



Australian Homelessness Monitor 2018

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Presentation overview

1. Background
2. The changing incidence of homelessness in Australia
3. Policy developments – recent changes with implications for homelessness
4. Conclusions



1. Background

Project origins

- Launch Housing sponsorship inspired by UK homelessness monitor series – lead author: Prof Suzanne Fitzpatrick
- Funded by Crisis UK and JRF since 2011
- Tracking homelessness impacts of policy and economic change
- Same objectives and research methods in AHM:
 - Published stats analysis
 - Stakeholder interviews
 - Homelessness services agencies survey



2. The changing incidence of homelessness in Australia

Section structure and sources

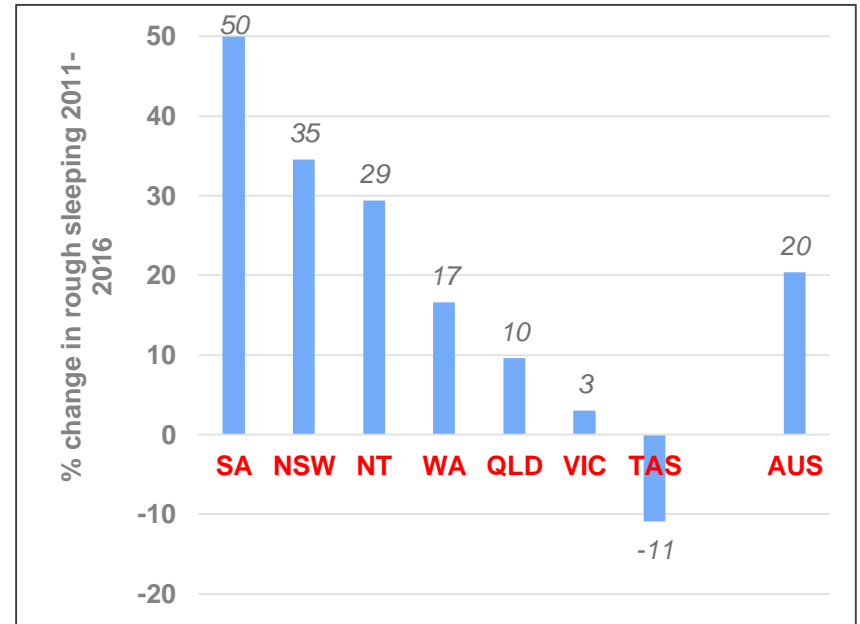
Topic	Source(s)
(a) Rough sleeping	Census, City Councils
(b) Homelessness overall (incl rough sleeping)	Census, AIHW SHS statistics
(c) Spatial contrasts and trends	Census, AIHW SHS statistics
(d) Homelessness causes	AIHW SHS statistics

- First report to triangulate stats from these complementary sources

Rough sleeping (1 of 3)

Change in rough sleeper numbers by state/territory

- 5-year national increase: 20%
- Highly variable by jurisdiction
- Largest numerical increase: NSW – up from 1,924 to 2,588

