counties using data to radically change how they work and the impact they can achieve — and proving that it is possible to make homelessness rare and brief.
- A growing number of communities across the country are proving this is an achievable reality by reaching a milestone known as functional zero.
- Functional Zero (FZ) is a milestone, which must be sustained, that indicates a community has measurably ended homelessness for a population. When it's achieved, homelessness is rare and brief for that population.
- FZ is a milestone on the way to absolute zero homelessness. Absolute zero can and has been achieved at a point in time, in Built for Zero communities, and elsewhere. To sustain absolute zero is something that is not possible in the short term, not until the broader issues of poverty, mental illness, addiction, racism and other factors are also eliminated from our societies.
- FZ then is the standard that communities ought to be able to set as a way of measuring are we getting closer to or further away from the goal of ending homelessness, but seeking to make it rare, brief and non-recurring.

(Image: Community Solutions Progress as of June 2022)

- For reasons that remain a mystery to me, the concept of functional zero elicits strong reactions from some. They suggest that it's just a way of defining your way out of the problem - it's not. Or that it's too complicated, it is, and so is the issue of homelessness. Or that it's not the end goal, it's just a milestone - agreed, it is a milestone that makes significant improvements to systems.
- 14 communities so far have achieved this milestone.
- In 2021, in recognition of their efforts, Community Solutions was awarded the MacArthur Foundation's 100&Change grant to help accelerate an end to homelessness in the United States.
- 100&Change is the MacArthur Foundation's global competition for a $100 million grant to fund a single proposal that promises "real and measurable progress in solving a critical problem of our time."

Data
- Data systems in the US, as in Australia, are very much about measuring transactions, not outcomes.
- The health systems often put the patient at the heart.
- We've built data systems that are disempowering to people.
- The goal of data in efforts to end homelessness is to help build more humanity in your system.
- In the US, the Federal Government requires agencies to use a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) - a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness.
- They don't stipulate what system you must use, just that there are some common features to that system that you must be in place. As a consequence there are a lot of private vendors who provide a HMIS system, that in order to protect their intellectual property and proprietary information, don't easily talk to each other.
- This is creating some challenges for communities that want to scale their by-name list beyond their existing collaborative, or Continuum of Care. They all need to be using the same vendor.
- In the US, communities store their by-name list in this HMIS platform.

Policy
- Identify incentives in the system that push people to current ways of acting.
- Outcomes focused contracts can help. Change the funding levers, because all too often the contract tells agencies to have x number of contacts with people experiencing homelessness, so you focus on that, rather than what is needed.
- You need policies set for sustainability, so that you get a policy shift that makes it harder for the status quo to exist. Generally, however, policies exist to perpetuate services, not to end homelessness. We need to shake that up.
- Political leaders need quick fixes, for example they want the encampment cleared out tomorrow. This makes it hard to get the focus on longer term integrated strategies, but at the same time have to recognise the demands being placed on them. That's why you need trustworthy data.
- You cannot just spend more and more on housing, you have to turn off the tap in the adjacent / upstream sectors.
- You need to build a system to be able to change when you get to the 'last mile' on the journey to functional zero.
- Some health systems do this well - they have had to, you need to eradicate every last case of an infectious disease. We need systems in homelessness that support this too if we are going to be successful in the last mile.
- You need a vehicle to get to the end point you want to get to - that's where the Zero Projects, collboations, campaigns in Australia are so important, they are that vehicle.

Collaborations
- Federal policy, in the USA, has required communities to develop a vehicle, the continuums of care (CoC's). They have been of varying quality and effectiveness. There are lots of lessons on how to do this better in the book *Ungoverned and Out of Sight: Public Health and the Political Crisis of Homelessnessin the United States* by Charley E. Willison.
- COCs are very diverse - some work well, many do not. The common problem with them is that they can't fund themselves very well.
- The US also required CoC's to implement a coordinated access system for better coordinating who gets housing, best described as triaging scarce housing and support resources to those most vulnerable.
- This is often described as prioritisation, but is much better understood as triage - just as you triage in a hospital emergency department, rather than first in, first serviced. That's what we need to better do in relation to how houses are allocated to end homelessness.
- Australia should learn the lessons from the US, in creating continuums of care (CoC's), then coordinated access, and eventually they will get to the QBNL step. The lesson for Australia is you need to do all three.
- The AtoZ methodology picks up all of these elements.

Commonwealth Government Recommendation 1: The Commonwealth Government support the rollout of the Advance to Zero Methodology through the renegotiation of the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement.

(Image: Rosanne and I at the Community Solutions Learning Session)

Large Scale Change

- Australia is currently struggling to figure out how quickly we seek to expand the AtoZ methodology. The inclination of State Governments is generally to try to solve the problem everywhere at once and to create state-wide by-name lists.
- The lessons from the United States to date have been to start small, demonstrate the value of what you are doing and achieve proof points or system change outcomes, i.e. quality by-name list data, shift reductions, functional zero for a population group etc. See Appendix B for further information about by-name lists, and these measures.
- We're operating in large cities and small regions. In this sense - we have 'caught up' to the Built for Zero movement in the US. Though we've not yet had the demonstration of 'proof points' that the US has had.
- CS have teams that are working with large cities, and this is a current focus for them. There are a number of large cities that have had significant reductions in homelessness, but none yet that have ended it. Though some are close.
- CS also have teams that are working on large-scale change, that is, groups of communities or CoC's working together across a state or region. Colorado being one example, but there are not a lot, and the pressures to scale do not seem to be as strong given the place based collaborative approach (through CoC's) is such a strong part of US homelessness response systems.
- In this sense, the work of the Advance to Zero Campaign needs to 'chart our own course', but as much as possible resist the urge to scale too quickly in the absence of demonstrated proof points.

Recommendation 16: The AAEH develop a plan for the phased roll out of Zero Projects, with the eventual goal of an integrated nation wide network of locally controlled and developed by-name lists.

- Set out why there is a risk in rolling out too quickly.
- Work with the leading communities.
- Develop capacity to deliver this work.

Recommendation 17: The AAEH's advocacy strategy should involve not just going to governments to seek funding to do this work, but seek the policy changes that will create the 'marketplace' - that communities need to develop the equivalents of continuums of care, coordinated access, BNLs, as set out in the AtoZ methodology.

Health and Homelessness
- Homelessness is a public health crisis - from poverty, discrimination, addiction and natural disasters, homelessness has many different causes, and many similar effects: serious adverse consequences for physical and mental health, quality of life, eduction and work attainment.
- Homelessness is at its core a threat to population health and health equity.
- In public health and medical communities there is a resounding call to permit a culture of health in all policies. Yet most conversations about health reform centre on hospital and health care - conspicuously absent are factors influencing population health across the life-course.
- Cities across America are facing a homelessness epidemic.
- When thinking about governance of efforts to end homelessness, we need to look more to the public health and emergency management fields than to the governance arrangements of housing and property management agencies.

Movement Building and problem solving.
- Using champions, in the political world, the business world, philanthropy, etc. is critical.
- This work takes a while to wrap your head around, you need to hold onto connections with those people who 'get it'.
- You need to develop strategies for engaging these people, having associates is one way, an alumni network of sorts.
- Recognising system leaders who have expertise in this work is another way - i.e. having a faculty of fellows in ending homlessnss to draw upon.
- Either we are making progress, or we are not, and we need more resources for system change. It's about creating a real time feedback loop.
- As long as you can constantly do quality improvement, you can keep solving problems, you can keep moving forward.
- We're often hard-wired to be great starters, but we also need to be better finishers.

(Image: Community Solutions, We all Have a Role to Play in Ending Homelessness Guide)

- You have to be prepared to 'piss people off' and to have an honest look at your own system. Collaboration and relationship building can't get in the way of solving problems.

Organising, events and administration

- This work is very much undervalued, but when it works well it is a powerful enabler of collaboration. Community Solutions has established a project excellence team to build capacity and recognise the importance of this work.
- Our systems are not set up to support collaboration. The people you need to work with in a collaboration are not all in the same organisation and you can guarantee they will all be using different software.
- Whether that is email software (Microsoft, Apple, Google), different communications software (Slack, Teams, Zoom, etc), document storage software (Dropbox, Files, Onedrive, etc) and project management software (Asana, Basecamp, Monday, etc). Taking the time to consider which platforms will enable everyone to work together is important.
- Organising better meetings is also an important part of supporting collaborations. Utilising the principles of continuous improvement, there are a number of ways to make sure you plan better meetings. They are all pretty basic things, but important things to have in place to enable collaboration amongst busy people.
    - Make sure every meeting has a chair/facilitator and a very clear intent/purpose, as well as membership. Sometimes the person who's meeting it is, is often not the best facilitator of the meeting.
    - Make sure every meeting has at least a very basic agenda - shared in Google Docs (or similar). Develop templates to support this, setting out who's leading each item, how much time is allocated, etc.
    - Make sure people have the information they need to consider and participate in the meeting in advance of the meeting.
    - Make sure someone is taking minutes / action items.
    - Come back to those action items at future meetings if they are not addressed.
- If you don't have these things in place for a meeting, are you respecting the participants' time?
- Events are also an incredibly important part of bringing people and organisations together to think differently about efforts to end homelessness, to collaborate outside their own organisation, sector, agency, level of government, industry, etc.

Recommendation 18: the AAEH develop a technology and collaboration guide for Australian communities seeking to end homelessness.

Recommendation 19: The AAEH develop a better meetings guide for use by Australian communities seeking to end homelessness.

Recommendation 20: the AAEH explore ways to build the capacity of communities across Australia to gather and work together on the efforts to end homelessness - starting with holding an Annual Zero HomelessnessSummit for people and organisations not part of the AtoZ Campaign to learn more and participate.

Working with Business
- Working with business is important for the longevity of this work. To build the allies, funding partners, capacity partners, it is worth the effort.
- Corporate partners want to be able to tell the story of what they are helping you to achieve.
- The bright spots are a great way of doing that. Bright spots are when you focus on the things that communities have learned and achieved together (Built for Zero (in the US) or Advance to Zero in Australia). Sometimes it's as helpful to focus on what is working, rather than what the problem is.

- Corporate partners can also be helpful in supporting you to influence the government. It's not the usual voices going to government then, they have government relations teams - get them to help lobby governments to understand that ending homelessness is possible.
- You also need corporate partners to understand we don't need them to fund initiatives, which then starts the tail wagging the dog. We need them to invest in the core operating budget of your collaboration - working closely with the engagement and comms teams to help learn together what it takes to end homelessnsess.
- Another way to do this is to seek secondments of people. This helps build the capacity to do the work, but also brings a new set of thinning, new perspectives to your collaboration and then they can go back to the organisation to help them better understand where to create value together. Sometimes this is called shared value.

(Image: Shared Value)[13]

- Shared value is a type of management strategy that focuses on companies creating business value that is measurable through addressing and identifying social problems that impact their business.

Supportive Housing
- Supportive housing exists at scale in the US, that is essential. Australia needs a supportive housing system, not just a collection of buildings, common ground model or not.
- The challenge is broader than that, because you not only need to build more in Australia, you need to think through how if you do build more supportive housing how you can ensure it stays as supportive housing and connected to the system wide efforts seeking to end homelessness.

Commonwealth Government Recommendation 9: The Commonwealth Government support the AAEH to establish a National Permanent Supportive Housing Network, to guide the development of local supportive housing systems in Australia, build understanding, improve practice, and help to ensure that when we do build PSH that they stay permanent supportive housing

Building Learning Systems
- The role of a community leads and data leads is about capacity building - particularly regarding improvement. A community lead is someone who takes responsibility for operationally building a Zero Project. A data lead supports

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[13] http://www.3pillarsnetwork.com.au/blog/shared-value-and-the-3-pillars-network/

that with the focus on building the by-name list and building understanding of what it is telling communities.

- The teams in Community Solutions have been creating learning systems that talk to each other, and when we were small that is super easy, as we've grown it's a lot harder. You need to give thought to that.

Recommendation 21: The AAEH develop a strategy for engaging those who truly 'get' the work of ending homelessness - including by recognising community champions, appointing Associates (an alumni network) and developing a faculty of Fellows, or people who are recognised as being able to train, coach and mentor communities that are seeking to end homelessness in Australia.

Do you think that ending homelessness is possible?
- All: Yes

The top three things needed to make that a reality - Rosanne:
- Building Political will for solving the problem, not a one time solution, but a sustained solution.
- Developing a data driven operating system.
- Ensuring the housing types that match the dynamic housing needs of individual communities.

Niñon Lewis - Institute for Healthcare Improvement
- Title: Vice President
- Date: 11 May 2022

Improvement Science
- For further background on improvement science see Appendix B.
- Improvement science has been a fundamental driver of the success of communities in the US in ending homelessness, and is a major influence on the AtoZ work in Australia.
- The following are key insights from the presentation and subsequent conversations.
- When doing improvement work, there are really two key roles - 1) get curious, see the water you swim in, and 2) have a bias towards action.
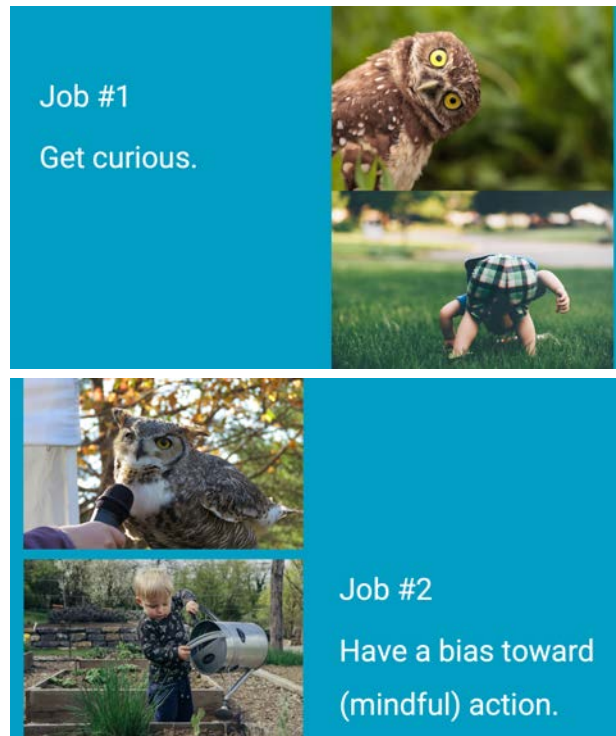
(Image: Niñon's presentation at the Community Solutions Learning Session - that got a good laugh from the audience, Chicago USA)

- The 'lenses of curiosity' is a focus of improvement work and has been adapted from the concept of a 'system of profound knowledge' - which is the culmination of Dr. W. Edwards Deming's lifelong work.
- This rather grandly named concept is an effective theory of management that provides a framework of thought and action for any leader wishing to transform and create a thriving organisation or system, with the aim for everybody to be successful in getting what they need.
- Improvement requires us to constantly think of the system. We get systems, when we look at a subway map, we know what the coloured lines mean, that you can move from one to the next.


(Image: Washington DC Metro System, USA)

- We need better ways to understand homelessness systems like this. The functional zero measurement points help us to see the water we swim in or the 'homelessness service system' we are trying to shape.

- The improvement model really has two parts to it, the thinking part and the doing part.
- This model has been central to the success of the US communities that have achieved functional zero and for those who have driven reductions.
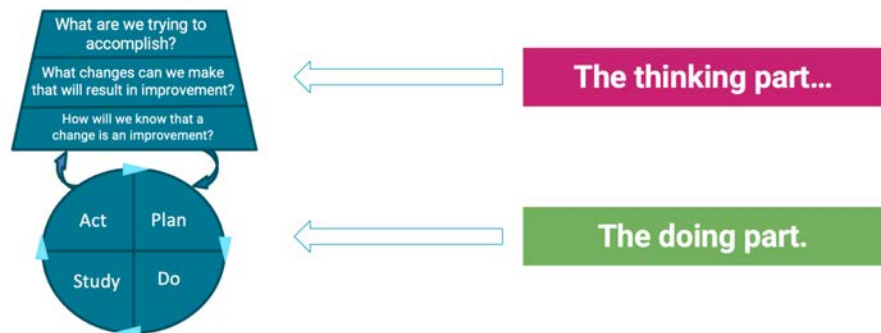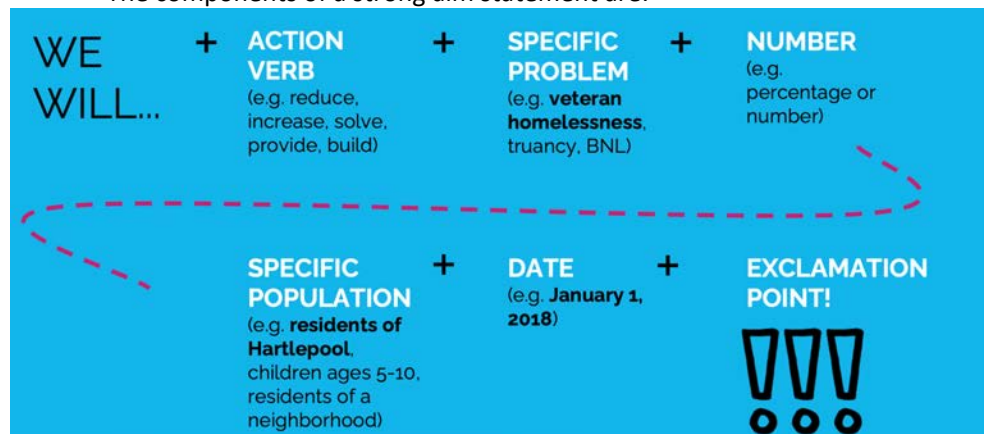

(Niñon's presentation at the Community Solutions Learning Session, Chicago USA)

- The model has been widely adopted because it:
  - can be used across all types of organisations, across all types.
  - facilitates the use of teamwork to make improvements.
  - encourages planning to be based on theory.
  - emphasises and encourages iterative learning.
  - provides a way to empower people to take action.
- Too often people feel disempowered by the complexity of the system.
- Developing clear aim statements is essential to help with this. Being specific helps with this work.
- Hope is not a plan, some is not a number and soon is not a time - Don Berwick, MD.
- The components of a strong aim statement are:

(Niñon's presentation at the Community Solutions Learning Session, Chicago USA)

- Having a strong aim statement is essential to ending homelessness. When working through what a community's goals are, write it down and quibble with it, but don't make assumptions. For example, we're the only community that has a shortage of housing, we have a high functioning case conferencing mechanism etc., back up your statements with evidence that is measurable and specific.

The **Aim** can be imagined as a **Lighthouse**. And while you can see the lighthouse from where you are, the path to it is not clear.

(Images: Community Solutions, Emma Beers, Chicago USA)

- Get people to sign onto the aim statement at the end of the exercise. Action Plans are a simple mechanism for this. In the US, CoCs are required to do this. In Australia, Zero projects, campaigns or collaborations need to do this - some are, but not all.
- The overall aim should be making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring, measured by functional zero.
- Remember, goals are different to aims.

Aim (Functional Zero or a Reduction Aim)
The overall objective or aim of a program, project, initiative, campaign or movement

Goals (usually 90-100 Days, or the length of an Action Cycle)
Interim objectives that help determine if you are on track to meet your goal

(Images: Community Solutions, Emma Beers, Chicago USA)

- On the road to the goal, we know we're going to hit some obstacles - we call these rocks. Look for leavers to help you overcome these, and work through what are the dependencies that will be needed to make that happen. A dependency is who will 'hold the big red ball' and get that done, and how are you measuring that.

Big Rock: Not enough affordable housing!
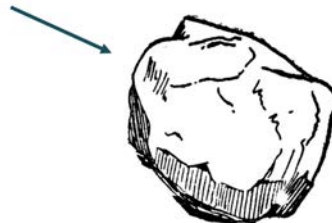
Lever: Recruit more private landlords
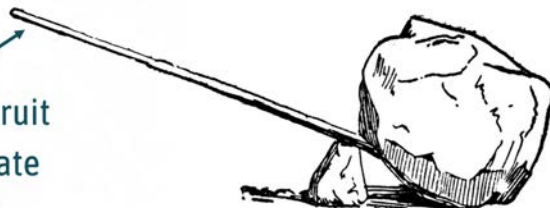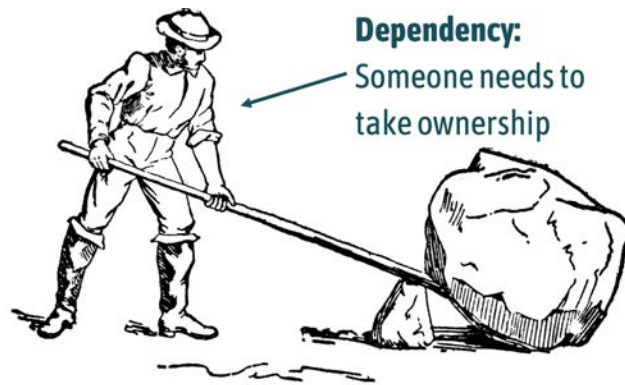
(Images: Community Solutions, Emma Beers, Chicago USA)

- Finally, one of the key benefits of the model for improvement is it ensures you remove ambiguity from the work you are doing - as much as possible. It's really clear what you are all working towards, and the path you are taking there.
- It enables a focus on how you overcome the obstacles, the leavers you will use and the dependencies - rather than discussions about where you are going.

(Images: Community Solutions, Emma Beers, Chicago USA)

Recommendation 22: The AAEH partner with the Institute for Healthcare Improvement in Australia to seek state government support to build capacity in the homelessness and health sectors to utilise the model for improvement.

Donald Whitehead - National Coalition for the Homelessness

- Title: Executive Director
- Date: 11 May 2022

Race Equity Discussion

- When you hear the history of your country, you should react the same way as when you hear about the fact that your family has a history of addiction or mental illness. You don't feel guilty, you take measures to mitigate its effects in the future, you learn from it.
- The George Floyd execution live on television was a massive inflection point in the US. It helped fuel a much deeper understanding that racism exists at the structural, institution and interpersonal level.
- "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it" - George Santayana, The Life of Reason, 1905.
- Homelessness has been with us since the beginning of this country, with the displacement of First Nations peoples. It continued from 1619 when the transatlantic slave trade started.
- The 1830s rail of Tears saw hundreds of thousands of people moved to the plains states - creating new waves of homelessness.
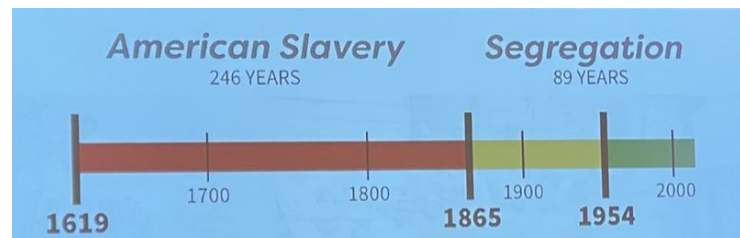
(Images: Donald's presentation at the Learning Session, Chicago USA)

- We need to understand that structural and institutional racism are intentional decisions and are a deeply ingrained part of American culture.
- The idealism of children seeps away the more times you hear that you 'fit the description' in the words of law enforcement.
- Today, we need to make a choice: you can be a racist, or an anti-racist, there is no middle ground.
- We are far from a colour blind society. We have lived through too many incidents / too many inflection . We need racial justice now.
- "Homelessness is not a moral failure of people, it is a moral failure of society - it is immoral to choose eviction over extreme wealth inequality".
- We need to all use our spheres of influence, to the extent we can, wherever we work - to support anti racism efforts - in the work to end homelessness in the USA or Australia.
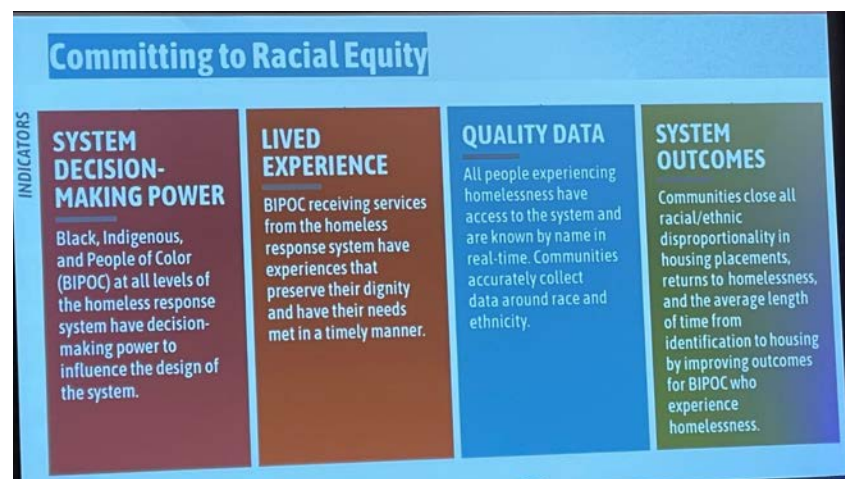
(Image: Community Solutions Learning Session, Chicago USA)

- Community Solutions have developed a racial equity framework to inform their work towards ending homelessness. All communities should consider how their work seeks to understand and account for racial inequity and colonisation.

