

Put compassion at the heart of our community

WACOSS has released a blueprint for social and economic change to help achieve the inclusive, just, and equitable society we all desire, the 2018-2019 Pre-Budget Submission: *At the Heart of Our Community*.

The Submission proposes an approach to government that puts people at the centre of decision making, and empowers local communities to drive systemic transformations that target their biggest needs and highest aspirations.

“The recent State election provides a clear mandate for progressive change, re-balancing our economy to reduce growing inequality, and build a vibrant and diverse future we can all share and pass on to our children,” said Louise Giolitto, WACOSS CEO.

Some of the recommendations in the WACOSS submission to achieve this include setting targets for social housing around Metronet Hubs, repealing mandatory sentencing laws, improving renters’ rights, protecting low-income households from rising energy costs, co-designing a comprehensive Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) response strategy, and creating a cross-government social policy evaluation and research unit.

“We recognise the tight fiscal situation that the State Government finds itself in, but hard-line austerity will only cause systemic costs to grow, undermine our economy, and further disadvantage those who have already been placed in a vulnerable position,” said Ms Giolitto.

“Without a serious shift towards early intervention and prevention, the unsustainable and growing demand pressures on tertiary services will just continue to grow.

“We need to take serious and concerted action in this State to reduce the unacceptable overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in our prisons and in state care.

“It’s time we put the interest of those on the lowest incomes, the marginalised and those who are currently excluded, right at the heart of our community.”

Ends

For further information please contact Laurene Coller, Communications Officer, 08 9420 7222 or 0419 316 557, laurene@wacoss.org.au.

A copy of the submission can be downloaded from the WACOSS website [here](#), and hard copies can be posted on request.

Pre-Budget Submission recommendations

Strategic Policy

- Put citizens at the centre of whole of government reform
- Create cross-government leadership teams to implement reform
 - A Social Policy Evaluation And Research unit (SPEAR) in DPC
 - An evaluation initiative led by Treasury
- Establish mechanisms that drive service system planning for collective impact
 - A Co-Design Program Fund to support flagship integrated service initiatives
 - Mechanisms for place-based pooled-budgeting, shared reporting and accountability
- Link existing consultative mechanisms through the Supporting Communities Forum
 - Regional Supporting Communities Forums to implement place-based reforms
 - A framework for commissioning place-based integrated services
- Build an Our Communities Outcomes Framework to enable whole-of-government reporting
 - A data linkage framework and unit overseeing agreed measurement protocols
 - An interactive directory of services and whole of government shopfronts
- Develop whole-of-government strategies to drive cross-agency reform
 - An early intervention initiative to reduce the growing cost of tertiary services
 - A children plan, youth services plan, FASD and family violence strategies

Children, Young People & Families

- Co-design a comprehensive Aboriginal child protection service system
- Increase the availability and effectiveness of secondary services for children, young people and families
- Transitional support for young people leaving out-of-home care
- Expand family violence outreach services and perpetrator accountability programs
- Co-design a whole-of-government FASD strategy

Housing & Homelessness

- Set targets for social housing and low-income affordable rental at MetroNet Hubs
- Implement a housing first collective impact model to end chronic homelessness
- Develop a new State Affordable Housing Strategy 2030
 - Residential Tenancies Act reform
 - Property Tax and Stamp Duty reform
- Co-design a shared assessment framework and tenancy support system

Justice

- Develop a Social Reinvestment strategy focused on diversion, rehabilitation
 - Repeal mandatory sentencing & reform the CLMIA Act
 - Increase availability of therapeutic services in the justice system
 - Implement behaviour management reform at Banksia Hill
 - Improve access to interpreter services
- Consolidate community legal service funding into a single, transparent program
- Review the WA Stolen Wages Reparation Scheme
- Extend statute of limitations on child abuse and sign up to national redress

Sustainable Services

- Develop a community services workforce development strategy
- Implement a human services Aboriginal workforce development strategy
- Create a whole of government strategy to increase the role of Aboriginal community controlled organisations to deliver services proportionate to population need
- Transitional funding to after-hours services affected by the gap between the ERO and NGHSS indexation
- Develop plans to increase MHAOD community support to 3.2 million hours by 2020

Financial Resilience

- Advocate to increase the adequacy of income support payments via COAG
- Undertake whole-of-government reform of social concessions
 - A brokerage fund for resident non-citizens not eligible for assistance
 - Trial a Home Energy Action Plan for low income households
- Fund Energy Consumers Australia to provide consumer representation and research in WA
- Use proceeds from the wagering tax to provide support to those harmed by online gambling