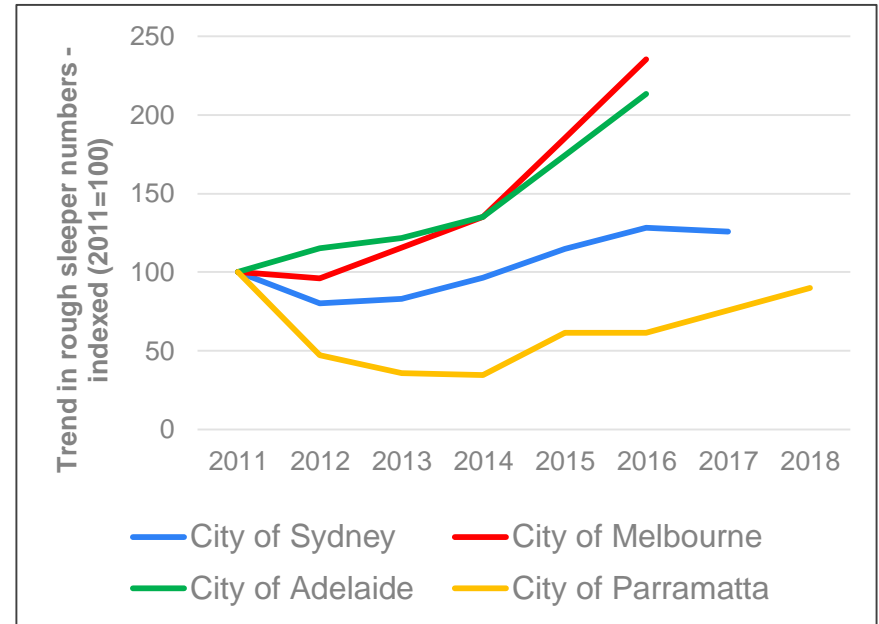


Source: ABS Census

Rough sleeping (2 of 3)

Change in rough sleepers: selected cities

- City council counts provide an alternative data source
- Annual or bi-annual counts
- City of Melbourne numbers indicate >200% increase 2011-2016

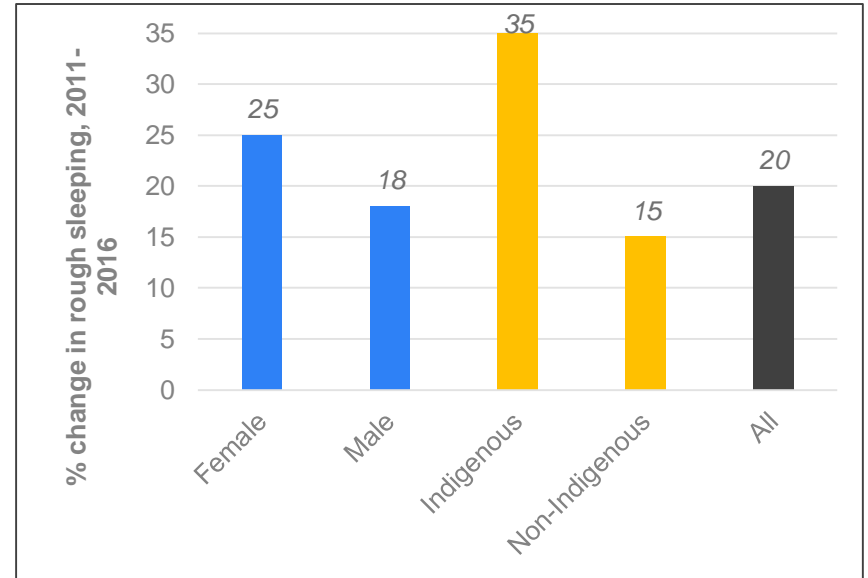


Sources: *named municipalities*

Rough sleeping (3 of 3)

Contrasting rough sleeping trends for different cohorts

- Disproportionate increases in rough sleeping recorded for:
 - Females
 - Indigenous

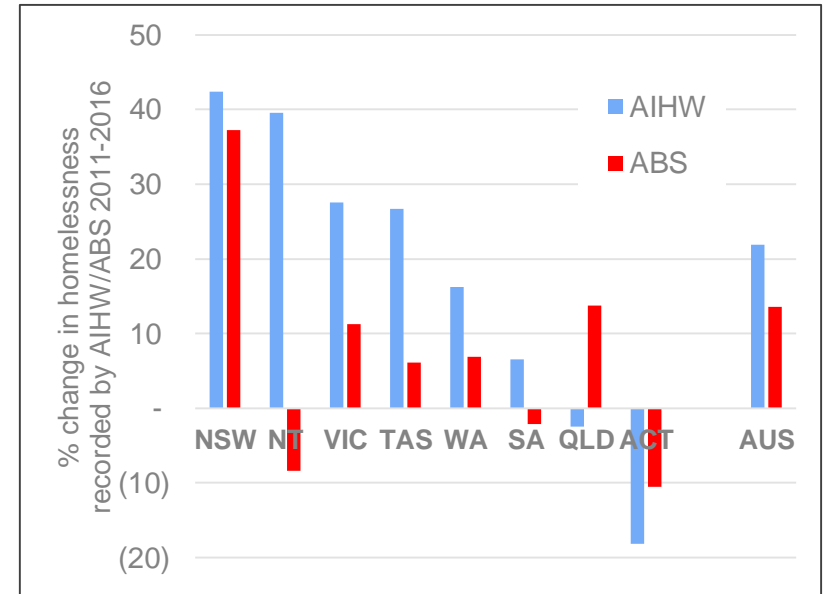


Source: ABS Census

Homelessness numbers overall (1 of 5)