Recommendation 23: The AAEH develop a statement of intent regarding racial equality, racial justice and reconciliation in relation to the AtoZ Campaign.

Amber Chandler - Lived Experience Discussion

- Title: Systems Improvement Advisor, Community Solutions
- In Attendance: Various representatives
- Date: 11 May

- You need a person with a lived experience at all tables, to hear that voice, but importantly to also ensure they have the support and mentors they need to succeed.
- Some communities have created a shelter resident's bill of rights. In Australia, we have a home visitors scheme for aged care, and disability care, but not for homelessness care services - why is that?
- Lived experience voices are the most powerful with political leaders.
- You need to pay your lived experience voices, and the going rate in the US at the moment is $125 an hour.
- Many communities in the US have structures for engaging people with a lived experience. Some of them provide a speakers network to help raise awareness of the impacts of homelessness, and what can be done about it.
- The following 'People with a Lived Experience of Homelessness' theory of change has been developed by the Community Solutions to inform their work.
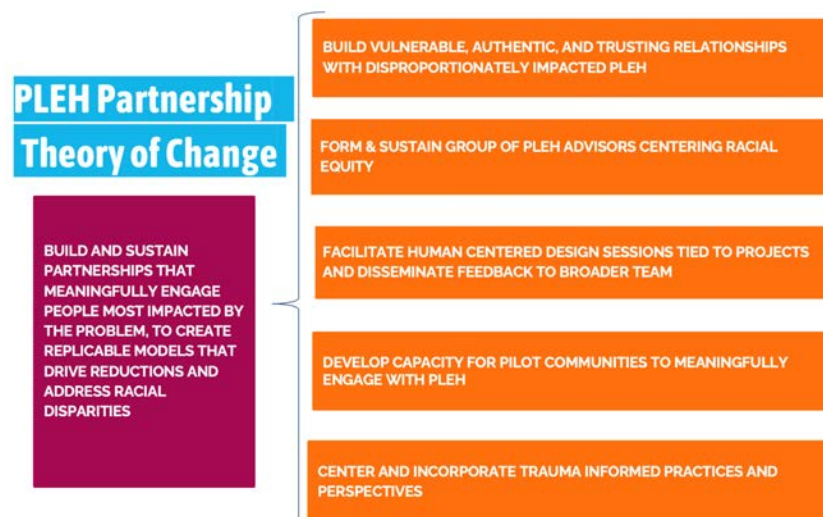
(Image: People with a Lived Experience of Homelessness: Theory of Change, Community Solutions Learning Session, Chicago USA)

Anna Kim - Community Solutions
- Title: Principal Communications
- Date: 12 May 2022

- Cynicism and competing priorities are amongst the greatest threats to our progress.
- How do we demonstrate and communicate that ending homelessness is possible to different audiences?
- It is a challenge of seeking to tell the truth louder - that homelessness is a result of systemic failures, not individual choices.
- The key comms challenge is to shift the narrative, to amplify the bright spots, and to demonstrate that we need new understandings and new behaviours.
- From a national organisation's perspective the challenge is to champion and amplify the progress and solutions being driven by local communities - without being seen to take credit for their work.
- A key communications task is to shift the understanding of homelessness as a problem that is solvable, a byproduct of systems and the urgent matter of racial equity.

- Engage people's heads and hearts. When you see homelessness everyday, you become hardened to it. We run out of empathy, it contributes to cynicism. If we can move the heart, we can move their minds. But there is a lot of competition for both.
- The more we can 'see' concerted efforts from various stakeholders working towards ending homelessness, you can see the government working for the people like they are supposed to, if you see corporations being part of a community not just about making profit - it is a virtuous cycle.
- Your communications efforts need to help people find a space in this work for them.
- Communication is about many things, but one of them is about helping to rally the resources you need to do the work.
- Having a list and clear explanation of what you want to do and why it will be beneficial is something that is rarely developed. This is different to the policy asks you have of the government.

Recommendation 24: The AAEH develop a prospectus of all the things we think are needed to be done organisationally to support an end to homelessness in Australia.

Recommendation 25: The AAEH develop a communications guide to talking about ending homelessness.

Crisis UK
- In Attendance: Ciara Devlin Head of Place-based Programmes & Kate Farell - Housing Led Programmes Lead
- Date: 12 May 2022

- How do you define an end to homelessness? Rare, brief and non-recurring, but it's not really defined in the UK and the concept of functional zero hasn't really made it there - outside of Crisis.
- In the UK, there is some regular data collected on rough sleeping, but it's not great.
- The Bureau of Investigative Journalism in 2018 did a big profile on homelessness deaths and that really got a lot of attention and created some focus. The ONS - Office of National Statistics, is committed to better enumerating this, but work is slow and challenging.
- In terms of the role of various stakeholders in ending homelessness, there is a role for all governments, local and in Westminster - the challenge is getting them to work together sometimes.
- There's also a big role for civil society, business, and others - it's not always well coordinated, or joined up. Crisis does some annual polling on attitudes in this space.
- In terms of examples of shifting the focus from crisis services to ending homelessness, the UK managed to get a private members bill passed called the 'Homelessness Reduction Act' which is worth looking into more. It gave everyone the right to support.

Do you think that ending homelessness is possible?
- Yes

What are the top three things that are needed to end homelessness?
- Data
- Government Commitment & Funding
- Housing and Support

(Image: Meeting at the Community Solutions Learning Session, Chicago USA)

Marie Morison - Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness

- Title: Director, Built for Zero
- Date: 12 May 2022

Housing First / Coordinated Access

- Housing First is a philosophy - but it needs to be implemented into systems.
- Some have very specific program models, but it needs to be about how to improve outcomes.
- For some, the focus has shifted in Canada away from Housing First, not because we don't believe in it, or because it doesn't work - it does. It's just hard to do Housing First, if you don't have the housing, first!
- A lot of attention has shifted to Coordinated Access, where there is a focus on actively working to prevent and divert households from an experience of homelessness by assessing their situation and connecting them to the financial, social service sector and supports.
- If Australia was to go down the path of implementing Coordinated Access, which is basically what you mean by 'coordinated care' as part of the Advance to Zero methodology, you should get Commonwealth dollars to go directly to local collaborations or Zero projects and not through the states.
- It's too hard for them to focus sometimes. Governments also need to allow for much more flexibility in contracts, to enable shared learning.

Administering a National Campaign

- Managing websites, and making sure you are sharing and curating your library of resources is a big job.
- The Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) has a strategy to build allied networks to support the work of ending homelessness, and a national conference. The AAEH strategy to copy that makes sense - as does the intention to ensure that the allied networks serve as much as possible the goals of the AtoZ Campaign.

Deaths

- Regarding data on deaths - the CAEH encourages communities to collect this information as part of measuring outflow from local by-name list systems.

Do you think that ending homelessness is possible?

- Yes

Top three things that are needed to end homelessness?
- A population level target and way to measure that - i.e. functional zero.
- Cross sectoral guiding coalition, that takes accountability for getting to zero
- Quality real time data

(Image: Marie and I at the Community Solutions Learning Session, Chicago USA)

Amanda Andere - Funders Together to End Homelessness
- Title: CEO
- Date: 12 May 2022

- We're moving a bit away from the idea of racial equity, which is about removing the inequity, and more towards racial justice - to make up for lost ground.
- Philanthropy can help change the narrative, it should focus on filling gaps - focus on doing the things that no one else is doing.
- Focus on changing the system.
- Help grow the pie for ending homelessness directed work.
- Ending homelessnessis possible, but seeking racial justice must be at the heart of it.
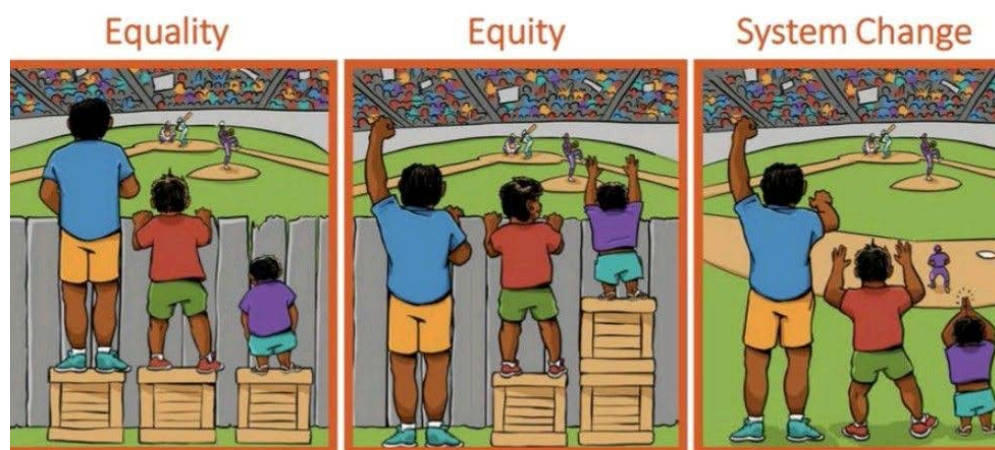
(Image: Interaction Institute for Social Change, Angus Maguire, USA)[14]

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[14] http://madewithangus.com/portfolio/equality-vs-equity/

Lydia Stazen - Institute of Global Homelessness
- Title: Executive Director
- Date: 13 May 2022

Background
- The Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH) drives a global movement to end street homelessness.
- Founded in 2014, IGH is the first organisation to focus on homelessness as a global phenomenon with an emphasis on those who are living on the street or in emergency shelters.
- The IGH staff and Advisory Committee work with a broad network of world-class advisors, experts, and organisations — balancing geographies, cultures, and skills.
- They work towards their vision through three strategic priorities:
    - See It: Advocate for international homelessness policy focused on definition and measurement
    - Solve It: Partner with cities and countries eager to take concrete action to solve the problem
    - Share It: Connect with others to coalesce the global movement

Collaboration in the homelessnesssector
- Sometimes it's hard, in fact more often than not it's hard, but working thorough that isn't a distraction from the work - it is the work.

Definitions
- Regarding functional zero as a concept, there are some - particularly in academia, who have a view that absolute zero should be the goal, not functional zero.
- Often there is a misunderstanding that functional zero doesn't focus on a stemming of the inflow into the system. It does.
- What works for everyone is a focus on the outcome, that we want to make homelessness rare, brief and non recurring. Focus on outcomes.
- Australia needs to do more work to have agreed definitions, outside of the AtoZ movement, engaging Commonwealth government agencies in this will be important. Particularly in relation to what ending homelessness means, how it's measured, definitions of chronic homelessness, etc.

(Image: Visiting the UN Headquarters in New York reminded me of the work being done by Lydia and the IGH to push for greater recognition of homelessness within the UN Sustainable Development Goals Framework)

Recommendation 26: The AAEH publish or make more publicly accessible the working definitions it uses as part of the AtoZ campaign and work with Commonwealth agencies, researchers and others to develop more broadly understood or agreed definitions in Australia.

- Do you think that ending homelessness is possible?
    - Yes

- What are the top three things that are needed to end homelessness?
    - Person centred approaches
    - Comprehensive housing and services options
    - A focus on outcomes and data

Emily Krisciunas - Chicago Funders Together to End Homelessness
- Title: Director
- Date: 13 May 2022

Background
- There are six or seven local networks as part of the national 'Funders Together to End Homelessness' network led by Amanda Andere.
- Chicago is a newer one. The origins story is, a group of organisations were frustrated with a range of things. A lack of coordination across funding organisations, no shared strategy, and a frustration that ultimately they were not moving the needle in any meaningful way.
- There was also next to no coordination with government or interaction with government by funders.
- Their work is centered on developing a shared investment strategy around ending homelessness, and to partner better and more effectively with government.
- There were originally eight foundations, and there are now 30 foundations, a mix of large community foundations, and some family foundations, corporate philanthropy, local united way efforts (who raise funds largely through employees in companies like United Airlines who then give to communities).
- They have three key strategies:
    - A greater focus on policy change; this is so central to ending homelessness. The philanthropic sector has been hesitant to engage with advocacy, community organising, and to be more patient with the advocacy that can often take a long time to be effective.
    - Aligning systems and sectors; work related to ending homelessness is so siloed, health, justice, employment, education - so bringing other funders to the table, who don't see themselves as a part of the homelessness world to align their efforts.
    - Power and shifting power dynamics - recognising that funders are predominantly white and wealthy family foundations, that hold the power on what ending homelessness looks like, what service models should be etc, and seeking to address that.

Power and Privilege
- One issue facing Chicago at the moment is that gun violence has exploded, is the top priority of elected officials, it's covered extensively by the media.

- Increased eviction rates have been demonstrated to lead to increased gun violence.
- In Chicago, as in the US generally, people experiencing homelesnsess are disproportionately people of colour.
- Amanda says in relation to getting push back - meet people where they are, but don't leave them there. Privilege is power.
- To deal with the power dynamics, funders have started to engage in participatory grantmaking or the democratisation of philanthropy.
- They have developed a strategic plan that seeks to do all of these things.
- The focus on ending homelessness is the strategy, but they get caught in the fact that the US Housing and Urban Development definition is a narrower focus on rough sleeping, whereas Chicago Funders to End Homelessness and others try to broaden the focus to be on all forms of homelessness, including doubling up (overcrowding).
- A philanthropic organisation in Australia, like the Mercy Foundation for example, could consider establishing an Australian Funders Together to End Homelessness Network, modelled on these efforts in the USA.

Communications and Ending Homelessness
- This is underfunded, under-prioritised, but really essential.
- There is a great organisation called the Housing Narrative Lab[15], that is focused on telling the story of who becomes homeless and why, and how safe and affordable housing is their first step toward stability and opportunity.
- They, like many organisations in the US, are seeking to lead with equity because "black, brown, Indigenous and immigrant people in our communities disproportionately bear the brunt of the nation's housing crisis".
- They offer pro bono communications support for grassroots organisations and national advocates working to solve homelessness. They provide narrative research assistance, strategic communications, content creation and education and training.
- Ultimately they work together to advance the real story of why housing is out of reach for so many citizens/neighbors.
- The proposed co-lab could focus on providing pro-bono communications support to local community efforts to end homelessness.

Business Engagement
- Try and identify corporate partners who may not see homelessness and housing as critical as it is, and make it relevant to them.
- Companies that are up in arms about crime and homelessness have a role to play in shaping homelessness policies towards ending homelessness rather than just responding, or worse, seeking to move it.
- A gold star example of this is Home for Good in the US, a similar organisation, but exists as a public, private and philanthropic partnership.
- The work is personal and relational. Personal proximity to the issue helps.

Recommendation 27: The AAEH support local business alliances to be established in each state or region to provide champions and allies for the work of ending homelessness in those communities - including through the development of a toolkit that integrates shared value strategies.

Is ending homelessness possible?
- Yes.

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[15] https://housingnarrativelab.org/

Top three things needed?
- A continued pipeline of affordable housing stock
- Significantly increased government will. We need to see investment that is proportional to the size of the problem
- More racially equitable housing policies that overcomes the history of structural and institutional racism.

Mercy Housing / Miriam Apartments Site Visit

- In Attendance: Various staff and residents, inc:
  - Felix Matlock Jr - Regional Vice President of Resident Services
  - Jacqui - Service manager
  - Sharnell - New Philanthropy & Partnerships Lead
  - Chariot - Resident and Lived Experience Peer-Worker
  - Julie - Resident
- Date: 13 May 2022

- Mercy Housing is the largest community housing provider in Chicago.
- They run a large number of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) properties - funded through a blend of funding from federal, state and local funding programs / voucher programs as well as through philanthropy.
- Each person has their own permanent lease.
- There is a 24/7 presence at the front door, supporting workers during the day and early evenings, with security guards the rest of the time.
- Residents are allowed one to two visitors at a time, and can have guests stay over but must check in.
- They offer a range of group activities in all of them, many of which have been impacted by the pandemic - with the intention of helping residents with their recovery, to get to know neighbours etc.
- They have invested in a computer room to support digital inclusion and provide a range of support for their use, including software training, resume drafting, etc.

(Image: Computer Room, Miriam Apartments, Chicago USA)

- They have in the past held Mother's Day painting sessions, nutrition bingo, yoga, scheduled walks, etc. They have a community room for groups to get together, including a shared television with movie collection and an attached kitchenette (pictured below).
- Nearby health centres do in-reach for things like covid vaccinations, script refills, etc. They also have a mobile health clinic that also visits - from the Near North Health Clinic.

(Image: Mobile Health Clinic visiting the, Miriam Apartments, Chicago USA)

- Rent is capped at 30% of income - utilities are included in this - including wi-fi.
- Common laundry facilities are provided, which includes a swipe card system for payment.
- To support improved health, and after consultation with residents they established a gym - with much of the equipment donated from neighbours and community partners.
- Julie, who spent 6 years in and out of homelessness, ended up in shelters for a further three years by the time she was able to access the permanent supportive housing.
- During this time she developed a problem with drinking and said that the ability to stay at the Miriam Apartments had literally saved her life.
    - Her proudest possession is her key (pictured below).
    - She credits her ability to sustain housing now on all the support available on site, including peer workers like Chariot.
    - A peer worker is someone who has a lived experience of homelessness and works with people who are currently experiencing or recovering from homelessness.
- Chariot experienced homelessness for almost 14 years, and stayed in shelters for over a year before being able to access permanent supportive housing. She lives at the Miriam Apartments, but also works as a peer support worker at one of the other Mercy Housing organisations PSH sites.

Recommendation 28: State Governments develop homelessness peer workforce strategies to increase the number of, and support best practice in relation to, peer workers in the housing and homelessness sectors.
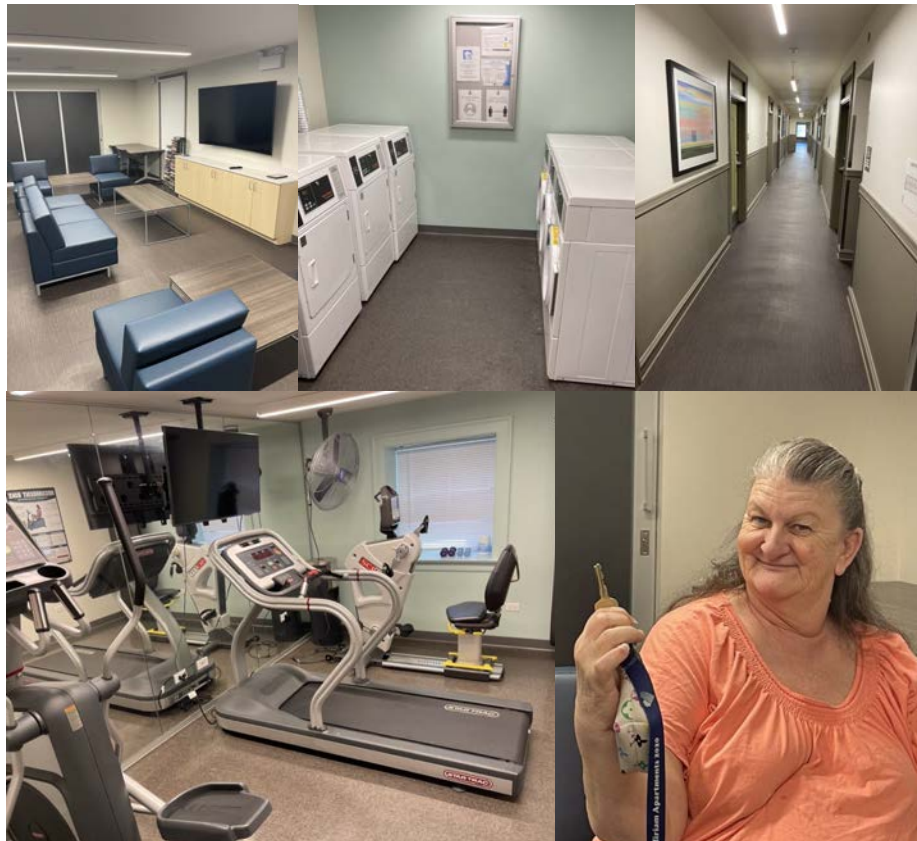
(Image: Miriam Apartments, Chicago USA)

Dough Schenkelberg - Chicago Coalition for the Homelessness
- Title: CEO
- 13 May 2022

Background:

- They support 'community organising' of people with a lived experience and anyone else interested in ending homelessness.
- Community organising is something that Chicago has a long history of. It is about generating and wielding people power.
- They are completely self funded with a budget of about $5 million per annum being made up of two thirds regular individual giving and the rest family foundations.
- They have six community organisers on staff. The places they go to do organising include shelters and encampments, to talk about who the coalition is and what they do.
- Community organising like this was born in Chicago. Famously, former President Barack Obama was a community organiser.

Lived Experience
- Their view is that you shouldn't be making decisions about what people experiencing homelessness need without involving them in those decisions.
- They are focused on building a system of leadership development - not just individual leaders.
- Most community organisers were once activists. So, a lot of the community organisers have a lived experience of homelessness.

- About half of their staff are people with a lived experience - some of the challenges can be getting people to understand working in the workplace.

Recommendation 29: The AAEH consider supporting the development of a "Street Voices for Change: Lived Experience Network" - not a policy consultation forum but a community organising network that supports the development of media-trained advocates, establishes a speaker service, proves training about working in a person-centred way, campaigns to reduce stigma, and other associated activities.

Advocacy, Activism and Community Organising
- They do what we'd consider activism in Australia including holding actions by showing up at the city hall or press conferences to raise awareness.
- They do a lot of work with the media to provide case studies, but making sure the personal stories are tied to systems issues. This means not just enabling a media focus on 'poverty porn' and contributing to a cycle of helplessness, despondency and doom when it comes to reporting homelessness.
- A tenet of community organising is that people do it for free - this is distinct from engaging people with a lived experience to be paid consultants to sit on reference groups and be part of governance or policy discussions.
- Organising is about power and power comes from people. Homelessness is a result of many things - amongst them is the power imbalance that prioritises in public policy debates the needs of the wealthy and powerful over the needs of the vulnerable and powerless.
- What distinguishes activism from community organising in the US parlance is having a really clear strategy or theory of change.
- Community organising is about pragmatism - being realistic about what is possible.
- People with a lived experience get lots out of activism, it builds confidence, helps with future employment opportunities, and makes change happen.
- They have had a lot of success with train the trainer models.
- Their training on this usually takes up to three days.

Recommendation 30: the AAEH partner with the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless to deliver community organising / advocacy training for interested parties in Australia and/or the establishment of a fellowship model.

Washington DC

Linda Kaufman
- Title: Retired leader with the 100,000 Homes Campaign, Community Solutions
- Date: 15 May 2022

- The 100,000 homes campaign was an incredible experience and learning opportunity.
- Although very successful in ensuring many, many people were housed, ultimately it failed to move the dial on homelessness, and why the move to the Built for Zero campaign was so important - to seek to count down.
- The VI-SPDAT is a crude tool, but there is no viable alternative.
- Housing First is useful, but the debates surrounding it are often not.
- Ultimately this work is about building a movement.

Definitions
- Having clear definitions are important.

- In Australia, we have relatively clear definitions of homelessness that are measured through an estimate and infrequently.
- In the US they have a federal definition of homelessness which we would define as rough sleeping, but they don't have a federal definition for or focus on overcrowding, and couch surfing..

(Image: Meeting at a 'typical American dinner' in Virginia, USA)

Jeff Olivet - U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
- Title: Executive Director
- Date: 16 May 2022

Background
- Recognising that solutions to homelessness cut across federal, state, and local jurisdictions, Congress charged The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) with building a robust interagency, cross-sector approach to preventing and ending homelessness.
- The mission of USICH is to coordinate the federal response to homelessness and create partnerships with the private sector and state and local governments to reduce and end homelessness.
- The USICH consists of representatives from 19 federal agencies on its governing Council and a full-time staff led by an Executive Director.
- Membership includes for example:
    - The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
    - Department of Education (ED) - which has been really important in supporting families and youth.
    - Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
    - Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
    - The Department of Interior - which is responsible for first nations homelessness or what many Americans refer to as 'native affairs'.
- The USICH's authorizing statute requires members of the council to be secretaries/agency heads or their designees.

