

# Homelessness

## and impact on education and employment

Hanover believes that education and employment are central in helping to break the cycle of homelessness.

### Key statistics:

---

- 90% of those accessing homelessness services are unemployed<sup>1</sup>
  - 33% of Hanover clients have completed year 10 or below as their highest level of education<sup>2</sup>
  - More than 50% of Hanover's clients want to undertake further study<sup>3</sup>
- 

### What are the causes?

Homelessness turns your life upside down. The instability impacts on your capacity to work or study and it affects your health. It's difficult to hold on to your possessions when you have nowhere to store them and the stress associated with homelessness places incredible tensions on family relationships.

Homelessness can be caused by job loss. Certainly, being homeless can make it extremely difficult to find a job. Many Australians also experience under employment, where they work part time, want more hours but can't get them as full time work is not available. Under these circumstances, and with rents constantly increasing, many struggle to hold on to their home.

Unstable housing also makes it difficult to focus on study. It is hard for someone to enrol or stay enrolled in a course when they don't know where they will be living in the long term. More than 50% of Hanover's clients want to undertake further study but find it difficult because of financial, physical health and housing issues.<sup>4</sup>

For young people who may have left school early, the likelihood of being able to find regular work is much lower than for those who move on to post school qualifications. This in turn increases their likelihood of ending up homeless.

### What are the consequences?

Without support to gain qualifications or employment, people experiencing homelessness can get stuck in a vicious cycle of unemployment, debt and homelessness. This cycle can also have a significant affect on an individual's physical and mental health.

The longer someone is unemployed, the more difficult it is to find a job. Employers become concerned that their skills are outdated. Their confidence begins to diminish, making it increasingly difficult present well at interviews.

### What are the solutions?

Everyone is different in the supports they need to get back into work. This might involve stabilising their housing, helping them to improve their physical and mental health and building their confidence through skill development.

Hanover has been providing employment as well as housing support to our clients for over 20 years. In 2009 we became one of only five specialist homelessness employment support agencies in Australia. However, more can be done. Hanover would like to be able to provide:

- Stable housing options to people committed to studying and completing qualifications.
- A foyer for young people aged 16-25 where they can stay for up to two years and receive support while completing their education and move into employment.

**'Rent my own flat. Get my life back. I want to continue studying and start living as opposed to existing'**

Tom, Hanover Client

<sup>1</sup> ABS counting the homeless p.32

<sup>2</sup> Hanover 2009 Annual Client Survey

<sup>3</sup> Hanover 2009 Annual Client Survey

<sup>4</sup> Hanover 2009 Annual Client Survey