Trends at state/territory scale

- 5-year national increase 14% according to Census
- Homelessness service users up 22% over same timeframe
- SHS statistical series initiated 2011-12; 2016 Census first opportunity for triangulation
- A degree of consistency – e.g. NSW and ACT
- But also some inconsistencies – NT Indigenous population movement

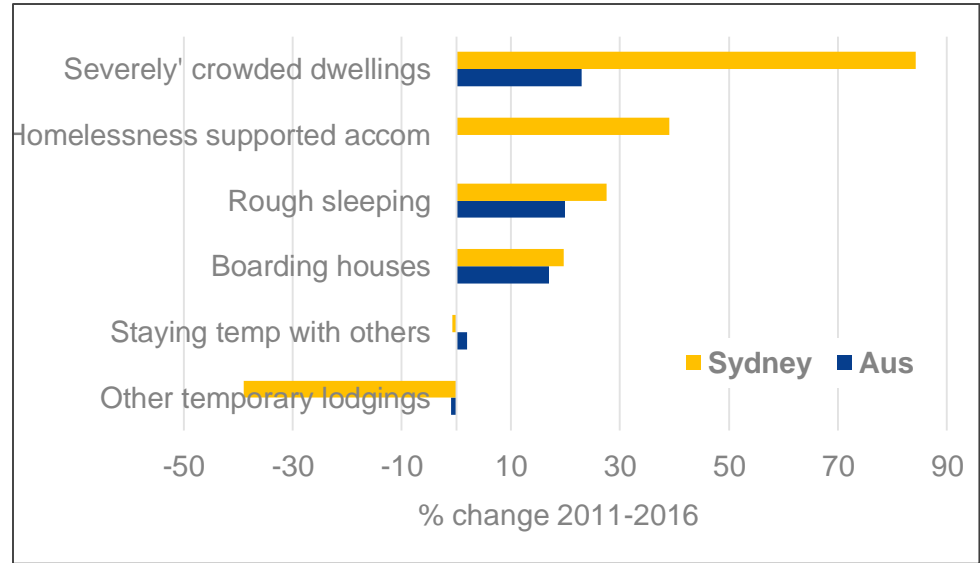


Sources: ABS Census; AIHW SHS statistics

Homelessness numbers overall (2 of 5)

Rates of 2011-2016 change by homelessness cohort

- A degree of consistency between Sydney and national trends for sub-categories
- Severely crowded households:
 - Around half of national homeless total
 - Fastest rate of increase, 2011-2016 – even more so in Sydney than nationally

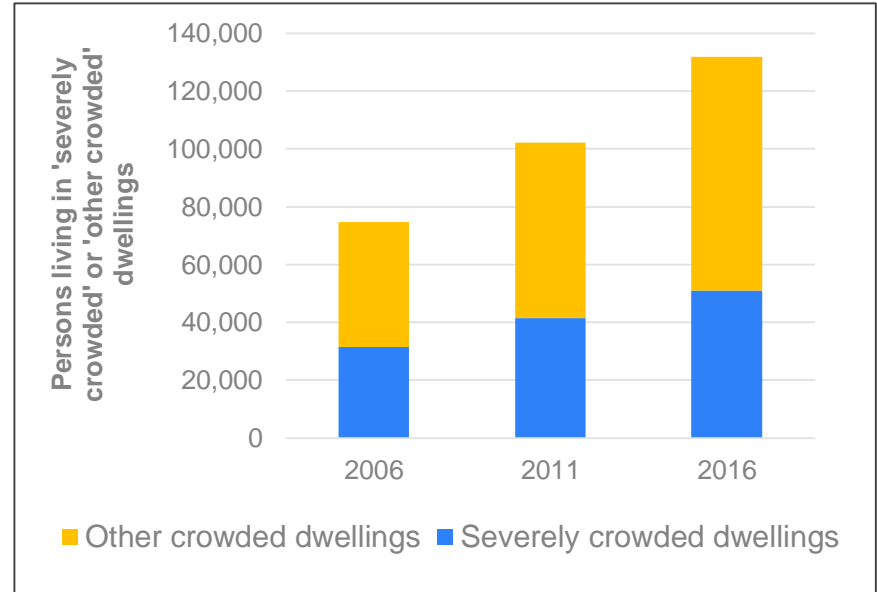


Source: ABS Census

Homelessness numbers overall (3 of 5)