Reducing Bureaucracy / Improving Integration:
- In the decade after USICH published the first Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in 2010, homelessness declined 9% overall.
- The plan drove significant progress among families and veterans experiencing homelessness, which respectively declined nearly 30% and 50%.
- USICH has certified that more than 60 communities across more than 30 states have ended veteran homelessness - though their definition of ending homelessness is very different from the Community Solutions definition and essentially is a point in time achievement measured through street counts. In Australia, we wouldn't consider this to be 'ending homelessness', but rather a milestone on the way to ending homelessness.

- USICH makes it possible to combine federal resources to more effectively end homelessness. For example, it has helped pair HUD-funded housing with Medicaid-funded services to deliver high-quality permanent supportive housing.
- Despite the existence of the Council there is still a lot of fragmentation, but it would be many times worse without it.
- "I highly recommend establishing a council in Australia, and would be happy to meet with the new Australian Minister".

EXHIBIT 1.1: PIT Estimates of People Experiencing Homelessness
By Sheltered Status, 2007–2020

(Image: The 2020 point in time count - annual homeless assessment report to Congress)[16]

Commonwealth Government Recommendation 4: The Commonwealth Government establish an Interagency Council on Ending Homelessness, to support the engagement of Commonwealth service delivery agencies relevant to ending homelessness, including in disability, aged care, primary health, veterans, social security, etc. It should be supported out of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Disaster Resilience and Homelessness
- One of the agencies involved in the Council is the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and a benefit of having them engaged is that it has sparked conversations about better disaster resilience efforts in relation to people experiencing homelessness, and developing support resources.[17]
- It has been found in Australia that having a by-name list can be very helpful in disaster preparedness, response and resilience.

Ending Homelessness in the Strategy
- They are working on a new strategy - but their existing strategy titled 'Opening Doors' talks about making homelessness 'rare, brief and non-reoccurring' - however some have concerns about this.
- Some think the current strategy has seen a neglect of families and youth.
- A key challenge for governments is they are accountable for seeking to do all things for all people all at the same time. It's hard for them to have a focus on a specific area for any length of time.
- Others see the chronic focus as an arbitrary construct - as people are constantly moving through different types of homelessness. It changes daily.
- Rare, brief and non-reoccurring in this sense is a milestone, not the outcome.

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[16] https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2020-AHAR-Part-1.pdf
[17]

https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Omicron_Variant_of_COVID19_What_Homeless_Service_Providers_Need_to_Know.pdf

- We've become very good at ending homelessness at the individual level, we need to get better at doing it at the systemic level.
- The next strategic plan will likely be published in September, and focus on themed areas of work, rather than population by population focus.
- Themes/pillars will be: equity, data and evidence, housing and prevention.
- There will be a bigger focus on lived experience.
  - "We can borrow from the mental health world where they have a well-understood concept of nothing about us without us".
- Target setting will be important to the new strategy, by all agencies.

Prevention
- Prevention will be much more of a focus - the White House recently spearheaded a homelessness prevention workgroup, agencies committed to what they can already do within existing resources.
- It has been quite successful so far. Some successes include:
  - Eviction prevention dollars in the Carers Act
  - Foster care transitions efforts
  - Justice system discharge improvements
  - Military engagement on housing and other pre discharge planning
  - Mental health inpatient care discharge arrangements
- They are also doing some work in the primary care field - for example when a doctor screens you for depression (PHQ5 tool), and if it signals some indicators of depression, you ask a few more questions, we don't do anything like that with housing risk. But we should.
- Prevention work is rarely successful when you take the dollars for it from the crisis / resolution end of the system. You need additional funding and you need mechanisms (targets and strategies) to hold these other systems to account for the outcomes to turn off the facet (tap).
- There has been some interesting work being done in the US, using computer models to predict who will become homeless to inform where prevention activities will be the most effective.[18]

Recommendation 31: State Governments work with local Zero Projects to use by-name list data match with other service systems to inform prevention work.

(Image: Meeting at Jeff, Washington, USA)

History

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[18] www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-06-12/homeless-prevention-unit?_amp=true

- The Council was established in 1987 - when modern homelessness really started to emerge.
- It was originally established within the Housing and Urban Development Agency, but that was not very effective, particularly in getting mental health, veterans and other agency by-in.
- Over time it moved to be a stand-alone agency.
- The Bush administration (Republican / conservative) breathed new life into the Council - so it's seen bi-partisan support, and it then grew in standing substantially under Obama (Democrat / progressive).
- They have a direct line to the White House, with the director appointed by the White House. Having the central government agency in your corner is essential.
- The head of the domestic policy council is Susan Rice, former Ambassador to the United Nations. Rice is the key contact in the White House. Underneath her is the Special Assistant to the President for Housing and Urban Development.
- Many of the states now also have interagency councils. Two of the more advanced ones are California and Massachusetts.

Recommendation 32: State Governments establish and publically document their strategies for supporting across government and intergovernmental coordination in their efforts to end homelessness.

Commonwealth Government Recommendation 5: The Commonwealth Government make having state based across government and intergovernmental coordination mechanisms in place a requirement of funding as part of the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement funding.

Operations
- In Washington DC they have a policy, communication, administration role. Then they have regional coordinators, for the various parts of the country that ensure a two way flow of communication.
- They have quarterly meetings, and that feels about right as the time, paperwork and resources needed to go into coordinating them is a lot.
- They also have a council policy group, which is a delegated group below the secretaries. They from time to time also seek to make the state based groups stronger.

Coordinating Entities
- Regarding Continuums of Care, some argue that they are conceptually flawed because they have very varying levels of effectiveness. The authority of a loose conglomeration of NGO leaders who are competing for the same funds, is minimal. The locus of control might better sit with local governments.
- Be wary of setting up new entity's to take the funding, this has been tried in the US, but usually just becomes another place for accountability to be shifted, where the levers of control don't exist.
- One example of a well established legal entity is the King Country Regional Homelessness Authority.
- In LA for example, the counties are strong and the Mayor's offices are weaker, comparatively to the rest of the country. They have had to set up regional homelessness authorities - and it becomes a blame game. This is where it's most dysfunctional in the US.
- To learn from this in Australia, perhaps the way to go is to utilise the Collective Impact models of a 'backbone coordinating entities', that works closely with governments and the sector, but are not from either.

- One example of the Collective Impact approach is the EveryOne Home initiative to end homelessness in Alameda County. It has a well functioning board, and the Mayor has backed it. Another is the Destination Home - Santa Clara County. The challenge is the sector often turns on itself.

Definitions
- Some find the functional zero concept challenging, or don't like the terminology as it accepts some homelessness, rather than seeks the goal of absolute zero, even though we're a long way off that.
- We can imagine a world where there is no homelessness for anyone, anywhere, anytime. So we should seek to bring that about. That's the first order goal. Then you can seek to make homelessness rare, brief and non-reoccuring in the short term.
- Conceptually, it helps to see functional zero as the way you measure that for particular population groups, on the way to absolute zero.
- Each of these concepts can be nestled within the broader goal of a literal end to all homelessness.
- The BNL has its role, but unless you do the data-matching to other service systems, you won't be going far enough upstream to really turn off the tap.

Do you think ending homelessness is possible?
- "Absolutely - I've been in this work 28 years, I've never felt more confident that it's possible".

Three things that are essential to ending homelessness:
- We really need to go upstream, it takes time, but we need to focus on it.
- We need a greater focus on equity
- National, state and local infrastructure is needed - bringing officials together with the sense of urgency, and the long view.
- "This is literally a life or death issue, we need to act with a sense of urgency, but simultaneously take the long term view. Short term solutions aren't helping anyone".
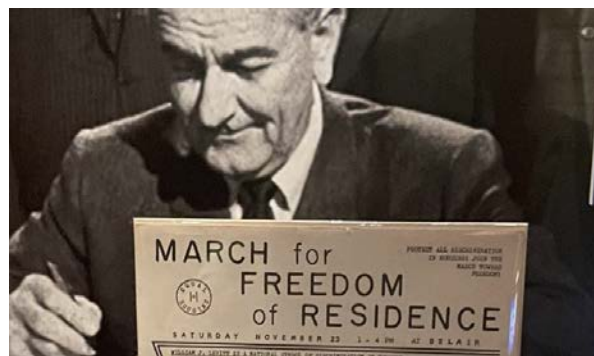
(Image: Photo from the National Museum of American History, display on democracy and advocacy, President Johnson signing an executive order re fair housing ordinance for the Washington DC area)

Michele Jolin - Results for America
- Title: Co Founder and CEO
- Date: 16 May 2022

Background
- The main areas of focus for Results for America, is supporting system

change work, enabling a focus on evidence and outcomes.
- Michele worked in the Obama White House on the social innovation team. There she helped create the $50m social innovation fund, but it was very hard to get Congress to understand this, to get a focus on funding things without a track record / or evidence base - to back innovation.
- Results for America was formed to help set a standard of excellence, what government needs to have to make decisions based on evidence and data.

Social Enterprise
- Michele works with Ashoka, a pioneer in the field of social entrepreneurship and seeks to help build a global community of changemakers who have the confidence and support to solve problems and contribute to the common good.
- We discussed how relevant the quote below from Bill Drayton, CEO of Ashoka is to the work of seeking to end homelessness, as opposed to addressing individual instances of homelessness.
- *"Social entrepreneurs are not content to just fish, or teach to fish, but to revolutionise the finishing industry" - Bill Drayton CEO of Ashoka.*
- To seek to end homelessness requires being entrepreneurial.

Communicating our work.
- When you're working to get others to change and working in an innovative way, It's important to be really clear about what you do - but equally to describe how you do it.
- Results for America describe how they work this way:
  - The Opportunity: We know more than ever before about what works to improve lives. Evidence and data point the way to solutions.
  - The Solution: Government leaders must have the will to seek out evidence and data on what works – and what doesn't – and the courage to use what they learn. If governments invest in what works, we can dramatically improve the impact of public dollars and increase opportunities for all.
- There are three streams to their work including:
  - Standards of Excellence - Creating standards that highlight the government infrastructure necessary to invest in what works.
  - Implementation support - Supporting policymakers committed to investing in what works through tools, resources and technical assistance.
  - Movement Building - celebrating the behaviour change and mobilising champions committed to investing in what works.

Recommendation 33: The AAEH develop a 'how we work' fact sheet, drawing heavily on the efforts of Results for America, to not just describe what we do, but to influence how we do it. For example:
- Excellence in practice: Advance to Zero, Allied Networks, etc.
- Implementation: training and advisory, fellows, academy, etc.
- Mobilisation: Summit, Allied Networks, etc.

Results-based funding
- Results for America started at the federal level, and are now working with over 100 cities in a placed-based way as a result of Bloomberg philanthropic support. As a result, a lot of programs have moved to outcomes-based funding rather than traditional block funding.
- Outcomes-based funding is where some, or all, of a contractual payment, is conditional on certain outcomes being achieved. It differs from block funding

- more traditional methods of government procuring human services where a 'block' of funding is provided and a set of outputs are required, i.e. help 10 people a day.
- Block funding is how almost all homelessness services are funded in Australia.
- The challenge with results-based funding is that a lot of the efforts to implement it have shifted a lot of the 'risk' to non-government organisations.

Recommendation 34: State Governments seek to transition more homelessness funding to outcomes based contracts, rather than output-based contracts, however, it's essential that there is a strong evidence-base behind what resources are needed to deliver those outcomes.

Innovation vs Evidence Base
- There are a lot of people who will argue governments shouldn't be funding services that aren't 'evidence based'. If you follow this argument to the logical conclusion, it's inherently conservative and doesn't enable change, innovation, and learning - outside of a highly prescriptive, expensive, randomised control research context.
- There are many types of evidence, ranging from build an evidence base through innovation, all the way up to randomised control trials.
- Having a really clear theory of change in the work you are doing helps create the space for innovation, but must include a commitment to building the evidence base as you go. This is what is so powerful about the by-name list innovation that Community Solutions have pioneered.
- It helps build a culture of using data for improvement and focusing on what works, and what we are learning, as opposed to data for accountability - either community and media holding governments to account, or governments holding service providers to account.
- We need more data for improvement versus data for judgement.
- Government needs to get better at providing the resources for building the evidence base as you go.
- Remember the innovation adoption curve - it classifies people by their willingness to adopt new ideas, technologies, or trends. Developed in 1962 by E.M. Rogers, it's also known as the Rogers Adoption Curve.
- It is represented by a bell-curve graph, which is used to show deviations within a group, with the highest point on a bell curve indicating the majority; the early majority and late majority make up most of the population.
- It's helpful to have a clear understanding of where you are at on the curve.
- The AtoZ movement is moving from innovators phase to the early adopters phase. This is a helpful reminder that we don't need to solve this everywhere at once - we're seeking to demonstrate that ending homelessness is possible.
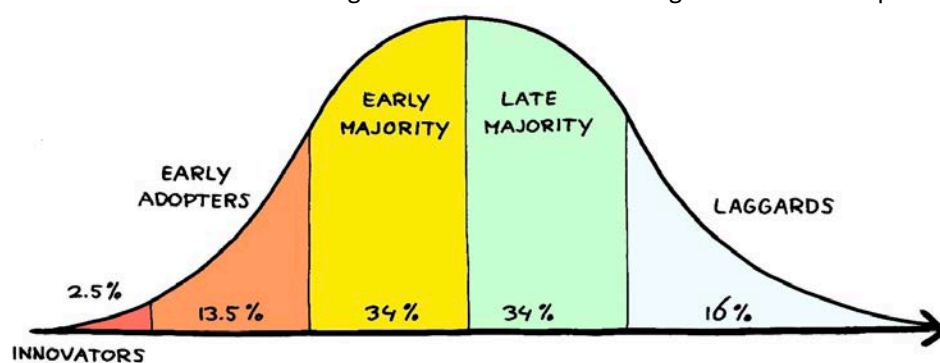
(Image: The Innovation Curve, The Centre for Association Leadership, USA)[19]

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[19] https://www.asaecenter.org/resources/articles/an_plus/2017/september/rethinking-the-change-adoption-curve

Collective Impact and Consultation
- Governments have not generally funded Collective Impact initiatives in the US. Some governments show up at the table, but it's mostly driven by community and philanthropy. More information on Collective Impact can be found in Appendix B.
- This is a challenge for Australia given our philanthropic sector is so much smaller. Local government has a really important role here.
- Governments talk about community consultation, and co-design, but it's rarely genuine or done well - the systems of government make this hard.
- Targets are important, as is having the right people at the table. Building capacity in government to do consultation better is also really key.

Recommendation 35: State Governments consider setting policies on Collective Impact initiatives and being clear on how state government agencies can best engage with and support these collaborations - particularly in relation to the Advance to Zero movement.

Recommendation 36: A focus of Local Government efforts in supporting efforts to end homelessness should be to help bring communities together to create local zero projects, and to financially support the backbone efforts of these Collective Impact initiatives.

Recommendation 37: Local Government agencies like the state-based Local Government Associations, the Australian Local Government Association and the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors (CCCLM) should support the development of tools and resources to make it easier for local governments to engage and support this work.

(Images: Photos of homelessness in the Washington DC area, including a children's stroller in front of a tent)

Communications and Evidence
- Better communicating the evidence you build is essential. It's all well and good to build an evidence base, but if no one knows about it, what's the point?
- To deal with this, Results for America has established the "What Works Media Project". This project uses the power of storytelling and data-driven solutions to impact policy and change lives.
- In particular, they use the power of non-fiction filmmaking to highlight "what works" to advance social mobility and the courageous leaders in government who are driving this change.

- It is led by award-winning documentary producers and journalists with decades of experience creating stories that translate difficult subjects and motivate action.
- Australia needs to build the capacity for this type of collaborative communications activity in support of efforts to end homelessness. The Co-Lab concept could provide a vehicle for this.

Stop Raising Awareness of Homelessness
- Another thing we need to get better at regarding communications and ending homelessness is to stop raising awareness.
- For anyone working on a cause they are passionate about, the instinct to make sure that as many people as possible are aware of the problem is strong.
- When we care about an issue, it's natural to want others to care as much as we do - surely if people knew that you're more likely to die in an accident if you don't wear a seat belt, they'd wear their seat belt.
- That instinct is described by communication theory as the Information Deficit Model.[20]
- What we need to do is create awareness that leads to action. There is a great Stanford social innovation review article that focuses on this and explains the four essential elements to creating a public interest communications campaign that leads to action:
  - target your audience as narrowly as possible;
  - create compelling messages with clear calls to action;
  - develop a theory of change; and
  - use the right messenger.[21]

Recommendation 38: The AAEH work collaboratively with other organisations seeking to end homelessness to develop a communications campaign driving action towards efforts to end homelessness amongst key stakeholder groups and populations.

Organising for Change
- Organisations that build robust infrastructure,which includes communications, but also information technology systems, financial systems, professional development, fundraising processes, and other essential overheads,are more likely to succeed than those that do not.
- This is not news, and nonprofits are no exception to the rule.
- The AAEH needs to think about its organisational strategy, and build an organisation capable of supporting the movement that will be needed to end homelessness in Australia. This isn't a distraction from your core business, this is literally your business as a social enterprise.
- One way to build capacity is to utilise volunteers and interns, but again you have to build the capacity to support them.

Is homelessness possible
- Yes

Three most import factors:
- Movement building - political engagement, making it mainstream, celebrating the changes in behaviour, and calling out the poor practice.
- Knowing what good looks like - examples of it being done elsewhere.

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[20] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_deficit_model
[21] https://ssir.org/articles/entry/stop_raising_awareness_already

- Helping people to get there - remember the innovation adoption curve, we don't need to solve this everywhere at once. We need to demonstrate the innovation.

Norman Suchar - U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Title: Director, Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs
- Date: 16 May 2022

Background
- Norman has been at US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for seven years and was previously with National Alliance.
- He is the director of Special Needs Assistance at HUD - one of the executive departments of the U.S. federal government.
- HUD administers federal housing and urban development laws. It is headed by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, who reports directly to the President of the United States and is a member of the president's Cabinet.

Data
- To get a system level outcome you need data to inform your efforts, to give you confidence that you are achieving what you think you are achieving.
- In the US we generally don't have great data on unsheltered homelessness - they move a lot and use a lot of different types of services.
- HMIS creates a set of data standards, and each community hires a vendor, to help them meet the requirements for reporting.
- The Australian Institute for Health and Welfare provides a similar role in Australia. The Challenge for HUD is they don't have any legal structures to influence the vendors, just consistent data standards.

(Images: Arriving at the HUD office in Washington DC) zž

Continuums of Care
- Continuums of Care or CoC's - were created to create incentives for providers to not cream, or cherry pick, who they house and leave the most vulnerable cycling through different forms of homelessness. More background on CoC's is in Appendix B.
- Some take the view that when CoC's are dominated by providers, they generally are not well operated, there isn't much accountability, often stagnation and very little innovation.
- Coordinated entry was established to take decision making away from the providers, and to put it at a community system level. This was really important.

- The CoC's that are most effective have heavy participation of various levels of government, and the various arms of government.
- Best continuums have strong mayoral or gubernatorial leadership. Champions are critical.
- There isn't much flexibility in how CoC's geographic coverage is decided, they are mostly historical anachronisms. There are a handful of states that have just one CoC - Montana for example, Ohio has six or seven city based COC's and the rest of the state falls into what's called a 'balance of state' COC.
  - Colorado has a number of CoC's but they all use the same HMIS vendor/system, enabling data sharing.
- Despite the challenges and problems with CoC's, what they really help with is ensuring that communities need to come up with a shared vision, if they don't the issues get played out in the media.
- The lack of local plans or action plans is why so often that rough sleepers get such a poor service.
- Another challenge is the CoC's come up with action plans, and the City and State Government change the plan - quite a bit. The idea behind CoC's action plans is that they represent everyone's view, but it doesn't work this way. CoC's aren't influential enough.
- When you have competing priorities, then you don't really have priorities.

Housing First
- In the US, people agree broadly, but we have very spotty execution.
- It's either not done at all, or if you're a provider, it's easier to run a program that is inflexible, delivers housing first purely to a small number of people, but operates in a system that is broken, and does little to influence that system.
- Regarding fidelity to the housing first debates, these went a way a bit in recent times because of President Trump - the debate was about defending the role of the Federal Government in homelessness at all. This helped more people recognise that housing first fidelity debates are an academic exercise unless you are changing systems on the ground.
- Homelessness needs are similar in most communities, but the responses are very different. So for example, New York is very shelter focused (and has a right to shelter), but California does not.

VI-SPDAT
- There are lots of debates, but the reality is there really isn't an alternative.
- We need a process for identifying people who are very ill and have high levels of disability, so that in the US we can identify people who need permanent supportive housing. In Australia this isn't the purpose behind the use of the tool, because we don't have a supportive housing system.
- Why government has not engaged in this, and left it to communities to decide is accountabilities are different in government. For example, if you've been arrested recently, you are more likely to be identified as vulnerable and more likely to get housed. If government mandated a process like that they would be crucified because it would be seen by some as incentivising the committing of crimes.
- There have also been significant racial disparities identified in housing outcomes in the US, but the fact that we have racist landlords in the private rental system, doesn't mean you need permanent supportive housing for all people subject to discrimination. We need to address racism in the private market.

Deaths Data

- The US collects some data, a lot of the data is collected through news reports, some cities track the numbers through coroner's courts. There is no consistent national framework for measuring how many people die whilst experiencing homelessness.
- <u>There are an estimated 21 deaths of people experiencing homelessness every single day in the USA.</u> They die in cars, abandoned houses, tents, shelters, and sidewalks. Almost all of these deaths are preventable.[22]
- This estimate is pulled together by a volunteer non-profit based in Seattle.

How did Ending Homelessness become Strategy
- The work of the National Alliance to End Homelessnesswas pivotal.
- In 2010, the federal government adopted the language through their 'Opening Doors' policy.
- It introduced the language of rare, brief and non-reoccurring - whereas the Alliance's language was closing the front door into homelessness (i.e. prevention) and opening the back door out of homelessness (i.e. stopping people from cycling back into homelessness).
- The outcome has been the same, and it's really permeated thinking ever since, and has even made it into the names of lots of organisations and collaborations.

By-Name Lists
- The difficulty in understanding functional zero is often a barrier for many, for others the level of resources to keep a by-name list up to date is prohibitive.
- The by-name list is a really good 'last mile tool', i.e. as you get closer to achieving functional zero, it's less helpful when you have 5,000 people sleeping rough out the front of the mayor's office.
- The standard that the US Govt recognising an end to homelessness is significantly less rigorous than the functional zero measure. It shares the rare, brief and non-reoccurring goal, but it relies on point in time counts.

The US Interagency Council on Homelessness
- The USICH has a really crucial function. Interagency work needs to be someone's responsibility, and it's always low on an agency's priorities, as they always have their own issues to work through.
- Accountabilities are very strongly up and down in government departments, you need someone to bring people together across agency structures.
- Agencies will always have disagreements, and you need someone to mediate.
- If you're developing strategy it's also really helpful to have it sit above agencies, i.e. out of the White House.

Is Ending Homelessness Possible?
- Absolutely, ending homelessness is possible, we can have enough housing.
- This is fundamentally a challenge of democratic governance - housing costs are going up everywhere, there is a problem of incentives around building housing and infrastructure and addressing poverty and inequality.

What are the top three things needed to end homelessness?
- Setting specific, measurable goals and modelling your progress to this is really important. To do that you need good data collection.
  - This enables a set of performance measures, cost effectiveness measures, preference measures to be developed.

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[22] https://homelessdeathscount.org/

- - To set a goal and model towards it is a telling strategy, it shows you where the pain points are, what the opportunities are.
    - HUD did some modeling on ending veterans homelessness. It got a surge in federal funding, but when they checked the model, they realised it was off. They realised through this that the technical assistance (consulting) and implementation assistance was really needed.
  - Bravery in the funding, stop funding things that aren't working.
    - They have had some success at redirecting funding away from transitional housing
    - There are always going to be agencies who only want to work with those with low acuity - it's easier and it's cheaper (for that agency - not for the system). Stop rewarding these agencies and punishing the ones who focus on the high acuity.
  - Collective impact is key, but you need to fund it.
    - "You could make many homelessness responses twice as effective, if you managed the system better, but the inclination is always there to fund direct services, it's inefficient. If you want to shift the dial, fund the improvements to the systems, not more funding into the crisis end of broken systems."

