

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – NOVEMBER 21, 2018

Addressing intergenerational poverty requires place-based approaches: Jesuit Social Services

Responses to intergenerational disadvantage must be tailored to individual communities and only long-term investments will help to improve outcomes, says Jesuit Social Services.

“If the Federal Government wants to effectively and practically address complex intergenerational marginalisation and disadvantage, it must ensure it empowers communities to lead and support solutions and commit to change over the long term,” says Jesuit Social Services CEO Julie Edwards.

Jesuit Social Services, Catholic Social Services Australia and Catholic Care Wilcannia – Forbes will present today to the Inquiry into Intergenerational Welfare Dependence in Canberra.

“Jesuit Social Services’ research into locational disadvantage, conducted in partnership with Catholic Social Services Australia over many years including *Dropping off the Edge* reports in 2007 and 2015, shows us that a small number of communities are dealing with multiple and complex forms of disadvantage and overburdened with long-term unemployment, child maltreatment and criminal convictions, among other factors.

“There is no quick or easy solution to addressing entrenched disadvantage and we must look at interventions from birth across the life span – including early childhood, school, mental health, justice and crime prevention and building the capacity of local communities,” says Ms Edwards.

“Better outcomes for future generations require long-term investment but there are things the Federal Government could implement in the short-term to support marginalised Australians, such as raising the rate of Newstart to lift people out of poverty and reflect cost-of-living pressures.”

“We also want to see the establishment of an independent social security commission to guide parliament on future changes to income support rates and a commitment to explore and fund initiatives that help open pathways to employment for disadvantaged groups such as the Corporate Diversity Partnerships model we run with NAB and John Holland.”

David Hammond, General Manager – Western Sydney at Jesuit Social Services, says the local community in which he works (spanning suburbs such as Willmot and Emerton in Mt Druitt) is among the most disadvantaged in New South Wales.

“Many of the people who live in Western Sydney are incredibly resilient however they are forced to focus on simply surviving instead of advancing their lives due to a range of factors including limited job opportunities, limited transport and inadequate or under-funded community services,” he says.

“We hope that this Inquiry will lead to a more inclusive Australia where everyone has a chance to reach their potential and lead positive and productive lives.”

Media enquiries – Kathryn Kernohan, 0409 901 248 or kathryn.kernohan@jss.org.au