Rising 'severe overcrowding' part of larger trend

- Going back 10 years 'severe overcrowding' and 'other overcrowding' up 77%

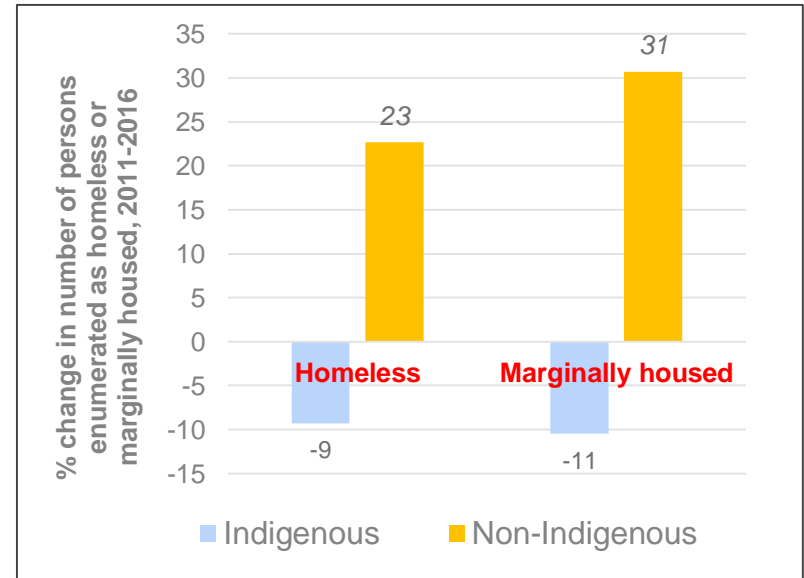


Source: ABS Census

Homelessness numbers overall (4 of 5)

Falling rates of homelessness and marginal housing for Indigenous Australians

- Indigenous homelessness rate remains 10x non-Indigenous rate
- But Indigenous number down 2011-2016 according to Census; same for marginally housed
- Rate of increase for non-I cohort: 23% (not 14%)
- Possible partial explanation: NPARIH construction program in remote Australia
- But census not corroborated by AIHW data – no of Indigenous homelessness service users *grew disproportionately* (up 39%)

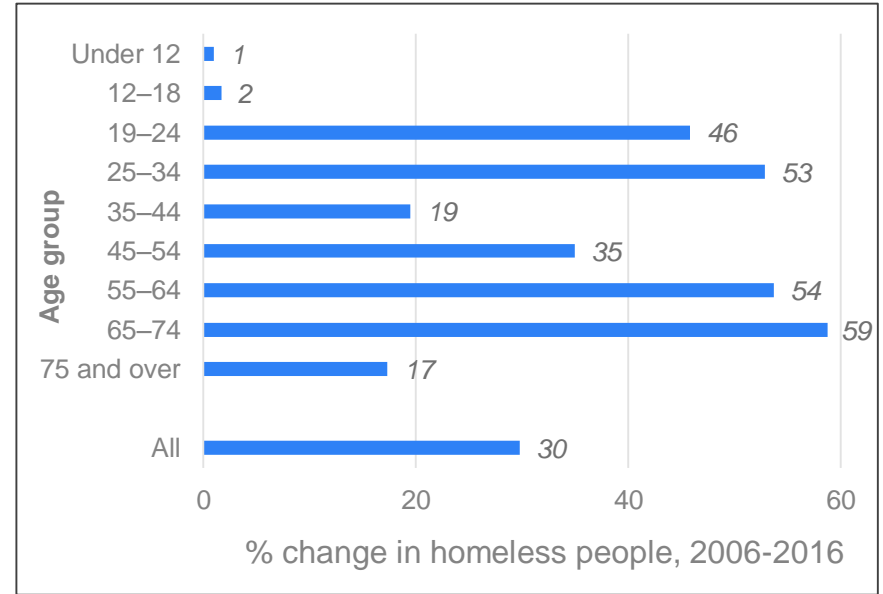


Source: ABS Census

Homelessness numbers overall (5 of 5)