Triina Van - Arlington County Department of Human Services
- Title: Homeless Services Coordinator
- Date: 17 May 2022

Background
- Arlington County is small, and only has one level of government involved in homelessness service delivery and coordination.
- All their funds come through their CoC which operates the coordinated access effort, as well as all the municipal services including employment, ageing etc.
- There are five non-profits that are part of the CoC. Co-Chairs of the CoC are from the NGOs, but it also includes housing developers, elected officials, etc.

Involvement in Built for Zero
- Their involvement started in 2016 when they joined the 100,000 Homes campaign. This really helped bring the county together.
- At the time, they had between 500-600 people experiencing all forms of homelessness. Roughly 225 in shelter, their capacity doesn't change much.
  - The campaign was really successful in getting greater integration.
  - Their involvement in the campaign spearheaded the decline in overall homelessness that has been sustained.
- The key factor in their success of getting to functional zero was that at the time, the federal strategic plan rolled out (pulled together by the interagency council). They moved from requiring a 10 year plan, to two-three year plans focused on a subpopulation strategy - i.e. chronic and veterans.
- Community Solutions help was really crucial to them successfully achieving functional zero for veterans and they have effectively sustained it ever since.
- They have had ebbs and flows in the reporting of the data to Community Solutions.

- They have sustained veterans functional zero to this day. That doesn't mean no one will ever be on the street who is a veteran obviously, just that experiences will be rare, brief and a one time thing.
- They haven't officially signed on to do 'zero for all' - i.e. all rough sleeping - they are working though their governance processes on that. They need to develop a new strategic plan due by the end of the year.

Data and Coordination
- The by-name list is just a subset of the data they have to collect for the Federal Government (HMIS). They have a number of by-name lists.
  - Families
  - Single adults - sheltered / unsheltered
  - Single Adults - rapid re-housing (short term rent assistance)
  - Youth gets overlapped.
- They have a different meeting /coordinating team for each list.
- Chronic has been really hard because they meet the definition, but not eligible for housing, i.e. they are undocumented, mental health system doesn't meet their needs, culturally appropriateness of services, stigma, etc.
- The community has been tracking data, and action is linked to strategic plans, but the data doesn't necessarily inform the activities. It should.
- HUD's trying to support collaboration, but the resource starved nature of the CoC's mean that the NGO's are usually competing with each other.

Challenges
- They have challenges, like most communities, with turnover of staff and stakeholders and general capacity issues for system level work.
- Getting people to engage is hard, it's trying to incorporate this side initiative that Community Solutions and Built for Zero are pushing and incorporate it and see it as part of the day-to-day work communities are doing.
- The challenge is finding solutions for the really specific sub groups.

Action Plans
- Having an Action Plan is a requirement of the CoC's - but HUD makes it flexible. They help build understanding of what everyone is agreeing to do.
- Most find them very useful - they give your work a grounding, they help enable a focus on connecting the strategy with the data.
  - Originally they required 10 year plans. That was too long term, it's better now with the requirement for 3-5 year plans.
- Their County reports data using a Results Based Accountability (RBA) approach, a way of measuring the real differences we make to communities, also known as outcomes based methodology.[23] It's closely linked to the Collective Impact approach towards collaborating with local communities to make positive, sustainable change to complex social issues.

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[23] https://clearimpact.com/results-based-accountability/

(Image: Photo of the Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington Cemetery, Virginia, USA)

Prevention
- Arlington's prevention efforts are to be credited for why we haven't seen a waitlist for the past few years.
- They have staff whose job it is to focus on this, and to measure performance.
- For example in 2015, the CoC benchmarked the number of persons who were homeless and entered permanent housing but returned to homelessness (e.g. emergency shelter or on the streets) within two years.
- In 2015, the percentage of persons returning to homelessness was 25 percent; this number decreased slightly to 22 percent in 2016. It was a small difference, but had a big impact.

Recommendation 39: The AAEH support AtoZ communities to benchmark, track and publicly report their systems performance in reducing the number of people newly identified or returning to homelessness - i.e. prevention.

Permanent Supportive Housing
- They have about 400 units available in their county, funded through a plethora of federal, state and local government programs.
- Most if not all of the Permanent Supportive Housing is scattered site, so no onsite support. They would very much like to have some more onsite based Permanent Supportive Housing.

Is Ending homelessness possible?
- Originally I would have said no - not without the resources, but now, we have the flavour for what it will take, and what kind of resources are needed - so yes. If the Federal Government could find the funding for the pandemic response, surely they could find the funding to end homelessness.

Top three things needed?
- Paying reparations to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) communities and getting resources and power into their hands.
- Move to a rights frame, and trust people with the funds and housing - so an empowerment model, where we stop policing the poor, making decisions on the basis of the deservingness of the poor.
- Data and Collaboration.

Nan Roman - The National Alliance to End Homelessness

- Title: CEO
- Date: 17 May 2022

- National Alliance's work focuses on data and research, policy work, and technical assistance / training.

Data and Research
- Has a research council that meets periodically and comes together at conferences.
- They often research what no-one else is focused on or even knows about.
- Government Departments have funds for research, but by the time they do it, the issues have usually moved on. It's frustratingly behind the eight ball.

Policy Work
- They have done a lot of work with Dennis Culhane, Professor at the University of Pennsylvania. Using administrative data, he's been really helpful in giving a sense of what the cost of action / inaction is and it helped raise a HUD program that was going to be $1bn to being a $4bn program, based on his work estimating the projected mortality rate of the homeless during the pandemic
- They also do a lot of work with the California Policy Lab - Jannie Roundtree.
- A key challenge is effectiveness - in the US - 9% get housed and the rest self resolve or remain homelessness.
    - People who are unsheltered are homeless five times longer than sheltered people
    - 80% of unsheltered women are tri-morbid - experiencing mental health, physical health and drug and alcohol problems
    - 2% of sheltered are tri-morbid

Technical Assistance and Training
- We do this work not because we need or are chasing the funds, but to understand what's going on on the ground, to understand what is needed by communities. To keep us grounded.
- Every few years we shift the focus, from individual adults, to people who are unsheltered, etc.
- The main activities of the Alliance are our two conferences: one in DC, that is focused on everyone, veterans, youth, families, individuals, and another on the West Coast - always on a subpopulation, i.e it was families recently.
- Most of the funding for the Alliance comes from the conferences and training. They get a few bequests and philanthropy, but they don't chase the corporate dollar, as it too often comes with too many strings.

(Image: An example of foundations engaging in Advocacy in Washington DC)

Communications And Advocacy
- Is a big part of their work - in all three areas, data and reach, policy and technical assistance.
- Very important that we're focused on the mission and not the industry.
- They've found it hard to engage with healthcare.

Supportive Housing
- There are problems with the efficacy of the supportive housing models.
- Providers don't always take the high needs clients. Sometimes they take them some time in the past, people get better, and then the service starts to fall away, so when you get vacancies, they don't want to take the high needs clients because they don't have the services any more or don't want to upset the service model.
- Holding PSH as PSH is hard.

Prevention / Assessment:
- There is a process regarding screening and tools that are used in veterans affairs on primary health which asks about housing. and This is not seen as threatening.
- Requiring a policy of no discharge is seen as threatening, and often doesn't get anywhere - that's why protocols are important.
- When it comes to prevention, one of the most effective can be diversion - i.e. on the day someone presents at a shelter or service, you work with them so that they don't need to come in, and try and work on options so that admission is a last resort, rather than a 'come on in' approach.
- What drives people to sleep rough is varied, but often very small issues, and a small amount of funding can go a long way. Flexible funding is key to this - and is often called brokerage funding in Australia.

Commonwealth Government Recommendation 6: The Commonwealth Government establish a 'Reduce to Zero: Ending Homelessness Flexible Fund' to support efforts to drive and sustain reductions in people experiencing homelessness through the Advance to Zero Campaign - with a particular focus on prevention and diversion activities.

Is Ending Homelessness possible?
- When Nan started working on affordable housing, they had racism, drug use, mental health problems, but people could get people into housing. There was no large-scale homelessness back then. She started in her role in 1983. Things

have changed a lot since then, but 'I know ending homelessness is possible, because there was none when I started my career'.
- The National Alliance was originally called the national citizens committee for food and shelter. Nan changed it to be about ending homelessness because she believed it is possible.
- I know we don't need it to be this way. Ending homelessness is absolutely possible, but we need housing.

Top three things you would do to end homelessness.
- Target funding to those who are most vulnerable, not the easiest to manage.
- Increase the supply of affordable housing.
- Make housing and health an entitlement or a right, not something that you have to jump through a maze of programs to try and access.
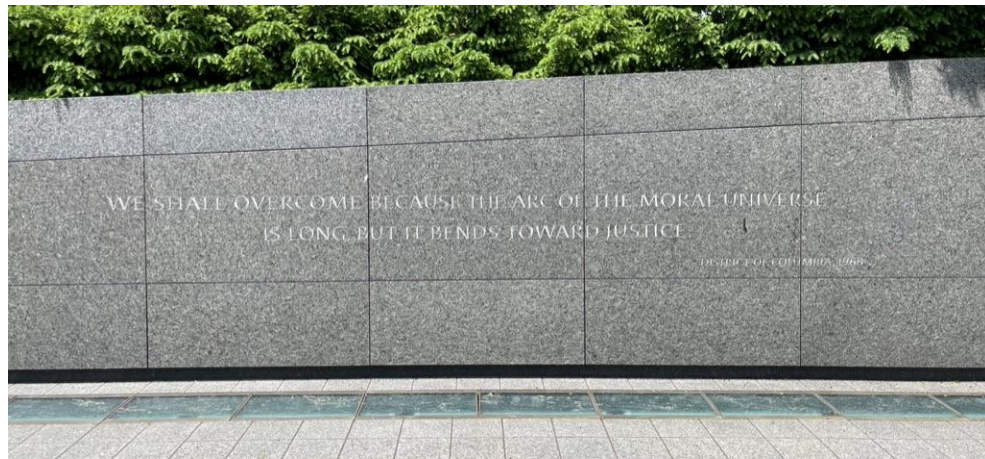
(Image: Rev Martin Luther King Jr Memorial, Washington DC)

National Alliance to End Homelessness
- In Attendance: Jerry Jones, National Field Director and Kristi Schulenberg, Director: Centre for Capacity Building
- Date: 17 May 2022

Field Organising / Politics
- Grass roots advocacy or bottom up movement building - both are needed.
- The grass roots approach has been the Alliance's founding focus, but they are doing the top down policy work a lot more now too.
- The organisations they engage in their advocacy work are shelter operators, drop in centre operators, etc.
- Local nonprofits are the lion's share of the Alliance membership.
- Activities include petitions, getting people to write to congress etc.
- Homelessness used to be bipartisan - increasingly less so.
- Homelessness is solvable, but Washington has to be willing to spend the money it would take.
- Field organising is key. The kind that the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) was well known for.
- One event that gets a lot of attention is the homelessness persons Memorial Day, held on the winter solstice - longest night of the year.[24]

Recommendation 40: The AAEH encourage the winter solstice to be a point to recognise the number of people whose lives are lost to homelessness each year in Australia.

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[24] https://nationalhomeless.org/about-us/projects/memorial-day/

"No country, however rich, can afford the waste of its human resources. Demoralization caused by vast unemployment is our greatest extravagance. Morally, it is the greatest menace to our social order."

"Fireside Chat" Radio Address, September 30, 1934

(Image: Photo of President FDR Memorial quote, Washington DC)

Training and Advisory
- Their work focuses on building system capacity, with Cities, or CoC's to conduct assessment of systems - and their effectiveness. They support building capacity in the Collective Impact approach as well.
- This is helpful for the local communities because as the saying goes, no one is a prophet in their own land.
- They have developed a centre for capacity building - the team includes an online learning manager that helps with developing onboarding training curriculum (because turnover is so high in the sector), delivering training on trauma informed care, improving racial equity, etc.

Recommendation 42: The AAEH seek funding from state governments to deliver more training and advisory services to build the capacity for undertaking the type of work that ending homelessness requires, working collaboratively, using data to inform decision making, assertive outreach, etc.

New York
Paul Howard - The Institute for Healthcare Improvement
- Title: Senior Director, Community Health Portfolio Lead
- Date: 19 May 2022

- Paul is doing a lot of work at the moment on community and population health - working with Orange County in California where they have highly wealthy areas and very poor areas right next to each other. The goal is to move the dial on the social determinants of health. They are selecting the areas at the moment - food security, safe affordable housing, etc.
- Tips for Australia, are
  - Focus on pain points, don't make it academic, doesn't matter what the issues are when you start, build the improvement muscle.
  - A lot of people say we don't have time for this. Helping them to recognise this is part of their work is a big part of improvement.
  - Building a foundational understanding of systems thinking, where they can see that they are making things worse in many instances by working in such a fragmented way.
  - Build the muscle, start small (small problems and few people). The first time a community runs a PDSA cycle (plan, do study, act), try and do it in seven day projects, and then 30 day projects.

- Try to only introduce 90-day projects after a learning session, and you've built the muscle, and tested and learned after a few rounds.
- You don't need to try and get everyone on board right away, you are looking for your innovators and early adopters - relevant to the innovation adoption curve.
  - 15% of the people start with the innovators - they will try because it's new.
  - Then there are early adopters who are often influential people in their system that will help shift the dial - 35%
  - Others will wait to engage until the evidence has been demonstrated - 35%
  - Then there are the laggards, or traditionalists, will only change behaviours when required to by policy, contract, or legislation - 15%

Government's role
- Being supportive, but not mandating, is very important at the early and mid stage. Only towards the last 15% do you want to mandate - for the traditionalists.
- We really need to test, and continue to customise in the Australian context, failing forward etc.
- Government wants to fund results - the pitch should be 'we want you to fund us to learn about what it takes to end homelessness in Australia'.
- So the approach should focus on pilot sites.
- Government helps with the support and getting the last 20%, but they aren't good at learning. Government can address homelessness, but to end it - for that you need learning.
- Government can solve technical problems, they can do big reforms, with policies and reporting, but you need to do constant improvement and learning in complex systems. Government should support those that are helping to learn, and inform them of what is working.
  - There is a need for innovation in the systems required to end homelessness - not just the homelessness system, but the feeder systems too.

Collaboration and Learning
- Forcing collaboration doesn't work, you need the light bulb to go off, and people to engage, for sustained change.
- Some will always push back - all we need is to fund housing first responses, and it is true that this is the lion's share of the problem, but that will help to address homelessness, not end it.
  - Housing first investment is a big part of the piece, it's not the entire answer to the problem.
- Others will also say you've been doing this work for years, how much more learning do we need to do? The answer I'd say to this is we haven't got the dosage right - funding will help with getting the dosage right, helping with coaching and the support, plus capacity on the ground - to do the improvement and learning required to truly solve this problem.

Doing Improvement Work
- What dosing is necessary in supporting improvement work? Do you always need direct coaching, can you have self directed learning, or cohort coaching?
  - What we've learned is that a high dosing early on is essential.
  - Explaining why you need to fill out the PDSA form, zeroing in on the hypothesis they are trying to test.

- - What we've also found is that people can learn it online, but have a lot of trouble applying it without coaching.
  - The resources that we've really built on are design thinking, psychology of change and doubling down on working with people with lived experience.
    - IHI thinks of design thinking and the Model for Improvement as complementary. For example, maybe you've figured out what you want to improve, but you're struggling with developing change ideas or the ones you've tried haven't worked. Design thinking makes you step back and work with patients to go beyond surveys to get insights about their experience. Those insights help generate a greater range of change ideas than can be formulated through more traditional processes. This helps speed improvement.[25]
    - The psychology of change in particular, has a lot of community organising, crafting strong messages, understanding what's in it for me (WIFM) type analysis - rather than just asking people to do things. A core tenet of the psychology of change is the four conditions for changing mind-sets:
      - A purpose to believe in;
      - Reinforcement systems;
      - The skills required for change; and
      - Consistent role models.[26]

Recommendation 42: The AAEH incorporate more systems thinking training (including mental models, psychology of change, etc.) into the existing improvement science training.

- We've found that the best way to engage a new community is to ask two simple questions: do you believe that ending homelessness is possible? If so, do you want to be part of a community that is learning how to do that?
- Regarding the best way to engage the health system in the work of ending homelessness - the trick is finding what is important to the healthcare system, and making your work relevant. To do that, you need to listen.

Recommendation 43: The Australian Health, Housing and Homelessness Network (A3HN) as part of its regular catch ups should discuss and track the top 'pain points' between the systems.

Is ending homelessness possible?
- Yes - we know how to do it and build the will necessary. It's a community and government choice to allow homelessness - we could choose to end it if we wanted.

The three things that enable any community that wants to end homelessness are:
- Use data and measure outcomes, through the establishment of by-name lists
- Learn all of the tools, re improvement science
- Connect and learn with others who are on the same journey.

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[25] https://www.ihi.org/communities/blogs/how-to-overcome-improvement-resistant-challenges

[26] https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/the-psychology-of-change-management

Laurel Blatchford - Blue Meridian
- Title: Senior Adviser - System change - Place Matters team
- Date: 19 May 2022

Background
- Laurel was chief of staff at the Department of Housing and Urban Development under the Obama Administration.
- Blue Meridian: brings problems, solutions and funders together. They support philanthropy to pool their funds to support leaders who are seeking to make change at scale, so they can focus on having impact and not on chasing grant dollars.
- They seek to scale what is working at a national level - but recognise the importance of place.
- They focus on youth or cradle to career outcomes in 14 places and are very informed by Collective Impact.
- It's a philanthropic effort, and they are looking to give $80-100m per place.
- They use the funds for technical assistance (i.e. data work), field building or backbone's of the local backbone work (i.e. what Community Solutions or the AAEH does).
- For example, the Gates Foundation is funding an economic mobility alliance, common definitions, common standard - building a frame of reference.

Place Based Work
- The benefits of place based work are apparent; it helps break down silos - and recognises that where you live is so fundamental to your life outcomes.
- They came to this work through affordable housing.
- The reason to think about place based work is to address the postcode lottery.
- The Johnson administration tried to do urban renewal, and it had some very destructive, gentrification outcomes.
- When doing place based work, innovative ownership structures, like land trusts are really important.

Community Land Trusts
- Community land trusts (CLTs) are nonprofit organisations governed by a board of CLT residents, community residents and public representatives that provide lasting community assets and shared equity home-ownership opportunities for families and communities.
- CLTs develop rural and urban agriculture projects, commercial spaces to serve local communities, affordable rental and cooperative housing projects, and conserve land or urban green spaces. However, the heart of their work is the creation of homes that remain permanently affordable, providing successful homeownership opportunities for generations of lower income families.
- There are over 225 community land trusts in the United States.[27]

Philanthropy

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[27] https://groundedsolutions.org/strengthening-neighborhoods/community-land-trusts

- Getting philanthropy to support efforts to get to scale in place based approaches is hard work, but worth it.
- Philanthropy is big in the USA because government is dysfunctional, and because of the massive wealth inequality.
- A lot of US based philanthropists think that they can solve complex problems like homelessness with the technical solutions that made them wealthy by for example building an app that gets you your sushi faster. Homelessness is more complex than that, but there are lessons to be learnt about working in an agile way, building minimum viable products to test innovations, etc. They bring skills that our sector needs.

(Image: Photo from the exhibition on Entrepreneurship in the Museum of American History, Washington DC)

Role of Government in ending homelessnss
- There's a view amongst some that HUD is broken, it's under-resourced to do what it does, and like any government agency, there's little incentive for taking risks.
- Critics say it's full of aeroplane hanger programs that take up all the money.
- We place too much expectation on government sometimes. It's harder for government because community led initiatives like the Advance to Zero movement get to pick the communities you work with. Government often doesn't.
- You need to join up government policy and community led organising.

Is Ending Homelessness Possible?
- Yes, but needs a system and structural response
- Housing first has demonstrated the first step, but it's not enough.

Top three things that are needed to make this happen?
- Radically changing the investment structure in housing, to make it more affordable
- Income - wages and benefits. Both need to be fixed.
- Funding systems at the level of need.

Deborah DeSantis - Corporation for Supportive Housing
- Title: CEO
- Date: 19 May 2022

Politics
- Homelessness is becoming more and more politicised; there is a tension between the business community and advocates.
- Increasingly on the east coast, there is a wrong connection being made between homelessness and crime. On the west coast it's more a public nuisance issue, than it is a public safety issue.

(Image: I met with Deb at a cafe in one of the largest former bank vaults in the USA - the signs of wealth inequality were never far away wherever I went)

Fuse Program
- The FUSE program (Frequent Users Systems Engagement) helps communities break the cycle of homelessness and crisis among individuals with complex medical and behavioral health challenges who are the highest users of emergency rooms, jails, shelters, clinics and other costly crisis services.
- FUSE is a proven model identifying frequent users and then improving their lives through supportive housing.
- It's the wrap-around support services that tenants are provided alongside their housing which stabilises their lives and significantly reduces returns to jail and homelessness, reliance on emergency health services, and improves overall quality of life.

CHALLENGE

Communities waste billions on uncoordinated service responses as people without housing frequently cycle between shelters, hospitals, jails, and the streets.

SOLUTION

The FUSE supportive housing framework stabilizes frequent users of homeless, health and justice services, ending this costly revolving door.

CSH FUSE has been formally evaluated and shows impressive reductions in the use of expensive crisis services and greatly improves housing retention. Over 30 communities implementing FUSE are seeing positive results.

Justice System	Medical & Mental Health	Homeless Response System
• Reductions in jail usage and jail days • Decreases recidivism	• Reductions in psychiatric inpatient hospitalizations • Decreases in ED visits	• Reductions in shelter usage • Housing retention rates of more than 85%

Cost Saving Across Systems

(Image: Overview of the FUSE initiative, Corporation for Supportive Housing, USA)[28]

Housing first
- There are a lot of debates about housing first in the US as in Australia, they often fall into the following camps:
  - Housing First as a program intervention: People who say that housing first isa very specific service model, with specific case management loads.

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28 <a>https://www.csh.org/fuse/

- Housing First as a philosophy: Those who seek to implement the philosophy as best they can in an environment where there isn't enough housing.
- Non Housing First: Either don't know about housing first, don't know how to do it, or don't want to.
- CSH sees housing first as a philosophy.
- Supportive housing can be best practice housing first, but we also have to recognise that some supportive housing isn't - i.e. some supportive housing tenants will want a clean and sober environment. That's not possible in a pure housing first model.
- The need is therefore to ensure choice that meets the needs of the people seeking help.
- CSH doesn't put much energy into defending housing first - "we focus on making sure people understand what supportive housing is".
- Housing first is seen to be failing in the US because providers don't have the funding, staff, willingness, and/or knowledge for supporting high needs clients.

Standards / Model Fidelity
- It's important to be honest about the challenges faced in holding the PSH model.
- There are examples of where tenants stay for a while, get better, the programs drop off (i.e. providers don't provide as many as they aren't needed), but then can't take the high needs clients going forward as they don't have the services.
- This is why you need a system that meets the needs of those that are in it.
- The CSH have developed a way of assessing the efficacy of the model - like a certification model, but it's voluntary.
- They have called it the dimensions of quality, but will be moving to a 'quality standards' in a rebrand shortly. Their are:

(Image: Corporation for Supportive Housing, USA)[29]

Recommendation 44: The AAEH bring the CSH to Australia to:
- Help develop a localised needs analysis toolkit to support AtoZ Communities to use their by-name list data to determine what their supportive housing needs are as well as the associated costs and savings such an investment would bring;

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[29] https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/CSH_Dimensions_of_Quality_Supportive_Housing_guidebook.pdf

- Facilitate the integration of their FUSE program lessons into the AtoZ tools relating to coordinated systems; and
- Help develop Australian Supportive Housing Standards.

Options for Growing the Supportive Housing system in Australia
- A tenant based vouchers scheme, or a top up to the Commonwealth Government Rent Assistance type arrangement would help to create an ongoing marketplace for this type of housing. Further consideration of this, and how it could work is needed. Lessons could be learned from what is and isn't working regarding access to supportive housing in the disability (NDIS) and mental health spaces.
- Arguably the easier and faster option is to create a Commonwealth Government capital fund - utilising the quality standards - to help unlock the investment to start to develop a permanent supportive housing system.

Commonwealth Government Recommendation 7: Commission an agency like the Productivity Commission to determine what the level of unmet need for supportive housing is in Australia and most importantly, what it would take to end chronic rough sleeping homelessness.

Commonwealth Government Recommendation 8: The Commonwealth Government establish a Permanent Supportive Housing Fund for capital and services to meet the immediate needs of those experiencing chronic homelessness, tying such investments to communities across Australia that are seeking to end homelessness. The Government should also investigate the creation of a Commonwealth Rent Assitance (CRA) top-up for people who have an experience of chronic rough sleeping homelessness to ensure we can prevent future instances of chronic homelessness from occurring.

Commonwealth Government Recommendation 9: The Commonwealth Government support the AAEH to establish a National Permanent Supportive Housing Network, to guide the development of local supportive housing systems in Australia, to build understanding, support improved practice, and help ensure that when we build PSH that they stay permanent supportive housing.

Is ending homelessness possible
- Yes, is it doable.
- Is it likely - no. We are lacking resources, political will and coordination - without this we can make great strides, but as a field we don't spend enough time on workforce development, we're not sufficiently focused on income.
- We had a keynote speaker a few years ago, Anan, who challenged everyone at our conference to imagine what would happen if you all decided you would advocate for one thing, rather than the hundreds of programs and various initiatives that you all go to the government and advocate for. Imagine how much more effective you would be. Imagine what could be achieved.
- We're all doing wonderful things but are we doing the right things? Are we aligning our efforts enough?

What are the top three things you would do?
- Address income equality
- Ensure service are funded on the basis of addressing need, not on block grants, so that if you need it you get it, particularly mental health

- Ensure there are collaborative vehicles in place to drive this change - i.e. in the US redesign the Continuums of Care to ensure they have all levels of government at the table - the vast blunk of them in the US are ineffective.

Cynthia Stuart - Supportive Housing Network of New York
- Title: Chief Operating Officer
- Date: 20 May 2022

- The network developed organically.
- We support providers to improve practice, like person-centred support, if the resident is using, helping them to reduce the harm etc.
- The network started out as a SRO providers group (single room occupancy), where there were shared bathrooms and cooking facilities, mostly from old hotel rooms. This was the first round of supportive housing. In the early 2000's we ran out of these old hotels and then had to start building.
- There are a plethora of grants from the federal, state and local governments that need to be weaved together; the network helps track all of this.
- New York had 92,000 people in institutions in the 60s, and when they started closing them as part of the de-institutionalisation process, they did not create 92,000 places in the community. Now there are only about 2,500 institutional beds left.
- The sources of funds for the Network are: about 50% from foundations, 25% dues based on the number of units people have (a lot of the organisations do other things so they don't do it as a percentage of revenue), plus 25% revenue from events - run conference and an awards gala etc.

Cost Effectiveness
- The City of New York realised that funding shelters didn't really solve people's homelessness and was very expensive, so they got more interested in supportive housing. The city gave a bunch of land to help build this, with cheap finance.
- The Million Dollar Murray argument has helped get some shift in resources.
- Million Dollar Murray refers to A *New Yorker* story by Malcolm Gladwell about a man who was homeless who over the course of 10 years of expensive "non-solutions," such as jail and hospitals, cost Nevada taxpayers one million dollars.

Service Model / Scattered Site versusSingle Site
- We often say that 'but for' the services, the housing wouldn't be successful, 'but for' the housing the services wouldn't be successful - this is central to supportive housing.
- We used to depend a lot on scattered sites for people who have light touch, they let their dealer or abuser into the house for example.
- Front desk services are crucial, helping enable an environment where there are very little rules, unlike the shelter system.
- The supportive housing "is beautiful, there are gyms, gardens, etc, and people want to stay, they want to live there, and it's better than the private market offerings which are often very run down".
- "One of the challenges with scattered site models is you're not growing the pot most of the time, you're just repurposing existing affordable housing, so you're just robbing Peter to pay Paul."

Creaming

- Creaming refers, in the US, to not taking the hardest to house into your service, and just creaming off the top of the system those more easy to manage.
- This is a struggle, because you have a group of vulnerable people already in your service that you need to continue to help or protect.
- You need to focus on what supports you need to wrap around that person, additional mental health, etc. and finding it, not just throw your hands in the air and say it's too hard, we're not taking them.
- If all supportive housing was equal, then it would be fine to take the most vulnerable all of the time - but they are not. So it would be irresponsible to bring in the most vulnerable to some of the ones with only light touch support available. It is difficult, which again is why you need a system of PSH, not just a few providers, and you need a coordinated access system.

Certification / quality assurance
- Our name is taken in vain a lot. There is no such thing as transitional supportive housing. There's not really a need to call it permanent supportive housing, because if it's not permanent, it's not supportive housing.
- There is no quality assurance scheme by the network - that wouldn't be appropriate for us - and the system isn't licensed either as that is part of what makes it work. This is because you have flexibility, you don't have to have a psychologist visit only for an hour only for a certain type of people - as medicare requires for example.
- The state and local governments do have quality control through their contracting and through the general regulation of nonprofits in the US.

Is it possible to end homelessness?
- Yes, it's just a matter of priorities. We give huge tax breaks to very wealthy people.

Top three things required to end homelessness?
- Invest the money that we are putting into mortgage breaks into affordable and supportive housing, plus universal rent assistance.
- Put more support into our mental health and substance use rehabilitation systems, so that they actually help people rather than re-traumatise and criminalise them.
- Convince the public that it's in their best interests to end homelessness, save tax dollars, improve community safety and contribute to creating a greater sense of community.

Fred Dust - Dust and Company
- Title: Founder and CEO
- 20 May 2022

Background
- They describe themselves as co-hosts, not consultants - they believe that developing strategy is a conversation you should be having and their job is to give you the structure and tools to have it.
- "Practice is more important than theory. This is a core belief that separates us from traditional consultants. The learning is in the doing instead of reading about doing."
- They help organisations that facilitate conversations that create change - i.e. the World Economic Forum.

- They do a lot of work with the Einhorn Collaborative; a nonprofit foundation dedicated to addressing America's growing crisis of connection.

Systems change
- Designing conversations is really important, especially when working across sectors.
- If you can't talk with someone, or a group, if it just ends badly, or you avoid it, do something together, bake together. A community that is divided should come together and clean up a playground, or find some other activity to help them talk.
- Systems change requires making conversations, amongst people who often don't or won't talk.
- You need leaders in government, community, philanthropy, and media all working together.
- Helping people craft hard conversations needs to be someone's job.

Homelessness
- People are leaving areas where there are huge amounts of homeless. It's been getting worse.
- Homelessness has been increasingly conflated with crime.
- The pope says you should give. It's not charitable work, it's human work, and not enough human work is going on. Justice not charity.

Do you think that ending homelessness possible?
- No, watching it intensify has been dispiriting. So not without radical change.
- Given some have such serious health issues, I keep seeing things not progressing. We need leadership.

Top three things you think are needed to adhesive this?
- There is a lot of embedded stigma on these issues, we need to address this. We've become desensitised. We need a societal mindset shift, then you get the political will. If someone fell over you would call 911 but we see homelessness people suffering every day and we do nothing, and we have for decades now. That's corrosive.
- Building the connections of everyone in society to address this, librarians for example are on the front line for homelessness care, everyone has a role.
- We need to educate people that this is a modern contemporary challenge:
  - First nations people didn't have homelessness
  - Neoliberal economics, de-institutionalisation - these are the things that have caused this.

Seattle

Ashley Barnes-Cocke - A Way Home Washington
- Title: Director of Anchor Communities Initiative
- Date: 23 May 2022

Helping ALL of Washington's young people find their way home
A WAY HOME WASHINGTON

Background
- They were founded in 2016 and in 2018 their Anchor Communities Initiatives (ACI) was established. Communities involved include:
    - Four counties - for the past four years.
    - Five new counties in March 2022.
    - There are 35 counties all up in Washington State.
- They got going because they kept hearing young people saying "we can't get what I need" or "I get offered what I don't need".

How's it funded
- They have received funding from a combination of governments and philanthropy to:
    - Fund a full time coordinator in each community, and
    - Extra funding for services in each community.
- A group of funders got together who wanted to copy what Community Solutions did with the Built for Zero campaign.
- The First Lady of the Governor of Washington is the co-chair - having champions like this is essential.
- The Office of Homelessness Youth, along with strong interest from the foster care sector (the Mockingbird Society) was also helpful.
- There are three communities that are both part of Built for Zero, and ACI - so they have an all communities by-name list.
- There are 81 people in Walla Walla - one of these communities - and they had an 80% reduction in the last year.

Flexible Funding
- A key part of their model is they get an extra $500k a year added to their services that are participating - helping fill outreach gaps, do prevention work etc.
- Their improvement teams are really using the data, are setting goals, have built a culture to look at data and nimbly respond.
- They have also worked really hard at being housing first focused, this was helped by using the new dollars for outreach, prevention dollars, etc. They do what they need to do with that flexible funding, and have the most lax eligibility requirements, they can use the funds for prevention, for people who are chronic, or people who are in another program and making it better (i.e. shelter etc).
- They have some definitions for when you can use it. They enabled funds to be used to reunite with the family - particularly for minors.

(Image: Street Art in Seattle, USA)

Stigma
- Seattle is dying, is a movement where there is a lot of antagonism towards the homelessnes in Washington State.
- Not making progress in ending homelessness leads to this kind of backlash, and it's ugly. The people experiencing homelessness, they see it, they hear it and they internalise it.
- The Office of Homelessness Youth is in the Department of Commerce, the view was that it wouldn't get cut if it was put there.

National Youth Initiative
- There was a national initiative based on what they are doing called "A Way Home America" established, however it had some challenges.
- They had ten communities, but they started in some of the biggest and hardest areas - i.e. Miami Dade, Sacramento, etc.
- It made it really hard for them. After a while it all fell apart, the director left, and the outsourced trainers didn't like the model. So they ended up shutting down their headline initiative.

Youth Focused Improvement
- A key focus of their improvement activities is trying to get communities to increase their housing placement rate. There was a lot of push back, "ohh there's no houses", and in essence they said they couldn't do it.
- They pushed ahead with improvement challenges - '30 diversions in 30 days' - they just set a challenge. And a bunch of communities got there.
- You need young people involved at every level of the work. You can't have older people doing it, the young people need to be able to associate.
- Their improvement teams, have:
  - a coach, and a data coach (to help with quality data).
  - a youth engagement officer - to support all communities to engage with young people - trains people up in the communities to have a Youth Action Board (lived experience).
  - a data team - including a data solutions manager, and data sciences student / capability and a tableau (data visualisation software) capability to support dashboards.
  - Admin support - there are a lot of contracts.

- They have developed a definition of functional zero for use with young people - which is that communities know they have reached functional zero when they have the capacity to:
  - Prevent most homelessness.
  - Quickly identify all the unaccompanied young people who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability at any given time.
  - Quickly resolve homelessness with connections to safe and stable housing.
- They have regular learning sessions, twice a year, online once and once in person at the moment.
- They don't put much data up publicly at the moment.
- Disproportionality is measured - i.e. for LGBTIQ people and others.

Recommendation 45: AAEH, over time, support communities who wish to seek to end youth homelessness, through the Advance to Zero Campaign.

Recommendation 46: AAEH develop, based on what 'A Way Home Washington' have developed, a charter for participation in the Advance to Zero Movement.

Is ending homelessness possible
- Yes, we could do it overnight with slight policy changes, we don't have a lack of resources, it's just a matter of political will.

Top three things needed?
- We should tax unoccupied units, a wealth tax on multi-millionaires, stopping developers from hanging onto properties and not using them.
- Reparations for people whose land was taken by colonisation.
- Flexible funding, with as few a barriers for acres as possible

Downtown Emergency Service Center (DESC) Hobson Place Visit
- 24 May 2022
- In Attendance: Patrick Szymanski, Associate Director of Housing & Drew Duplantis, Project Manager of the Clinic at Hobson Place

- The building has been decorated by art from the Salish people whose land the facility is built on.
- The facility was built in two stages: first 85 studios, and then last year they opened up the second stage - another 92 studio apartments with a health clinic integrated.
- They have 24/7 shifts of 'residential counselor staff' - who have a basic level of qualifications and operate on a three shifts basis, with a thirty minute block inbetween for handover. A number of these staff are people with a lived experience.
- They also have Clinical Support Specialists on site (CSS) or case managers. Every resident gets one, and it's about building a rapport, so for example if they are using they will encourage people to link to service, and harm minimise.

(Images: The Clinic @ Hobson Place, Seattle, USA)

- To support staff retention they have a generous common room, with shower and locker facilities for staff.
- Drew was originally from Louisiana which has not got a robust social services system, and didn't really even try to operate under housing first principles.

(Images: The Clinic @ Hobson Place, Seattle, USA)

- The focus on harm minimisation is a real strength at DESC whereas in other places like Louisiana they don't talk about drug and alcohol issues, so don't do harm minimisation.
- Rooms are all individual with bathroom, kitchen etc. They have to pay for their own phone and internet.
- Each room has a timer for the electrics in the kitchen to help with forgetfulness and reducing risk of fire alarms being set off etc.
- Everyone can access all areas, not locked down by floor.

Services

- Medication monitoring, all on a voluntary basis, helps manage controlled substances and harm minimisation.
- Alcohol monitoring programs - for example two beers in the morning, afternoon and then afternoon.
- Budgeting support or payee services (i.e. guardianship arrangements for people who aren't capable of making decisions for themselves / a form of income management).
- They have a specific desk (see below - closed) for distributing funds to get people used to banking etc when they are having their income managed. The following is also where medication is dispensed.
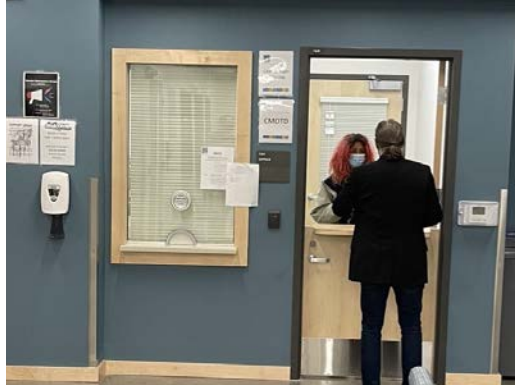
- Employment services, with a team based on site, funded through a collection of federal and other levels of government to deliver these services.
- Peer workers are a big part of this service.
- Many other services on site, like music and art therapy, are provided in therapy rooms like the below, many of which were just starting to reopen as the COVID-19 situation improves.
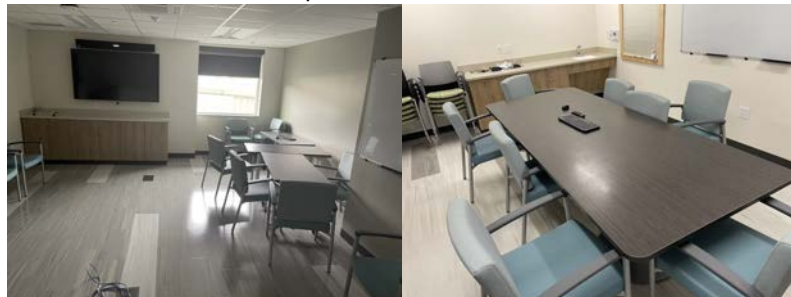
Health Clinic

- Provides a full range of primary care services - i.e. physical, wounds, pathology, eye exams, etc.
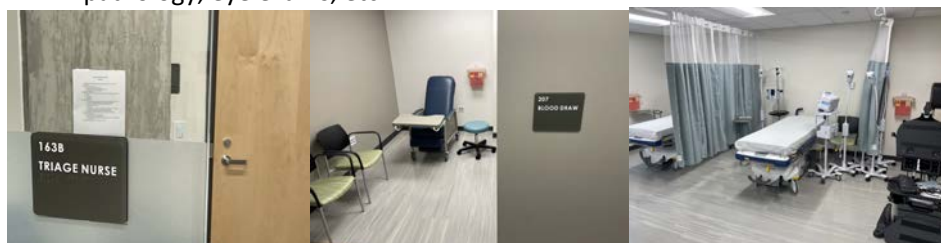
- A range of behaviours health services, including: psychiatry, psychology, substance use support, etc.
- A lot of people using the clinic have behavioural health issues that were unaddressed and couldn't or wouldn't get addressed by mainstream services.

- They have a substance use disorder team, it's funded by Medicaid / their federal government.
- While they have a good relationship with the state on harm reduction, but federally there are a lot more restrictions. Having an enlightened attitude to harm minimisation is key.
- Anyone from the community can utilise the health services, not just residents of Hobson Place.
- They ask people to make bookings but they will take walk-ins from the community and Hobson Place, but they do try to encourage people to stick to appointments.
- Getting the health and the homelessness systems to talk to each other can be a challenge. So much so that they need two computer systems for each of the staff - with a box that allows you to switch between systems.
- They also have an ambulance bay where emergency overdose patients can be diverted from emergency departments to this clinic.
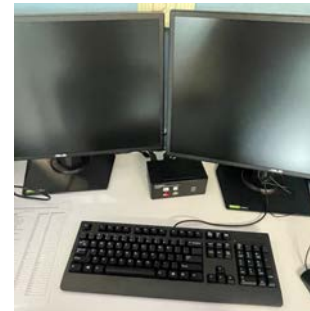
Service Support + Tenancy Management
- The building ownership, tenancy management and support are all provided by the Downtown Emergency Service Centre.
- They incorporate both as it enables both to have an aligned mission and enables maximum possible integration. If they were separated out into different teams across the organisation they would have had to have staff managing multiple properties, and not be as connected to the service and clients as they currently are.
- Their workforce indicated strongly they didn't want to do this - they wanted a closer connection to the local communities in each site.
- How it works is everyone signs a lease, follows landlord laws. For instance, property damage or unsafe behaviour can result in eviction. However, they do sign a mutual lease term, so that if evictions are required there is no eviction on record, and they can do a risk assessment down the track to re-admit them.
- It's generally a myth that most people graduate from permanent supportive housing - it's likely that most will want/need to stay for a long time. Not all do, and many that leave often have a cycle of 6-9-18 months when they are ok, but something happens and they spiral, often ending up back on the street or back at Hobson Place, but with more trauma.

Specialisation and Coordination
- Many of their permanent supportive housing sites have a different focus or specialisation.
- Who we selected is 100% high acuity. There is no attempt to have a mix of client vulnerabilities.
- They have a centre that is focused on alcohol, where they have experimented with establishing a sober floor to help people manage their alcohol issues.
- Some centres have a focus on veterans, some have very light touch services on site, like a drop in nurse, etc.

- Their smallest is 50 units, and largest 190. To maximise land and services, having a minimum of about 100 people is seen as best practice now. All have 24/7 onsite support.
- A number do coordination and case management from the site, they have outreach teams from the site.
- Place matters, and supportive housing as a system coordination hub can be really valuable. Co-locating CoC's with case management, with the accommodation, with on site services, and with system coordination improves all of them.

Recommendation 47: State Governments support hubs or the co-location of service coordination efforts, backbone activities and other system change efforts, alongside the support services in new builds of permanent supportive housing.

COVID
- Their main shelter in Seattle had 200 people in it prior to COVID-19 and when it hit they moved everyone into hotels.
- They had such good results, that they decided not to re-open the congregate living shelter.
- COVID has meant that there's been a big transition away from congregate shelter.
- They are now looking to modify the shelters into permanent supportive housing.

Seattle is Dying Narrative
- Street homelessness is quite bad in Seattle at the moment, there is a view amongst some commentators that it is so bad that "Seattle is dying".
- Both agreed that there is a huge amount of highly visible homelessness.
- All over the US you don't see the addiction and mental health issues that are going on as they are taking place in people's homes - the housing crisis is driving this into the public domain and making it more visible, along with the increasing homelessness in Seattle.
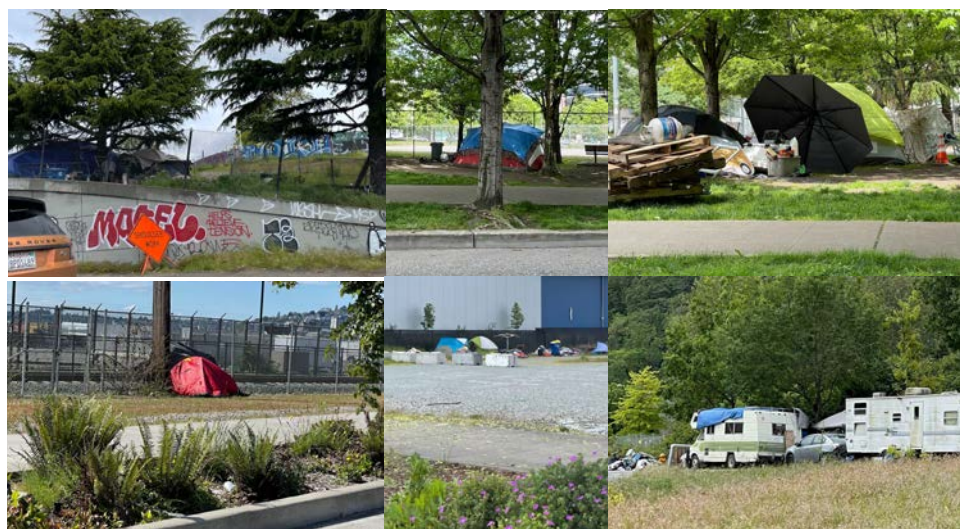
(Images: Various homelessness encampments across Seattle, Washington, USA)

- People are being forced to live their worst life in full view of the general public, and it doesn't engender sympathy.
- "Thankfully we're not buying into this 'Seattle is dying narrative', we're just not criminalising the problem here like others."

- We've moved to a housing first model, not trying to require people to prove they are housing ready.
- Stigma is a big issue, 'don't talk to these people' is the prevailing orthodoxy.
- We need to do more to encourage people to engage with people experiencing homelessness, to tackle this pervasive narrative that homelessness is a choice.
- Homelessness is not a choice, it's the least bad option available to them. Other options are likely to be re-traumatising.

Ending Homelessness Possible?
- Yes, absolutely. But you need the housing and support.

Top three things needed to end homelessness?
- Funding, for housing, staff and services (for staff development and because they make peanuts- they are paid so poorly) .
- Funding for community services, like mental health, drug and alcohol programs, etc.
- Tackle stigma.

### *Philip Welkhoff - Gates Foundation*
- Title: Director Malaria
- Date: 24 May 2022

Importance of Zero
- Counting down is something the public health space recognises is fundamental.
- What kinds of problems lead themselves to an eradication strategy - this is something the public health world has learned a lot about.
- They take an elimination strategy in public health, when it's not enough to make improvement.
- Malaria is an example - it is a brutal disease. 600,000 deaths a year, used to be about 1,000,000 people dying a year.
- The reproduction rate for COVID-19 is 2-4. The reproduction rate of Malaria is 100 - so one untreated person can go on to infect over 100 people.
- In the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, more people died of malaria than Ebola because the supply chains broke down. Malaria is just so unforgiving unless you get rid of it altogether, it is deadly.
- Homelessness has many parallels with Malaria; chronic homeliness is also deadly.
- Sri Lanka abolished Malaria, and deaths reduced by almost double what they thought. Because Malaria was reducing people's immune systems which means people would be dying of illnesses that would not have killed others. When they abolished Malaria, it had a cascading effect[30] in other areas.

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[30] A cascading effect is an inevitable and sometimes unforeseen chain of events due to an act affecting a system. One of the most renowned cascading effect is the story of how wolves were reintroduced to the Yellowstone national park, and the cascading effect was to literally change the direction of the rivers and whole ecosystem. Could ending chronic homelessness have a cascading effect on the homelessness system? https://www.yellowstonepark.com/things-to-do/wildlife/wolf-reintroduction-changes-ecosystem/
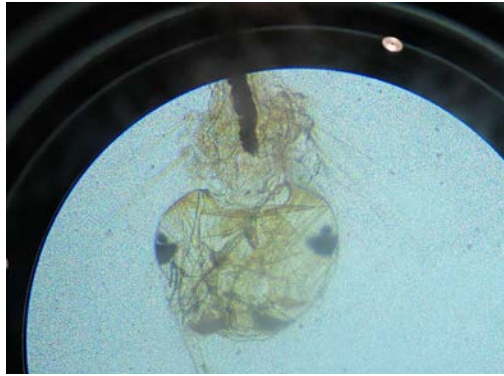
(Image: Magnification of a mosquito lava taken just after the meeting with Philio at the Seattle Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, USA)

- Public health recognises that the only reasonable, strategic, and ethical goal is zero.
- When you realise and accept that, you recognise that the current systems you have won't get us there. They just aren't set up in the same way that will get us to the outcome we seek.
- "Just as with climate change, we focus on the net reduction, not the programs that might get us there. The outcome of ending homelessneess is what is most important."
- The parallels between Malaria and homelessness are incredible.
- The difference is that the reproduction rate parallel doesn't apply to homelessness - other than the perverse outcomes you start to get when homelessness becomes endemic, criminalisation, sweeps, move on powers, more shelter, etc.
- In public health, when you are trying to get to the last mile, they are sometimes disproportionately costly. If you can get it down to a manageable level, then it goes away over time with economic development. The opposite exists in homelessness. The last mile clients are the most expensive largely because of being such frequent users of services.