Homelessness change by age cohort – decade trend

- Fastest growing age cohort in % terms: older people aged 55-74
- Largest numerical growth: young adults
- V limited increase for young people aged under 18 and over 75s possibly indicates effective policy action

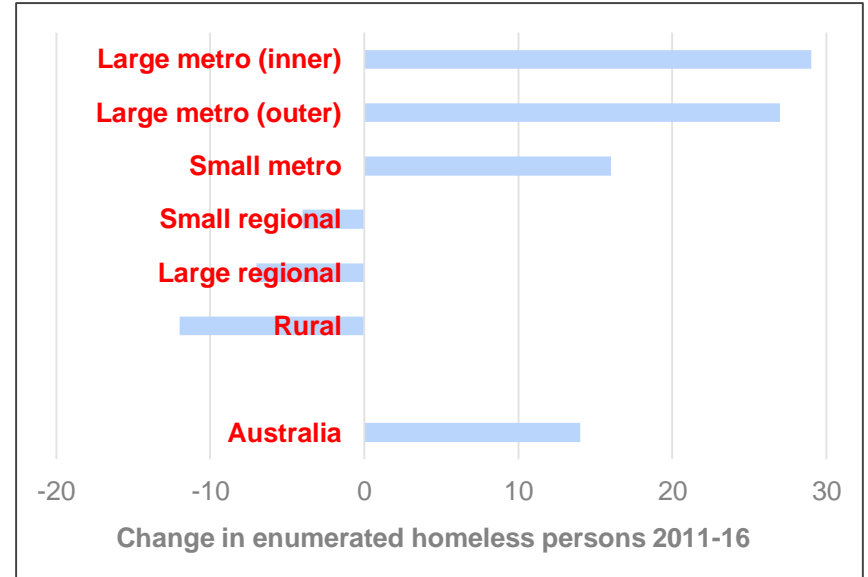


Source: ABS Census

Spatial contrasts and trends (1 of 2)

Patterns of change at the macro scale

- Disproportionate rates of increase in capital cities
- Reductions in regional and rural Australia
- Possible consistency with reduced Indigenous homelessness

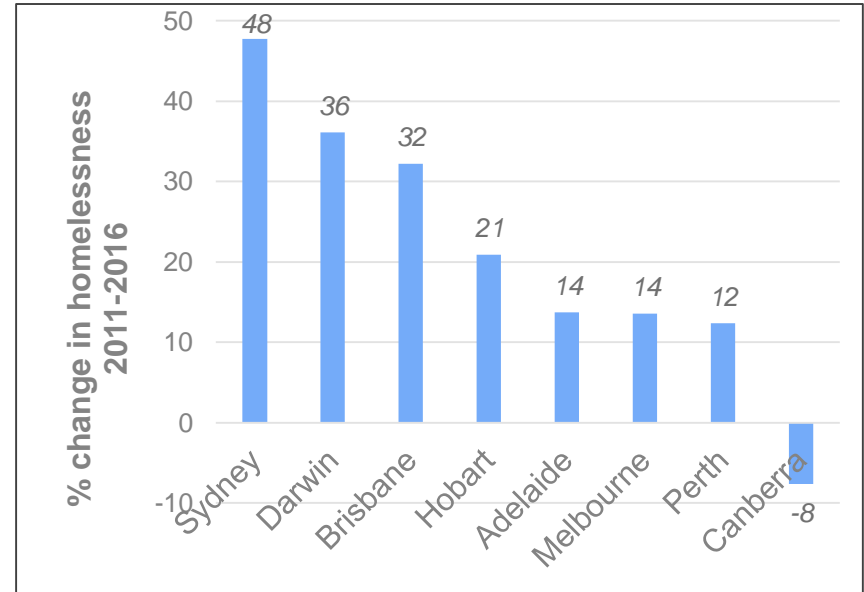


Source: ABS Census

Spatial contrasts and trends (2 of 2)