Funding
- Everyone in the public health world recognises that we can't eradicate Malaria for the $3.5 billion we currently spend on it because it's not enough, but not many more times more. If the systems change strategy is set up right, the additional investment will get us to where we need to be. Just more money into a broken system won't.
- From 2004-2015 - a lot of progress was made globally on tackling Malaria - global roll out of nets etc, but they realised that Malaria is very different in every community. So you need really good data to help inform local decision making.
- Another critique given in the public health world is that the data driven work is undercutting the argument for just more resources.
- There's no solution to this mindset, other than just push through, and let the results speak for themselves.

Lessons Regarding Systems Change
- A key lesson from the Malaria work is that there is a lot of inertia in the existing power structures for how resources are distributed.
- We need to seek to use data to inform local decision making, but when the data shows you need to make a change, often the existing power structures are reluctant to give up power or influence.

- If you have a one size fits all approach, you can have centralisation of allocation, but when you have to decide locally you have to give up power and influence, to enable more local decision making.
- For system change, having the viability of data, getting the quality data is important. But there will be push back of why you are spending resources on data collection and data analysis, and not on direct service delivery.
- People will ask you where the evidence is, and you can fix one or two things, but this hasn't resulted in a change in the system, yet!
- It's the challenging nature of the work, because you have to fix multiple things at the same time, and hold them, often before you start to see results, but when the system changes, often it will really move.
- In summary, tips for system change are to recognise that you'll need to change the power structures, that you'll need good data, and inform local decision making.

Is ending homelessness possible / top three things needed
- Yes, but you need to make sure you're dealing with the inflows as well as the outflows.
- Quality Data on the issue you're seeking to resolve.
- Local decision making is so important.

(Images: The Gates Foundation, Seattle, USA)

By the Pictures

The following is a record of the social media / Facebook posts I made whilst on my Churchill Fellowship. Shared with the intention of giving a sense of the thoughts and emotions I experienced whilst on this journey.

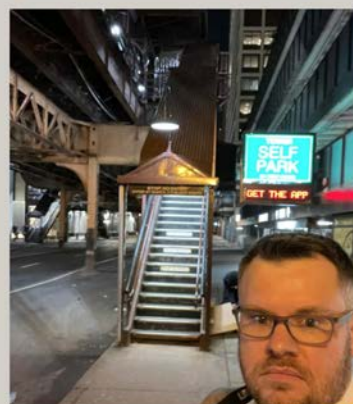**David Pearson** is in **Chicago, Illinois**.
10 May at 13:10 ·

Just had an amazing, inspiring and heartbreaking first day in Chicago as part of my Winston Churchill Fellowship.

Started with a run to the bean to work off the jet lag.

Had an inspiring meeting with a host of leaders in the homelessness, housing, health, research and advocacy sector – organised by the amazing Lydia at the Institute of Global Homelessness. All agreed that ending homelessness is possible but that it takes collective will from community and government!

Had a great chat with Guy below, who agreed to let me share his story and our photo. Guy and I have an eerily similar story. We're the same age, both have 4 year old daughters, both lost our mum's (or mom's as they spell it over here) at a young age. Where our stories differ is that he's been sleeping rough for the last 8 months. Started when his wife left him, led to drinking, lost his job as a result of a DUI, gov evicted and has now lost almost half his body from sleeping rough this last winter. He's scared all the time, of the violence inflicted on people sleeping rough by others and of the cops that he might be arrested for some of the things he's had to do to survive. Heartbreaking and yet he is hopefull still that the future might bring change and maybe even the opportunity for housing and a new beginning.

Catching the iconic elevated loop train home now – with a full head and heart.

Jill MacKenzie, Matthew Pearson and 154 others   12 comments

David Pearson is in **Chicago, Illinois.**
11 May at 22:00 · 👥

Day 2 of my Churchill Fellowship, had the opportunity to spend the day with the amazing Liz Drapa from the Corporation For Supportive Housing. Supportive housing is literally housing with support (usually onsite)- there is a system of this type of housing in the US, we have previously little of it in Australia. Visited the La Casa Norte facility that has on the ground floor a health clinic, a community food bank (where you can shop for low cost groceries, a drop in service, community meeting spaces, kitchen, on-site support etc... very impressive.

👍❤️ Matthew Pearson, Rebecca Baker and 53 others   5 comments

David Pearson **is at Maccormic Convention Centre.**

12 May at 16:35 · Chicago, IL, United States · 👥

They say never meet your hero's as you're bound to be disappointed. Today, nothing could be further from the truth, as I got the chance to catch up with and spend some time with the person that inspired me more than anyone else to dedicate some, most and now all of my working life to the cause of ending homelessness - Rosanne Haggerty. Her and the entire team at Community Solutions are such an inspiration in how they are humbly, passionately and diligently setting about demonstrating that ending homelessness is possible.

Was also such a treat to get to meet in 3D for the first time - despite working closely togeher for over two years - my boundlessly energetic colleague and friend Rian Watt.

Feeling very inspired, supported and so incredibly jet lagged! 🥴😊
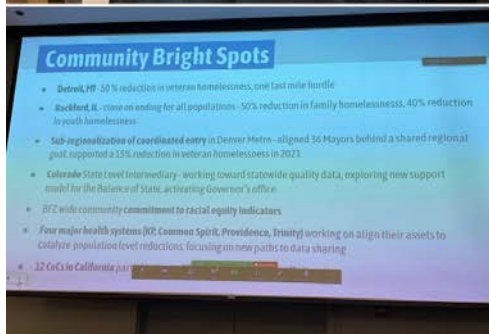
Jill MacKenzie, Matthew Pearson and 82 others   5 comments

David Pearson is with **Rian Watt** at **Maccormic Convention Centre.**

13 May at 14:09 · Chicago, IL, United States · 👥

Was so great to spend time, compare notes and share resources amongst the international large scale change leaders involved with Community Solutions and ending homelessness over the last two days. Finished up with some deep pan Chicago Pizza. #soooogoodgood #sooofull

👍❤️ Jill MacKenzie, Matthew Pearson and 39 others   8 comments

David Pearson is 🌷 feeling hopeful at **Maccormic Convention Centre.**
14 May at 12:35 · Chicago, IL, United States · 👥

This week I had the privilege of attending the Community Solutions national learning session where the over 100 Communities that are either working towards ending homelessness or have done it in the case of 14 communities. Impressive stories to share, presenters and a very powerful 25-minute run through of the history of racism in the USA - from the disposition of the First Nations people from their land, to the transatlantic slave trade and more recently the murder of George Floyd.
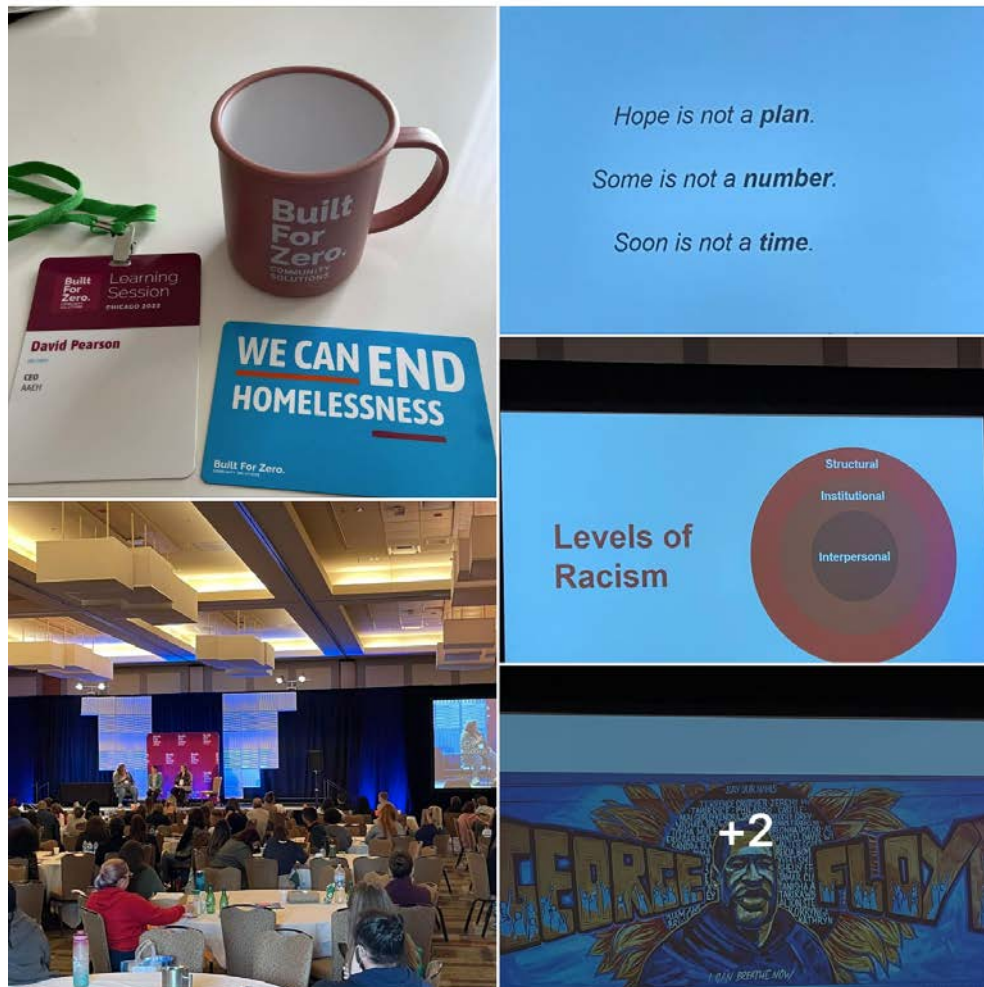
👍❤️ Jill MacKenzie, Matthew Pearson and 28 others

David Pearson is 🥵 feeling exhausted in **Chicago, Illinois**.

15 May at 00:34 · 👥

Spent today catching up with the wise, supportive and always helpful Lydia Stazen at the Institute of Global Homelessness.

Then visiting a range of permanent supportive housing properties operated by Mercy Housing and got to meet the wonderfull tennants Charlotte and Julie. They described the sense of community that this type of housing fosters being so important to ending their experiences of homelssness for good!

They have a mobile health clinic that comes and visits them, case managers on side, 24hr concierge / front desk, common rooms, art therapy, social activities, a gym and a computer room all on site - as well as their own room with bathroom, kitchen and importantly their own lease, where they can stay for as long as they need. Julie was super proud to show me her apartment key! Very cool to see the impact this kind of housing has - we need much more of this type of housing options in Australia.

Had a knock off drink with the CEO of the Chicago Coalition for the Homelssness - Doug Schenkelberg - taking about lived experience community organising and homelessness on the banks of the chicago river + a few chats about US politics given we were in the shadow of Trump Tower...

Then managed to squash in dinner and a show at the famous Second City comedy club. Then crashed very hard.
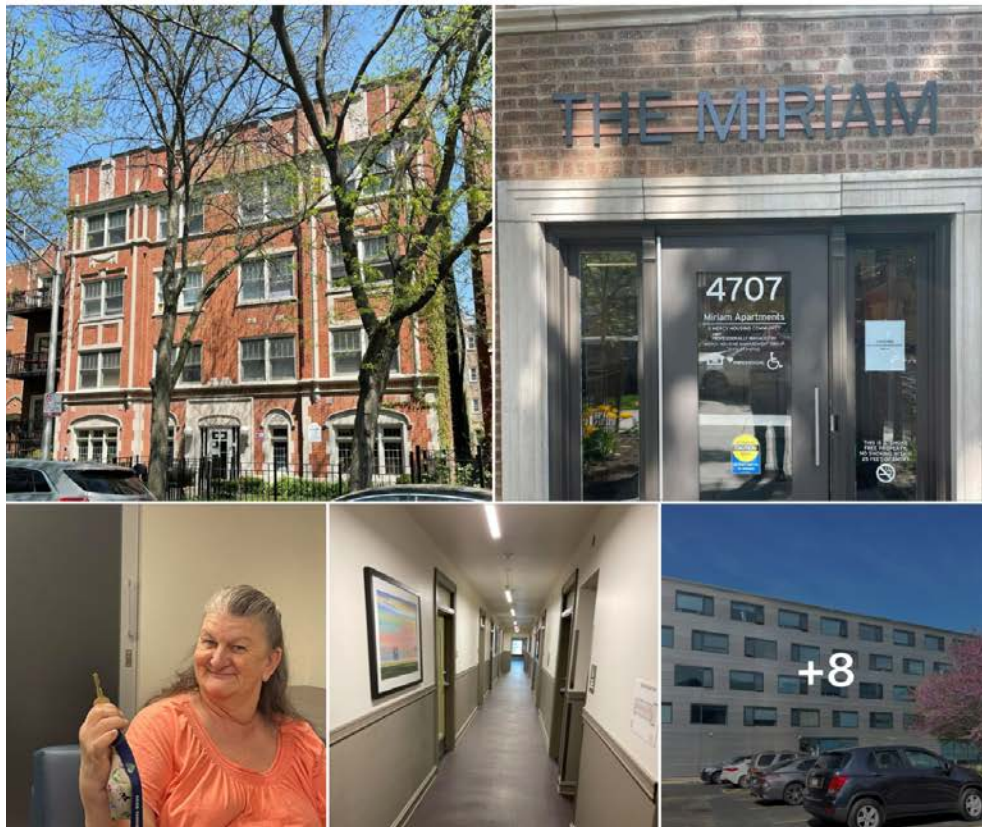
⬆️❤️ Jill MacKenzie, Rebecca Baker and 51 others   8 comments

David Pearson is 😊 feeling inspired in **Washington D.C.**
16 May at 07:38 · 👥

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Goodbye Chicago, hello Washington DC.

Nine hours of walking & visiting so many of the nations monuments it left me inspired and feeling that that task of ending homelessness is comparatively easy compared to realising the founding promise of the United States of America - that all people are created equal - a task that is as ongoing here as it is back home. The task of ending homelessness is even greater here in Washington than it was in Chicago - people sleeping on the streets sadly everywhere!

All up visited the:
- Lincoln Memorial
- Washington Monument
- Jefferson Memorial
- WWI, WWII, Korean And Vietnam war memorials (there were veterans everywhere just sharing stories, was very moving)
- Martin Luther King Jr Memorial
- FDR Memorial - inc powerful section on the New Deal
- Ford Theatre (where Lincoln was shot) & Theatre Museum that explores the civil war and what would have happened if the promose of the civil war been fullfilled.
- Black Lives Matter Plaza - felt very fitting to finish here given the theme of the day.

Putting my feet up now...
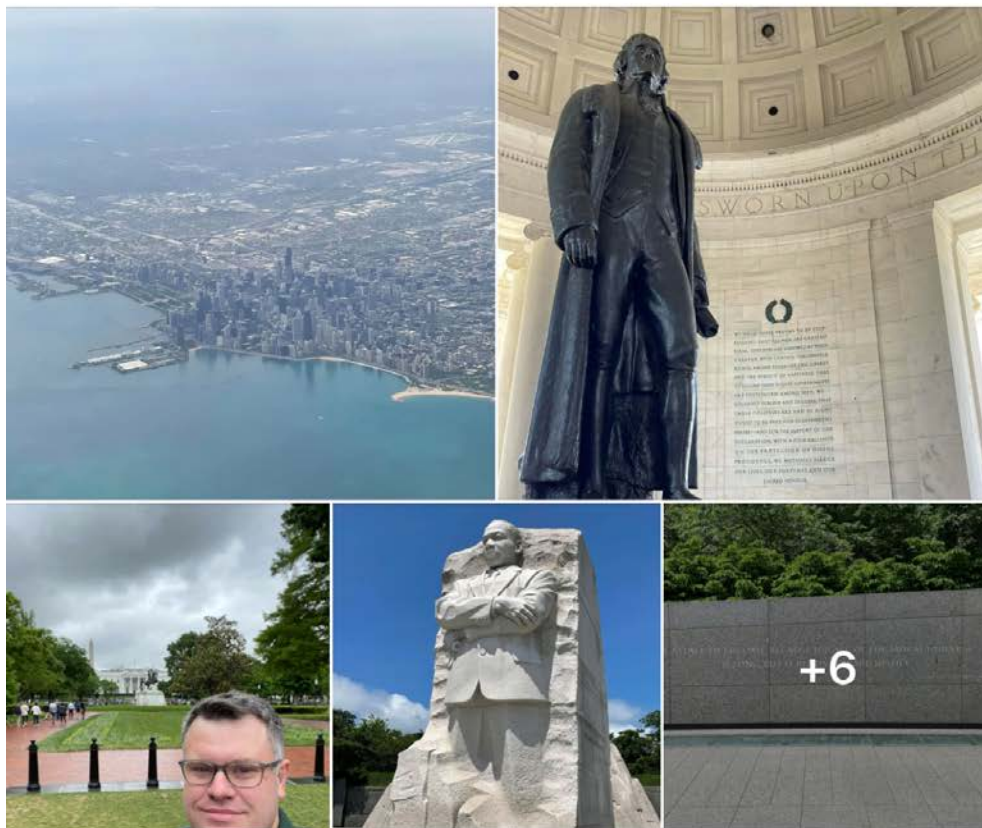
👍❤️ Jill MacKenzie, Matthew Pearson and 59 others   11 comments

David Pearson is 🙏 feeling connected in **Washington D.C.**
17 May at 19:47 · 👥

Had a series of really helpful meetings with leaders on homelessness in the Biden Administration today, including Jeff Olivet the head of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness - I think we need something like this in Australia, and just as theirs reports to the White House ours should report to the PM. As Jeff said, if you recognise that homelssness is the result of multiple systems failures than the response cannot be driven by a single system (housing agencies). This sentiment was echoed by staff from the Housing and Urban Development Department. Both highlighted how a 'whole of government, whole or community' strategy is so important and that 'ending' rather than seeking to just address homelssness needs to be at the heart of it.

Managed to also squash in lunch with the co-founder and CEO of Results for America Michele Jolin - to talk all things social innovation, systems change and working in and with government to drive change.

Spotted so much homelssness when walking around DC. Pretty confronting to see a stroller parked out the front of one of the tents at the end of the day.

Think I'll need some new shoes after this - according to my iPhone I've walked 25km's😳 over the last two days.

👍 Jill MacKenzie, Matthew Pearson and 59 others   6 comments

David Pearson is in **Manhattan, New York**.

20 May at 07:15 · 👥

Had some really helpful meetings with the team at the National Alliance to End Homelessness to compare notes on policy development, advocacy, capacity building, comms and organisational strategy.

Was also so cool to learn more directly about the efforts of the folks from Arlington Country who achieved functional zero veterans homelessness in 2017 and have sustained it ever since. Oddly enough, having a plan, and getting everyone to agree to it, was central to the success. Who would have though. For the record, very few communities in Australia have something as basic as this...

Said goodbye to Washington DC with a run through the mall and hello New York City with some PIZZA 🍕!

Also managed to squash in a visit to the Museum of American History – with a few insights into homelssness there too.
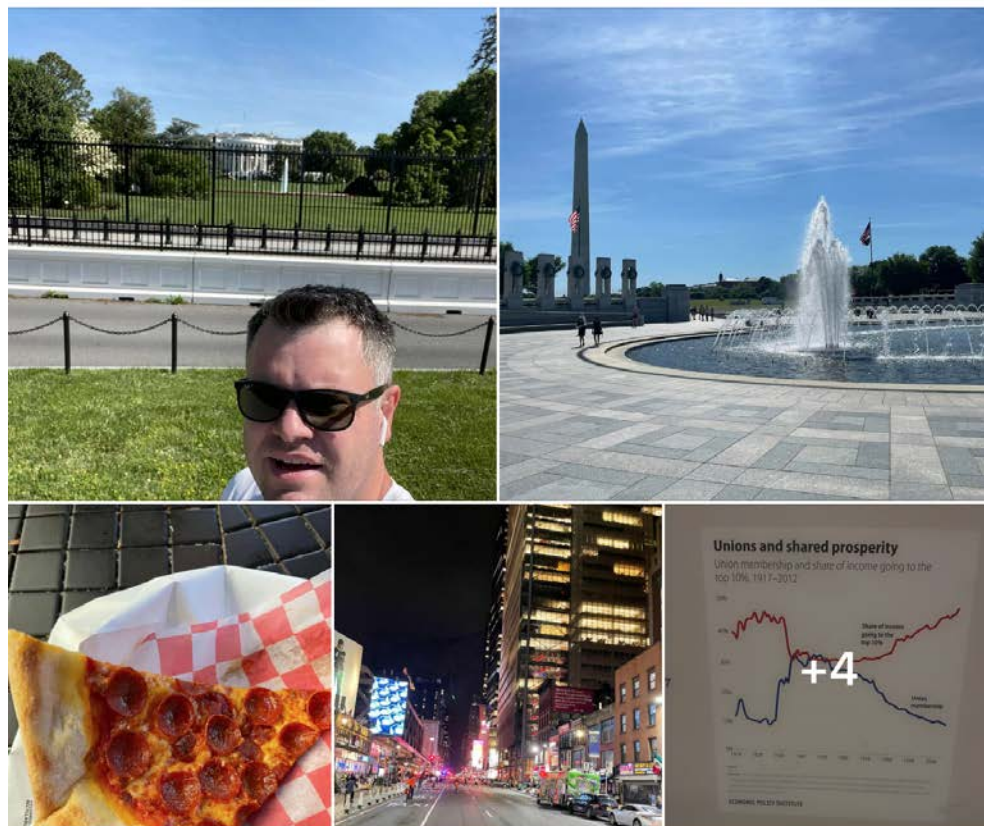
👍❤️ Matthew Pearson, Peter Sandeman and 52 others   3 comments

David Pearson is 😋 feeling positive at **New York, New York**.

21 May at 11:44 · New York, NY, United States · 👥

Walked almost 20kms around Manhattan in the last two days.

Had lunch in one of the largest and now former bank vaults in the US with the very generous Deborah DeSantis CEO of the Corporation For Supportive Housing – strategising about how to grow the supportive housing system in Australia.

Had a similar and super helpful catch up with the New York Supportive Housing Network.

Was also cool to be able to catch up with Fred Dust and talk about strategies for engaging philanthropy and the importance of strategic communications, including the 'key elements of meaningful conversations' (per his new book) when seeking to make change.

Also managed to stop by / walk past:
- the 9/11 memorial - sad but also feels like such a long time ago now, especially as we've lived through trump and are living through a pandemic (they've just passed through the one million lives lost to COVID in the USA millstone 😔).
- resting place of Alexander Hamilton (helped draft the US constitution and had a killer musical written about him).
- about 200 weed buses!
- little island (a park built over the river, by someone with a lot of money) but very cool.
- the naked cowboy in Times Square (strange but funny) and the naked cowgirl/grandma (also pretty much naked - so didn't take a photo 🙄)
- and much more

Just awesome to walk around this incredible city.
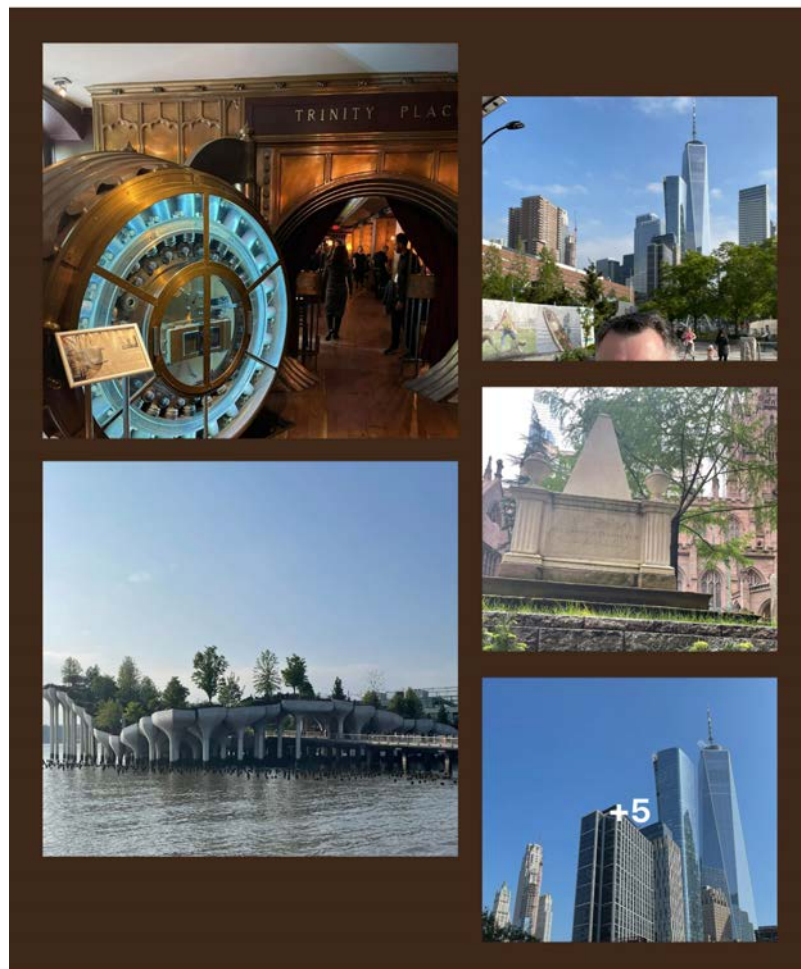
👍❤️ Jill MacKenzie, Matthew Pearson and 36 others   4 comments

David Pearson is at **United Nations**.

25 May at 08:08 · New York, NY, United States · 👥

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Had an incredibly inspiring visit to the United Nations – the passion of our tour guide was infectious and there was was a beautiful cross section of people from all over the world on the tour.

Was very cool to visit the General Assembly whist in session, discussing migration and refugee issues.

Was hard to listen to the question from the young African guy about how five permanent members of the security council were chosen and why there is no representatives from Africa. Those with power and privilege all too often protect their power and privilege.

Interesting learning about the Economic and Social Council – this is where 70% of the UN's work occurs but receives very little attention. The roof was never completed because the work of social, economic empowerment is never finished.

Fantastic to hear the story of the creation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals – the worlds strategic plan. Thanks to the efforts of the Institute of Global Homelessness and others, work is underway to incoporate housing and homelessness explicitly into the goals. For now, the work of ending homelessness is part of many of them, most significantly – No Poverty!

As we walked through the General Assembly, the tour guide asked us to reflect on which of the goals we thought we could most contribute to over our lives. #EndHomelessness

👍❤️ Jill MacKenzie, Matthew Pearson and 52 others   5 comments

David Pearson is 😊 feeling thankful in **Seattle, Washington.**
26 May at 15:33 · 👥

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Goodbye New York - hello Seattle. The last stop on this first leg of my Winston Churchill Fellowship (part two is in November: Canada, England, Scotland and Finland).

Was cool to read the New York Times coverage of the Australian election results on the plane. Though the five hour flight turned into a almost ten hour odyssey, due to a long list of delays - so was rather sleepless on my way to Seattle. 🥵

Staying with my sister and her awesome wife was neat. So good to see them both and just hang out + catch up on sleep!!!

Caught up with A Way Home Washington to hear about their efforts to end youth homelessness utilising what we in Australia call the Advance to Zero Homelessness methodology. Was fascinating to hear how they have been adopting, driving, learning and making progress with ending youth homelessness. Something no communtities have yet done back home, but I know some want to. Having young people engaged and part of the process every step of the way has been key! Not rocket science, but not always done / done well.

Next up, was catching up with the awesome Rian Watt at the Community Solutions international Seattle headquarters (i.e. his house 😆). First order of business was a brisk walk through the nearby park discussing and catching up on all things homlessness, tools development, coaching plans, event planning, and all round general scheming. Was awesome to do this in person and to realise how much energy Rian has!

Finished off a wonderfull day with dinner with Rian, his (definitely) better half Jenny, my sister Rebecca Baker and sister in law Michelle Baker. Good times.
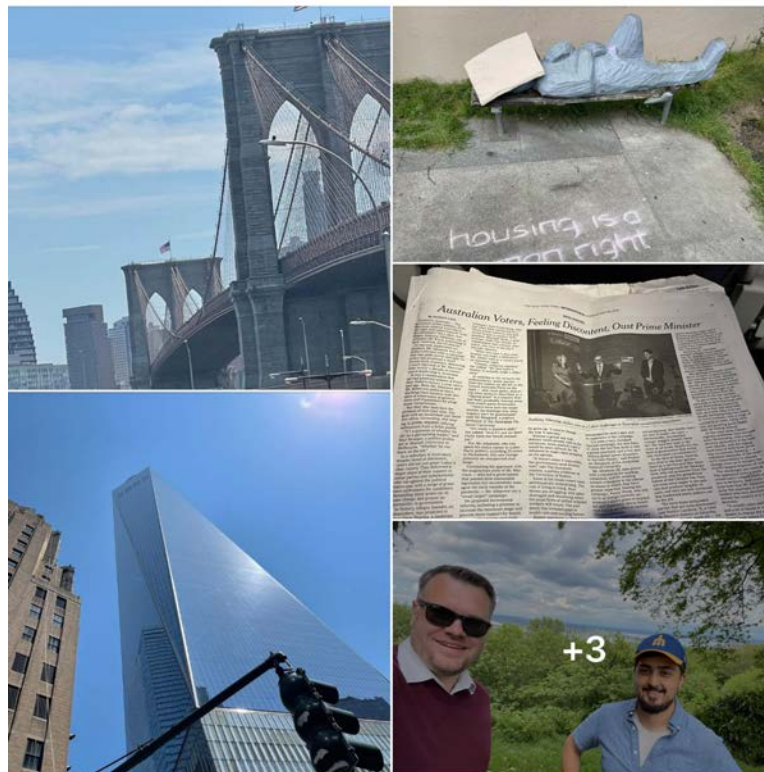
👍❤️ Matthew Pearson, Joanna Krips and 46 others   1 comment

David Pearson is 😊 feeling motivated with **Rebecca Baker** at **Seattle, Washington**.

27 May at 14:35 · Seattle, WA, United States · 👥

Have completed my final visit and meetings as part of the first part of my Winston Churchill Fellowship. That went quick.

Visited the Seattle Downtown Emergency Service Centre's - Hobson's Place - permanent supportive housing service, which includes a full health clinic.

Impressive set up and array of services on site, including:
- sobering up and detox support
- group therapy spaces
- computer room
- art therapy
- employment services
- 24/7 front desk staff
- Access to primary care
- an ambulance bay so people suffering an overdose can be diverted away from emergency departments and to the health clinic
- and much more.

We need more places like this in Australia - with integrated services for the general community but also residents who are recovering from the trauma of chronic/long term homelessness. A number of the permanent supportive housing sites in Seattle are redeveloped shelters (shelters being temporary and providing no ongoing security).

Had some really insightful conversations with the team there. The situation with homelessness is tragically bad in Seattle. There are people camping out everywhere - including in the sides of freeways. So much so that many residents and bussiness have become so frustrated there's a group of people who are claiming that 'Seattle is dying'. The team at DESC assured me it's not, it's just that people who would ordinarily be living their 'worst lives' in the privacy of their homes, grappling with trauma, addition, escaping violence etc, are doing so on full view of the public now - because of the housing affordability crisis.

Also managed to catch up with the Philip Welkhoff from the Bill and Mellinda Gates Foundation. The parallels between the work they are doing on eradicating malaria and ending homelessness are profound. In essence it's system change work they are doing and the key bits of advice based on their success in saving countless lives is - recognise you'll need to change the power structures, that you'll need good data and that it needs to be informing local decision making.
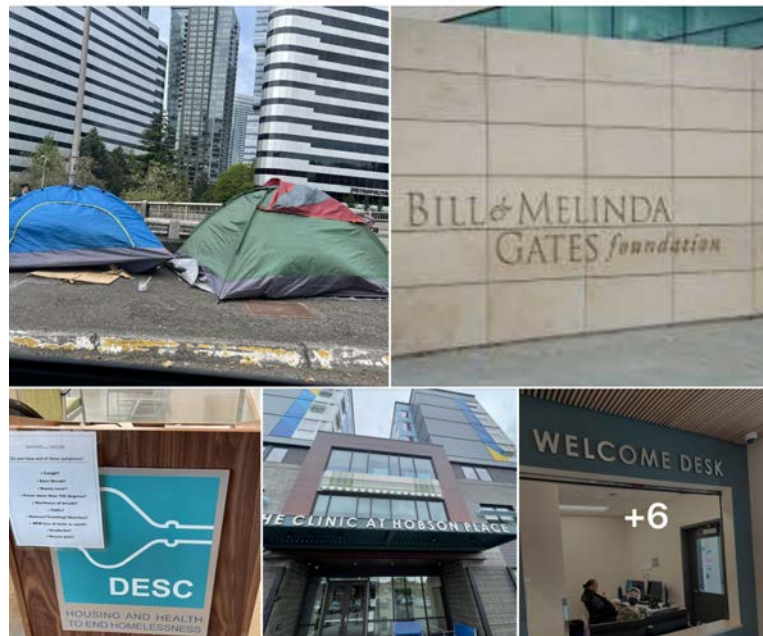
👍❤️ Jill MacKenzie, Joanna Krips and 49 others   7 comments

David Pearson is 🥰 feeling loved with **Jill MacKenzie** and **2 others** in **Seattle, Washington**.

28 May at 15:08 · 👥

So good to be reunited with my favourite humans and have some tourist adventures in Seattle with friends new and old!

👍❤️ Rebecca Baker, Joanna Krips and 138 others   13 comments

David Pearson is 😌 feeling determined.

20h · 👥

•••

And that's a wrap... after almost three weeks of traveling and exploring the successes and failures of efforts to end homelessness across the United States – I'm heading home. Feel very privileged to be able to do that and to have had this opportunity – equally confronted by the scale of the crisis in so many of the cities I visited, and determined to make a difference back home. Was sad to see so many barriers or 'hardening' of public spaces to make it more difficult for people sleeping rough in Seattle on the way to the airport.
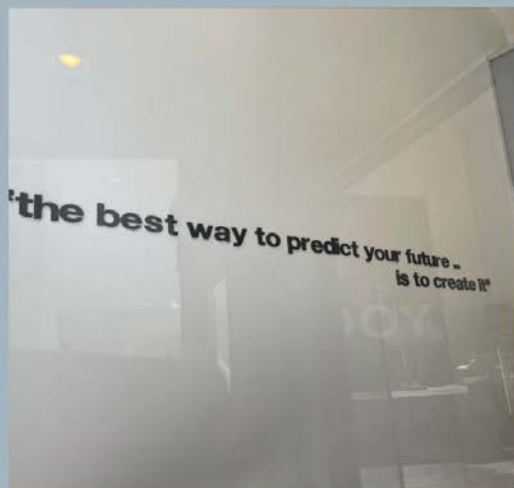
🔵😮❤️ Rebecca Baker, Joanna Krips and 38 others

6 comments

Recommendations Summary

As indicated earlier in this report the following recommendations are a result of the Churchill Fellowship, the many conversations I had, the varied resources I read along the way and of course my ongoing work leading the AAEH.

They are self evidently not the result of any ongoing or detailed consultation process - which I acknowledge I would ideally like to conduct. For now, this is beyond the scope of this Churchill Fellowship (though it is something the AAEH intends to address in time).

Commonwealth Government Recommendations

Support community-led efforts to End Homelessness

Recommendation 1: The Commonwealth Government support the rollout of the Advance to Zero Methodology through the renegotiation of the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement.

Recommendation 2: The Commonwealth Government urgently directly support financially the community led efforts, utilising the Advance to Zero Methodology, in Australia.

A National Health Equity Policy

Recommendation 3: The Commonwealth Government Department of Health develop a National Homelessness and Health Equity Policy, that supports:
   A. A taskforce.
   B. Funding for health and homelessness services.
   C. A national network.
   D. Funding certainty.
   E. Funding equity.
   F. A deaths data reporting framework.
   G. Chronic defnition.
   H. A COAG meeting.

Intergovernmental and Interagency Coordination to End Homelessness

Recommendation 4: The Commonwealth Government establish an Interagency Council on Ending Homelessness (ICEH), to support the engagement of Commonwealth service delivery agencies relevant to ending homelessness, including in disability, aged care, primary health, veterans, social security, etc. It should be supported by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

Recommendation 5: The Commonwealth Government make having state based across government and intergovernmental coordination mechanisms in place a requirement of funding as part of the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement funding.

Reduce to Zero: Ending Homelessness Flexible Fund

Recommendation 6: The Commonwealth Government establish a 'Reduce to Zero: Ending Homlessenss Flexible Fund' to support efforts to drive and

sustain reductions in people experiencing homelessness through the Advance to Zero Campaign.

Supportive Housing

Recommendation 7: Commission an agency like the Productivity Commission to determine what the level of unmet need for supportive housing is in Australia and most importantly, what it would take to end chronic rough sleeping homelessness.

Recommendation 8: The Commonwealth Government establish a Permanent Supportive Housing Fund for capital and services to meet the immediate needs of those experiencing chronic homelessness, tying such investments to communities across Australia that are seeking to end homelessness. The Government should also investigate the creation of a Commonwealth Rent Assitance (CRA) top-up for people who have an experience of chronic rough sleeping homelessness to ensure we can prevent future instances of chronic homelessness from occurring.

Recommendation 9: The Commonwealth Government support the AAEH to establish a National Permanent Supportive Housing Network, to guide the development of local supportive housing systems in Australia, build understanding, improve practice, and help to ensure that when we do build PSH that they stay permanent supportive housing.

A National Housing and Ending Homelessness Plan

Recommendation 10: The Commonwealth Government ensure that 'ending homelessness' is the ambition of the new housing and homelessness plan they have committed to developing.

Recommendation 11: The Commonwealth Government consider how to deliver greater investment in social housing and income support as part of the development of a national plan on housing and homelessness.

Recommendation 12: the Commonwealth Government needs to consider how as part of the National Plan and the renegotiated National Agreement they can redouble efforts, as committed to in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, to build the Aboriginal Community controlled sector, in particular those organisations that work on ending homelessness.

Recommendation 13: the Commonwealth Government support the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ending Homelessness Network to provide a space for peer-to-peer support, develop training resources, sharing of best practices, and the development of advice and recommendations on ways to grow and better support the ATSI workforce within the existing housing, homelessness and other related sectors.

USA Visit Recommendations

As indicated earlier, the above Commonwealth Government Recommendations have been prioritised, the following recommendations will be refined and categorised by sector/organisational relevance for the final report as part of my Churchill Fellowship.

Recommendation 14: The AAEH and its allied networks consider the creation of state based Co-Lab's to build the capacity of community efforts to end homelessness.

Recommendation 15: The AAEH work with the CSH to develop a Permanent Supportive Housing Needs Analysis toolkit for Australia, to help local communities do these cost benefit analysis regarding the amount of permanent supportive housing their community needs to end homelessnes.

Recommendation 16: The AAEH develop a plan for the phased roll out of Zero Projects, with the eventual goal of an integrated nation wide network of locally controlled and developed by-name lists.

Recommendation 17: The AAEH's advocacy strategy should involve not just going to the Government's to seek funding to do this work, but seek the policy changes that will create the 'marketplace' - that communities need to develop the equivalents of continuums of care, coordinated access, BNLs, as set out in the AtoZ methodology.

Recommendation 18: the AAEH develop a technology and collaboration guide for Australian communities seeking to end homelessness.

Recommendation 19: The AAEH develop a better meetings guide for use by Australian communities seeking to end homelessness.

Recommendation 20: the AAEH explore ways to build the capacity of communities across Australia to gather and work together on the efforts to end homelessness - starting with holding an Annual Zero Homelessness Summit for people and organisations not part of the AtoZ Campaign to learn more and participate.

Recommendation 21: The AAEH develop a strategy for engaging those who truly 'get' the work of ending homelessness - including by recognising community Champions, appointing Associates (an alumni network) and developing a faculty of Fellows, or people who are recognised as being able to train, coach and mentor communities that are seeking to end homelessness in Australia.

Recommendation 22: The AAEH partner with the Institute for Healthcare Improvement in Australia to seek state government support to build capacity in the homelessness and health sectors to utilise the model for improvement.

Recommendation 23: The AAEH develop a statement of intent regarding racial equality, racial justice and reconciliation in relation to the AtoZ Campaign.

Recommendation 24: The AAEH develop a prospectus of all the things we think are needed to be done organisationally to support an end to homelessness in Australia.

Recommendation 25: The AAEH develop a communications guide to talking about ending homelessness.

Recommendation 26: The AAEH publish or make more publicly accessible the working definitions it uses as part of the AtoZ campaign and work with Commonwealth agencies, researchers and others to develop more broadly understood or agreed definitions in Australia.

Recommendation 27: The AAEH support local business alliances to be established in each state or region to provide champions and allies for the work of ending

homelessness in those communities - including through the development of a toolkit that integrates shared value strategies.

Recommendation 28: State Governments develop homelessness peer workforce strategies to increase the number of and support best practice in relation to peer workers in the housing and homelessness sectors.

Recommendation 29: The AAEH consider supporting the development of a "Street Voices for Change: Lived Experience Network" - not a policy consultation forum but a community organising network that supports the development of media-trained advocates, establishes a speaker service, proves training about working in a person-centred way, campaigns to reduce stigma, and other associated activities.

Recommendation 30: the AAEH partner with the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless to deliver community organising / advocacy training for interested parties in Australia and/or the establishment of a fellowship model.

Recommendation 31: State Governments work with local Zero Projects to use by-name list data match with other service systems to inform prevention work.

Recommendation 32: State Governments establish and publically document their strategies for supporting across government and intergovernmental coordination in their efforts to end homelessness.

Recommendation 33: The AAEH develop a 'how we work' fact sheet, drawing heavily on the efforts of Results for America. To not just describe what we do, but to influence how we do it.

Recommendation 34: State Governments seek to transition more homelessness funding to outcomes based contracts, rather than output-based contracts, however, it's essential that there is a strong evidence-base behind what resources are needed to deliver those outcomes.

Recommendation 35: State Governments consider setting policies on Collective Impact initiatives and being clear on how state government agencies can best engage with and support these collaborations - particularly in relation to the Advance to Zero movement.

Recommendation 36: A focus of Local Government efforts in supporting efforts to end homelessness be to help bring communities together to create local zero projects, and to financially support the backbone efforts of these Collective Impact initiatives.

Recommendation 37: Local Government agencies like the state-based Local Government Associations, the Australian Local Government Association and the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors (CCCLM) should support the development of tools and resources to make it easier for local governments to engage and support this work.

Recommendation 38: The AAEH work collaboratively with other organisations seeking to end homelessness to develop a communications campaign driving action towards efforts to end homelessness amongst key stakeholder groups and populations.

Recommendation 39: The AAEH support AtoZ communities to benchmark, track and publicly report their systems performance in reducing the number of people newly identified or returning to homelessness - i.e. prevention.

Recommendation 40: The AAEH encourage the winter solstice to be a point to recognise the number of people whose lives are lost to homelessness each year in Australia.

Recommendation 41: The AAEH seek funding from state governments to deliver more training and advisory services to build the capacity for undertaking the type of work that ending homelessness requires, working collaboratively, using data to inform decision making, assertive outreach, etc.

Recommendation 42: The AAEH incorporate more systems thinking training (inc mental models, psychology of change, etc) into the existing improvement science training.

Recommendation 43: The Australian Health, Housing and Homelessness Network (A3HN) as part of its regular catch ups should discuss and track the top 'pain points' between the systems.

Recommendation 44: The AAEH bring the CSH to Australia to:
- Help develop a localised needs analysis toolkit to support AtoZ Communities to use their by-name list data to determine what their supportive housing needs are as well as the associated costs and savings such an investment would bring;
- Facilitate the integration of their FUSE program lessons into the AtoZ tools relating to coordinated systems; and
- Help develop Australian Supportive Housing Standards.

Recommendation 45: AAEH, over time, support communities who wish to seek to end youth homlesssness, through the Advance to Zero Campaign.

Recommendation 46: AAEH develop, based on what A Way Home Washington have developed, a charter for participation in the Advance to Zero Movement.

Recommendation 47: State Governments support hubs or the co-location of service coordination efforts, backbone activities and other system change efforts, alongside the support services in new builds of permanent supportive housing.

Appendix A - The Itinerary

The following is who I met with where, on the first part of my Churchill Fellowship.

Name	Title	Organisation	Date
Chicago, Illinois, USA			
Molly Brown	Professor of Clinical Community Psychology & Director of the Homeless Advocacy Research Collaboration Lab	DePaul University	9 May 2022
Doug Schenkelberg	Executive Director	Chicago Coalition for the Homeless	9 May 2022+ 13 May 2022
Carolyn Ross	CEO	All Chicago	9 May 2022
Steve Brown	Senior Director, Social & Behavioral Health Transformation & Advocacy	Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences	9 May 2022
Mark Angelini	CEO	Mercy Housing	9 May 2022
Lydia Stazen	Executive Director	Institute of Global Homelessness	9 May 2022 + 13 May 2022
Guy	Lived Experience	N/A	9 May 2022
Jake Maguire	Principal	Community Solutions	10 May 2022
Liz Drapa	VP Field Operations & Consulting	Corporation for Supportive Housing	10 May 2022
Roseanne Haggerty	President and CEO	Community Solutions	11 May 2022
Niñon Lewis	Vice President	Institute for Healthcare Improvement	11 May 2022
Donald Whitehead	Executive Director	National Coalition for the Homelessness	11 May 2022
Amber Chandler	Systems Improvement Advisor	Community Solutions	11 May 2022
Dawn Moskowitz	Strategy Lead, Catalytic Projects	Community Solutions	11 May 2022

Ramina Davidson	Strategy Lead, Zero for All Proof Points	Community Solutions	11 May 2022
Anna Kim	Principal Communications	Community Solutions	11 May 2022
Ciara Devlin	Head of Place-based Programmes	Crisis UK	12 May 2022
Kate Farell	Housing Led Programmes Lead	Crisis UK	12 May 2022
Jessica Venegas	Principal Strategic Partnerships	Community Solutions	12 May 2022
Aras Jizan	Portfolio Lead, Built for Zero	Community Solutions	12 May 2022
Marie Morison	Director, Built for Zero	Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness	12 May 2022
Amanda Andere	CEO	Funders Together to End Homelessness	12 May 2022
Emily Krisciunas	Director	Chicago Funders Together to End Homelessness	13 May 2022
Felix Matlock Jr	Mercy Housing	Regional Vice President of Resident Services	13 May 2022
Julie & Chariot	Mercy Housing	Residents, Miriam Apartments	13 May 2022
Washington DC, USA			
Linda Kaufman	Retired	Community Solutions	15 May 2022
Jeff Olivet	Executive Director	U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness	16 May 2022
Michele Jolin	Co Founder and CEO	Results for America	16 May 2022
Norman Suchar	Director, Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	16 May 2022
Triina Van	Homeless Services Coordinator,	Arlington County Department of Human Services	17 May 2022

Nan Roman	CEO	The National Alliance to End Homelessness	17 May 2022
Jerry Jones	National Field Director	The National Alliance to End Homelessness	17 May 2022
Kristi Schulenberg	Director: Centre for Capacity Building	The National Alliance to End Homelessness	17 May 2022
New York, New York, USA			
Paul Howard	Senior Director, Community Health Portfolio Lead	The Institute for Healthcare Improvement	19 May 2022
Laurel Blatchford	Senior Adviser: Place Matters	Blue Meridian	19 May 2022
Deborah DeSantis	CEO	Corporation for Supportive Housing	19 May 2022
Cynthia Stuart	Chief Operating Officer	Supportive Housing Network of New York	20 May 2022
Fred Dust	Founder and CEO	Dust and Company	20 May 2022
Seattle, Washington, USA			
Ashley Barnes	Director of Anchor Communities Initiative	A Way Home Washington	23 May 2022
Rian Watt	Strategy Lead, International and & Initiative Large Scale Change	Community Solutions	23 May 2022
Patrick Szymanski	Associate Director of Housing	Downtown Emergency Service Center	24 May 2022
Drew Duplantis	Project Manager of the Clinic at Hobson Place	Downtown Emergency Service Center	24 May 2022
Philip Welkhoff	Director, Malaria	Gates Foundation	24 May 2022

Appendix B - Further Background

By-Name Lists[31]

A by-name list is a comprehensive list of every person in a community experiencing homelessness, updated in real time. Using information collected and shared with their consent, each person on the list has a file that includes their name, homeless history, health, and housing needs.

By maintaining a by-name list, communities are able to track the ever changing size and composition of their homeless population. They know current and detailed information on every homeless person in a given subpopulation.

Communities use by-name list data plotted in graphs to understand the impact of different ideas designed to reduce homelessness and see if these ideas work. Because they are constantly tracking who is experiencing homelessness in their community, they're able to see if their interventions are working. And they're able to tell quickly, allowing them to course correct if they aren't seeing improvement.

In Australia, we add an extra level of richness to the data, by seeking to ensure that the VI-SPDAT tool is used to collect information on the needs and vulnerabilities of each person experiencing homelessness in our community.

A by-name list is therefore not just a static list of names that one or even a handful or agencies have, or even a dynamic list that only a handful of agencies have. Every community in the US and Canada that has ended homeelssness, has first developed what's called a 'quality by-name list'.

A Quality By-Name List
In short it means that you have the vast majority of providers feeding into the list, you have it shared, and community owned, and you have had the list certified as quality. In Australia, the AAEH certifies community efforts to create a quality by-name list utilising the by-name list scorecard we developed with Community Solutions.

The scorecard assesses:
- community participation and coverage
- policies and procedures
- data infrastructure to track data points related to system-wide inflow and outflow

Some communities start by creating a by-name list focused on a specific population, like single adults. Others create lists that account for all households experiencing homelessness in their community. The goal is that eventually communities will build one list accounting for all people experiencing all forms of homelessness.The AtoZ Campaign in Australia focuses on starting with rough sleeping homelessness, with local communities then deciding when and for which groups to expand their by-name lists to include.

A System Measure
The goal is not data collection, the goal is to take the people on your by-name list and make sure each person gets connected to housing, or to prevent people from coming

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[31] https://community.solutions/what-is-a-by-name-list/

onto the list in the first place. So, we track how people move through the homeless response system in order to determine if our efforts are helping us get closer or further away from the goal of ending homelessness - or to make it rare, brief and a one time thing. The by-name list gives us a way to measure this by ensuring that everyone on the list is categorised according to where they are in the system. In Australia we call these the Functional Zero data points, and they are:

Inflow: the new people
When a person loses housing and enters into homelessness, they're part of what we call inflow. Inflow data points are:
- Newly identified: People new to homelessness
- Returned from housing: People who experienced homelessness before, got connected with housing, and now are homeless again
- Returned from Inactive: People who experienced homelessness before and exited to unknown destinations (left town, were institutionalized for 90+ days etc), and now are homeless again

Actively homeless: the people without housing right now
People who are currently homeless are categorized as:
- Actively homeless: This group contrasts to people whose current status is Housed or Inactive
- Temporarily Sheltered: Those who were experiencing rough sleeping homelessness, but have moved into temporary housing/shelter. This is a new data point in the Australian context because the Advance to Zero Campaign focuses on ending rough sleeping as a first step, and we don't consider moving off the street into temporary housing the outcome we seek, what we seek is permanent housing.
- ATSI Mobility: There are groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia who are sleeping in the public domain and who are not seeking housing, but are vulnerable and need support (including from cultural sources as well as government and/or non-government services - for example support to return to country). This is a category that has not been operationalised by any communities in Australia as yet, but is being explored by some.[32]

Outflow: the people who are no longer homeless
Outflow data points are:
- Housing placements: People who are connected to permanent housing
- Moved to inactive: People who exit out of homelessness without support from the homeless response system, such as finding their own housing, moving out of the community, or entering a long-term stay in an institution

Functional Zero
The by-name list collects the data we need to determine if we are getting closer or further away from the goal of ending homelessness, but it doesn't calculate this - for that we need a measure, that's where the concept of Functional Zero comes in.

Functional Zero is *"a milestone, which must be sustained, that indicates a community has measurably ended homelessness for a population. When it's achieved, homelessness is rare and brief for that population. Communities in Built for Zero are*

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[32] More information about this can be found here: https://saaeh.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Aboriginal-Mobility-Data-Project-Report-FINAL-1.pdf

confirmed for achieving functional zero using their quality, by-name data, which is updated at least monthly".[33]

Functional Zero needs to be measured slightly differently depending on the population group that your campaign or local zero project is focused on. The US valculates Functional Zero this way for chronic homelessness:

(Image: Community Solutions, USA)

And this way for veterans homelessness:

(Image: Community Solutions, USA)

The Australian definition used by the Advance to Zero campaign is that functional zero is what happens when a community's six-monthly average housing placement rate is greater than the number of people sleeping rough.

In order to reach Functional Zero, the average number of housing placements must be more than the number of people sleeping rough in a community for a minimum of three consecutive months.

The below is an example of a community having reached functional zero in the US, using their calculation for the chronic homelessness population definition of functional

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[33] https://community.solutions/built-for-zero/functional-zero/

Bakersfield/Kern County, CA
reaches functional zero for chronic homelessness
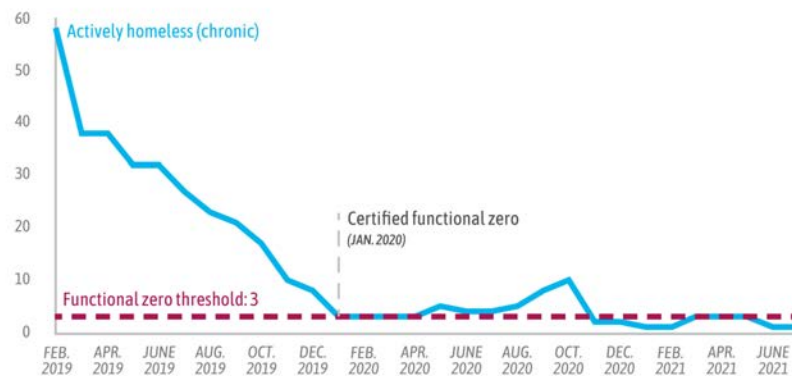
(Image: Bakersfield/Kern County, California, reached FZ for chronic homelessness in January 2020, and have continued to sustain it, Community Solutions, USA)

Other Progress Measures

Functional Zero is a progress measure because ultimately we want to end all homelessness and we want to achieve and sustain absolute zero homelessness. We know however that absolute zero is not possible to sustain until we address significant structural challenges in our society, policies, politics and economy. For these reasons a number of progress measures have been the focus of efforts in the US, Canada and Australia to end homelessness. Functional Zero being the most significant of these, but there are a number of other including:

- QBNL - when communities can answer yes to all the questions on their population specific by-name list scorecard.
- Shift Reduction - A *"shift constitutes a measurable, meaningful reduction in homelessness for a community. More specifically, it means that a community has driven the number of people experiencing homelessness below their median for six consecutive months. A shift in the median tells us when there has been a fundamental, sustained change in the level at which the system operates"*.[34]
- Others - a range of other progress measures can be adopted by local communities, for example, the first time a milestone like 100 people having been housed from the by-name list, the first time a shift reduction in inflow occurs (i.e. successful prevention efforts).

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[34] https://community.solutions/what-is-a-shift-a-by-name-list-and-what-do-they-have-to-do-with-ending-homelessness/

(Image: Community Solutions, USA)

The VI-SPDAT

The VI-SPDAT or Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritisation Decision Assistance Tool is a pre-screening tool that is used to better understand the housing and support needs of individuals or families who are experiencing homelessness. By better understanding the needs of people, services can more effectively match individuals or families to the most appropriate housing option, healthcare service and/or other community support.

The VI-SPDAT's purpose is not to simply collect information about homelessness nor is it as a research or data collection tool, but to help ensure all individuals and families who are homeless in a community get the right response. It helps communities build their 'By Name List' (BNL) which is an essential component of working to end homelessness in every community. De-identified collective information can then be used to support better system planning and to advocate for the precise housing and support needed to end homelessness in your community.

The VI-SPDAT is being used throughout Australia by communities who have already made a collaborative commitment to ending street homelessness in their community. It is the essential tool for communities to use as part of the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness' Advance to Zero Campaign.

The context in which the VI-SPDAT tool is used in Australia, and the tool itself are different to the tool used in the USA. In particular because OrgCode the creators of the Vi-SPDAT and the AAEH have worked together to develop a new version of the tool explicitly for use in Australia.

OrgCode have indicated they will no longer be supporting the use of the VI-SPDAT in the USA and have partnered with the AAEH to support the development of a new version of the tool - to be called the Australian Homelessness Vulnerability Triage Tool.

More information available about this at: www.aaeh.org.au/atoz

Continuums of Care and Coordinated Entry

The US Government Department for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) describes Continuums of Care (CoC's) as being:

Designed to promote community wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, and State and local governments to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families, and communities by homelessness; promote access to and effect utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families; and optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.[35]

(Image: Continuums of Care, Community Solutions, USA)

The National Alliance to End Homelessness describes them as:

a regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals. In 2007, 461 CoCs submitted applications for federal homeless assistance funds in all 50 states, plus DC, Puerto Rico, and Guam. CoCs represent communities of all kinds, including major cities, suburbs and rural areas.

In 1995, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) began to require communities to submit a single application for McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants in order to streamline the funding application process, encourage coordination of housing and service providers on a local level, and promote the development of Continuums of Care (CoCs). By requiring communities to submit a single application, HUD hoped to encourage a more structural and strategic approach to both housing and providing services to homeless people. A CoC would provide this more strategic system by providing homeless people with housing and services appropriate to their range of needs.

Parts of a Continuum
According to HUD, a CoC is *"a community plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and maximize self-sufficiency. It includes action steps to end homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness."* HUD identifies four necessary parts of a continuum:

1. *Outreach*, intake, and assessment in order to identify service and housing needs and provide a link to the appropriate level of both;
2. *Emergency shelter* to provide an immediate and safe alternative to sleeping on the streets, especially for homeless families with children;
3. *Transitional housing* with supportive services to allow for the development of skills that will be needed once permanently housed; and
4. *Permanent and permanent supportive housing* to provide individuals and families with an affordable place to live with services if needed.

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[35] https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/

CoCs are tasked to track and manage the homeless community in their area. One of most important activities entrusted to CoCs is the biannual point in time count of the homeless population and an annual enumeration of emergency systems, transitional housing units, and beds that make up the homeless assistance systems. These counts provide an overview of the state of homelessness in a CoC, and offer the information necessary to redirect services, funding, and resources as necessary. The CoC also manages these services, offering both prevention strategies and homeless assistance programs to assist those at-risk of or experiencing homelessness.[36]

A CoC differs from the overall homelessness response system, or what we would call in Australia as a Zero Project because they are made up of contractually bound partnerships as a condition of Federal funding. Zero Projects, take a Collective Impact approach comprising (ideally) everyone with an interest or a stake in improving the homelessness response system.

(Image: Housing Response System, Community Solutions, USA)

Coordinated Entry

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) Program requires communities to implement a coordinated entry system that covers the geographic area of their CoC. This is because an effective coordinated entry process is a critical component to any community's efforts to meet the goals of Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness.

What it looks like in each community is different.

HUD says[37] that the primary goal for coordinated entry processes is that assistance be allocated as effectively as possible and that it be easily accessible no matter where or how people present.

Most communities lack the resources needed to meet all of the needs of people experiencing homelessness. This combined with the lack of well-developed coordinated entry processes HUD states can result in severe hardships for people experiencing homelessness. They often face long waiting times to receive assistance or are screened out of needed assistance.

Coordinated entry processes help communities prioritize assistance based on vulnerability and severity of service needs to ensure that people who need assistance the most can receive it in a timely manner. Coordinated entry processes also provide information about service needs and gaps to help communities plan their assistance and identify needed resources.

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[36] https://endhomelessness.org/resource/what-is-a-continuum-of-care/

[37] https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Coordinated-Entry-Policy-Brief.pdf

Without Coordinated Entry

Clients continually re-directed, creating delays in service or even distrust, especially the most vulnerable populations.

Available resources are underutilized or misused as clients are continually referred to multiple providers.

Multiple assessments leading to duplication of services, and poor data tracking.

Client Enters CE

Diversion/ Prevention Services

Community Services

Housing/ Service Providers
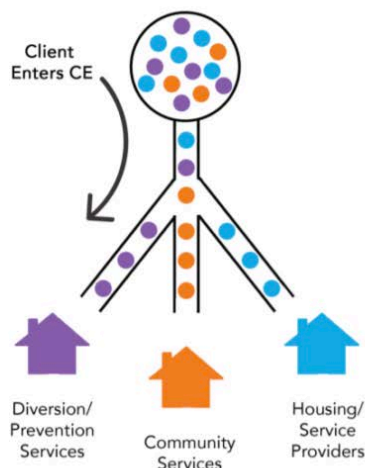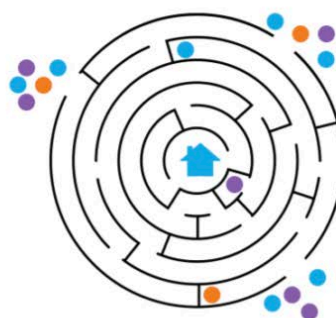
With Coordinated Entry

No wrong door approach, meaning any agency participating in CE has the ability to direct a client to the resources that best match their needs.

Shared resources and assessments to better understand our population.

Clients are placed in safe and stable housing options faster and more effectively to reduce length of time homeless and returns back to homelessness.

(Image: Community Alliance for the Homeless, USA)[38]

Permanent Supportive Housing

The AAEH seeks to advance the development of a supportive housing system in Australia as an approach for change that: leans in to address the root causes of inequity; breaks down silos; creates smarter and better-integrated systems; builds more resilient communities; and helps inform efforts to end homelessness.

Permanent supportive housing is a proven solution to homelessness for the most vulnerable chronically homeless people. It pairs housing with case management and supportive services.[39]

There is good evidence to show - through data collected during Australian connections weeks' - that approximately 50-60% of those people experiencing rough sleeping homelessness will require permanent support to sustain housing. This is because they may have several health conditions, such as chronic illness, disability, mental illness and/or a history of having had a traumatic brain injury. Others who experience this type of homelessness will also need permanent housing to end their homelessness, but may only need short-medium term support or no additional support at all.

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[38] www.cafth.org/coordinated-entry/

[39] www.mercyfoundation.com.au/our-focus/ending-homelessness/common-ground-permanent-supportive-housing/

For the small group of Australians who have high (and often, complex needs) and who experience long term homelessness we need a systemic response to their permanent housing and support needs. We need an adequate supply of 'permanent supportive housing'. We don't need a great amount of this type of housing, simply an adequate amount for the current number and future number of people with high and complex needs who will not sustain permanent housing without permanent support.

(Image: Key Components of Supportive Housing, Corporation for Supportive Housing, USA)

Types of permanent supportive housing

There are a number of ways that permanent supportive housing can be created and managed. The two primary ways are 'high density' models (for example, Common Ground) and 'scatter site' models. High density models, like Common Ground, involve people living in one apartment complex, using a mixed tenancy model (eg.not everyone who lives there has support needs or has experienced homelessness) and some of the support they need to sustain their tenancies is provided 'on-site'. There are workers on-site who can assist tenants with support as well as helping to coordinate other professional health, mental health and support services for the person. With 'scatter-site' models, people live in separate houses or units and support workers visit the person's home to help deliver or co-ordinate needed support.

Housing First

Housing First is an international model for housing and supporting people who have experienced long term and recurring homelessness and who face a range of complex challenges. It supports strategies to end homelessness and is a methodology for effectively assisting some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

Micah Projects has described the Housing First Approach in this way.[40]

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[40] www.endhomelessnesswa.com/our-approach
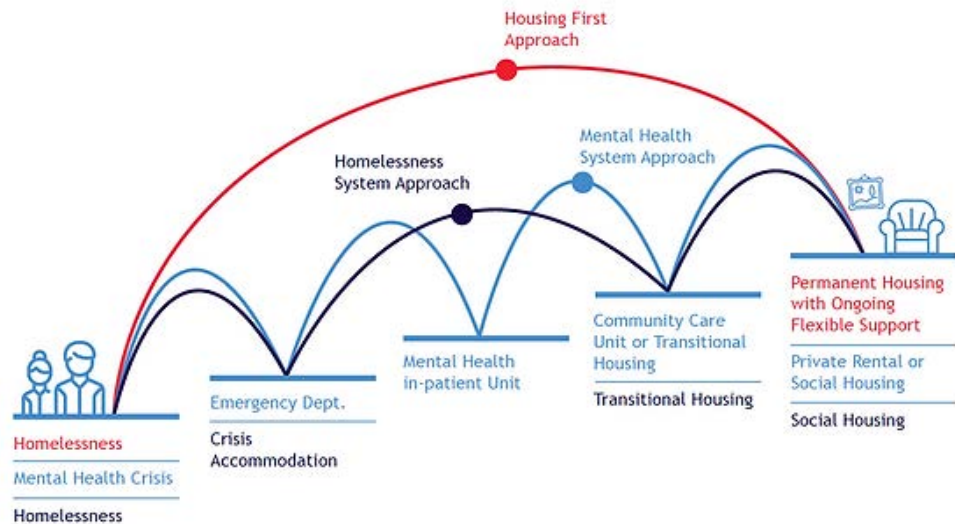
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The following principles for Australia have been developed to promote the implementation of Housing First in Australia.[41]

PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT TO A HOME

Access – Immediate access to a permanent, self-contained home which meets people's cultural and social needs.

Eligibility – No treatment or behavioural eligibility pre-conditions.

Tenancy – People enjoy full tenancy rights and standard rental conditions with security of tenure.

Suitability – Location, affordability, access to services and quality of property meets the specific needs of the individual or family that are housed. Considerations include safety and community connections, and for people with physical disability – maximising their capacity to live independently.

Sustainability – People are able to keep their homes if they have absences for family, cultural or other reasons (eg. hospital or prison stays) and are assisted to quickly find a new home if a tenancy fails.

Safety – The housing provided must be safe and secure.

HOUSING AND SUPPORT ARE SEPARATED

Separation – While they work closely together to maintain and support tenancies, the provision of housing and support must be functionally separate. This is to ensure housing and support are not contingent upon one another and unwavering advocacy is provided for the individual or family.

Tenancy – There are no additional requirements to participate in support or treatment as part of the tenancy and people are able to maintain their home regardless of their engagement in support services.

Continuity – The offer of support stays with the person if they choose to move home or if a tenancy fails. The support is available to people in their new living situations including a return to homelessness or to an institutional setting where support will actively assist people secure new homes.

Security – People are supported to follow the terms of their tenancies in the same way as anyone else renting a home. Support services work to maintain tenancies while understanding the critical part a home plays in the wellbeing of both individuals and families.

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[41] www.ruah.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Housing-First-Principles-web.pdf

FLEXIBLE SUPPORT FOR AS LONG AS IT IS NEEDED

Continuity – Support does not have a fixed end date and people can return to or continue support for as long as needed.

Holistic – Support is directed by the people receiving the support, and is available across a wide variety of domains being sensitive to people's family context, cultural identity and past trauma.

Intensity – Support intensity can rise and fall with individual or family need so services can respond positively when people need more or less support on a day to day basis.

Accessibility – People are able to quickly re-engage with support without needing to undergo a new assessment or intake process.

Relationship – Support is built from an authentic relationship and it is practical, flexible and creative – responding to each unique set of circumstances as required.

CHOICE AND SELF-DETERMINATION

Home – People define for themselves what makes a place a home which may include connection to particular land. People are given a choice of where they live and the type of housing in which they want to live.

Support – People are able to make real choices about how they live their lives and these choices determine the support they receive including how, where, when and by whom it is provided.

Household – People are able to choose with whom they live, who they invite into their own home and whether visitors are able to stay.

Person-centred – Support acknowledges that the best way to understand and respond to people's needs, is to listen to their views and questions, so that any planning is directly responsive to their particular concerns and dreams. This approach respects each individual and that person's strengths rather than focusing negatively on each person's limitations.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT WITHOUT COERCION

Responsibility – The onus is on workers to maintain the relationship and employ creative and imaginative approaches to ensure their work is engaging rather than blaming people for "disengaging".

Persistence – While individuals and families can refuse support, staff persist without intruding and use their relationship to make ongoing and regular offers in ways that show care and respect for people.

Compassion – A deep understanding of people, means that support is designed to fit the individual rather than the individual being required to fit the service.

Availability – Caseloads are small and support is available outside normal working hours. This allows workers to be persistent and proactive in their approach, doing "whatever it takes" and not giving up and closing when engagement is low.

Trust – Because of people's past experiences of trauma, extended homelessness and exclusion, it is critical that services build trust and have a strong commitment to "doing what they say", so they are experienced as trauma and gender informed, reliable and transparent.

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION

Belonging – Social and community inclusion is an integral part of support as it rebuilds a sense of self and connection to others, which in turn is a protective factor for people's tenancy, health and well-being.

Relationships – People are supported to build friendships and relationships within their community, and where possible to reconnect with family, culture and those who are important to them.

Participation – People are supported to participate in a wide range of pursuits including education, employment and volunteering opportunities as well as cultural, artistic and recreational activities.

Community – Homes exist as part of a community. Support not only helps people connect to that community, but also uses strategies to build acceptance amongst neighbours of people with different experiences, lifestyles, and appearances.

HARM REDUCTION APPROACH

Safety – Support uses a wide range of proactive strategies to assist people to reduce the negative impact of substance use, gambling, self-harm and potentially high-risk behaviours.

Education – Factual information is provided in a non-judgmental style to enable people to make informed choices about their health, tenancy and relationships with others.

Change – Support is guided by individual choice and for those who choose it, connections are made to specialist services that are accessible and culturally appropriate. Support is also mindful that recovery is not a linear journey and does not necessarily require abstinence.

Inclusion – Housing and/or support are not withdrawn from people who choose to continue to drink, use, self-harm, gamble or participate in high-risk activities.

RECOVERY ORIENTATED PRACTICE

Recovery – Understanding that recovery is not about an expectation that people be symptom free. Rather recovery focuses on people being able to recover a sense of themselves and their place in their community.

Hope – Support offers hope and actively encourages people to dream and imagine a future for themselves, a future focusing on gaining a sense of purpose with the prospect of enjoying a good and secure life.

Dignity of risk – A process of trial and error involving small steps forward and backward celebrating successful experiences but also learning from experiences of pain and frustration without a sense of shame.

Strengths – Celebrating and working with people's capacity and abilities that are quite separate from any diagnosis they may have.

Appropriate – To developmental stage, cultural and gender identities.

Improvement Science / Continuous Improvement

- The 'science of improvement',[42] sometimes called Improvement science and often referred to in Australia as continuous Improvement is an applied science that emphasizes innovation, rapid-cycle testing in the field, and spread in order to generate learning about what changes, in which contexts, produce improvements.
- It has been a central feature of the US, Canadian and increasingly the Australian efforts to end homelessness.
- Community Solutions has pioneered the use of improvement science in the work of ending homelessness, working closely with the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI).
- It is characterized by the combination of expert subject knowledge with improvement methods and tools.
- It is multidisciplinary — drawing on clinical science, systems theory, psychology, statistics, and other fields.
- It starts by identifying a clear aim for improvement and a measurement plan, and then immediately begins with small tests of the changes we think will lead to improvement over a short period of time.
- As these small tests are refined and successfully implemented in the given context, we begin to broaden the testing and scale up the changes.
- There is an emphasis on starting improvement efforts on a small scale, and leveraging all the generated learning to plan for spread and, later, scale up.
- IHI's methodology traces back to W. Edwards Deming (1900-1993), who taught that by adhering to certain principles of management, organizations can increase quality and simultaneously reduce costs.
- Based on Deming's work, the Model for Improvement was created by Associates for Process Improvement (API) as a simple, effective tool for bringing about positive change.
- The Model for Improvement asks three questions —
    - What are we trying to accomplish?
    - How will we know that a change is an improvement?
    - What changes can we make that will result in improvement?
- It then employs Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles for small, rapid-cycle tests of change. IHI uses the Model for Improvement in all of its improvement efforts.

(Image: AAEH, adopted from IHI and Community Solutions)

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[42] http://www.ihi.org/about/Pages/ScienceofImprovement.aspx

Collective Impact

- The Collective Impact approach is a structured form of collaboration whereby organisations and individuals from different sectors all work together on a common agenda for solving a specific problem.
- Collective Impact is based on the understanding that existing approaches to creating change are too often ineffective for solving complex issues.
- My first exposure to the concept was reading the seminal piece on it in the Stanford Social Innovation Review.[43]
- The Collective Impact approach contains five core conditions for change:

The 5 Conditions of Collective Impact

1. Common Agenda
- Common understanding of the problem
- Shared vision for change

2. Shared Measurement
- Collecting data and measuring results
- Focus on performance management
- Shared accountability

3. Mutually Reinforcing Activities
- Differentiated approaches
- Coordination through joint plan of action

4. Continuous Communication
- Consistent and open communication
- Focus on building trust

5. Backbone Support
- Separate organization(s) with staff
- Resources and skills to convene and coordinate participating organizations

(Image: United Way, Northern California)[44]

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[43] https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact
[44] www.norcalunitedway.org/collective-impact