Contrasting trends at capital city level

- Increases equal to or above national increase in all capital cities other than Perth and Canberra
- Darwin result could reflect some 2011-2016 Indigenous population movement

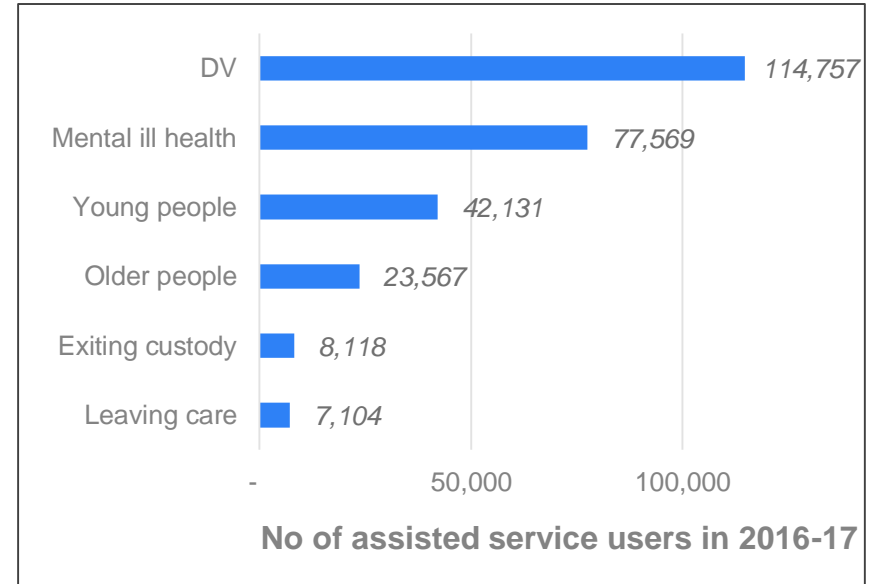


Source: ABS Census

Homelessness causes (1 of 3)

Incidence of 'associated issues' 2016-17

- In absolute terms, DV is by far the most commonly recorded 'associated issue'
- Institutional discharge numbers are modest

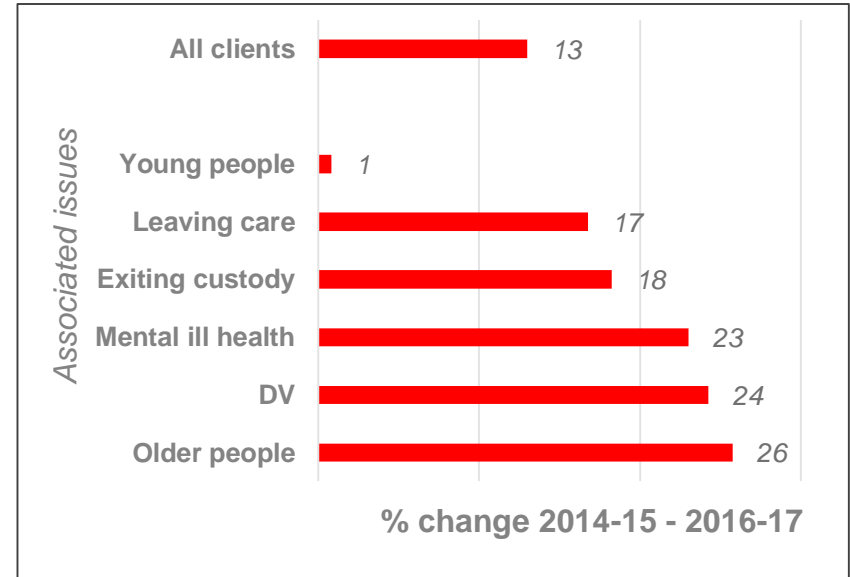


Source: AIHW SHS statistics

Homelessness causes (2 of 3)

Recent change in homelessness associated with different issues

- Although relatively numerically small component of the total, older persons homelessness rising fastest
- Similarly, above-norm increases for institutional discharge categories

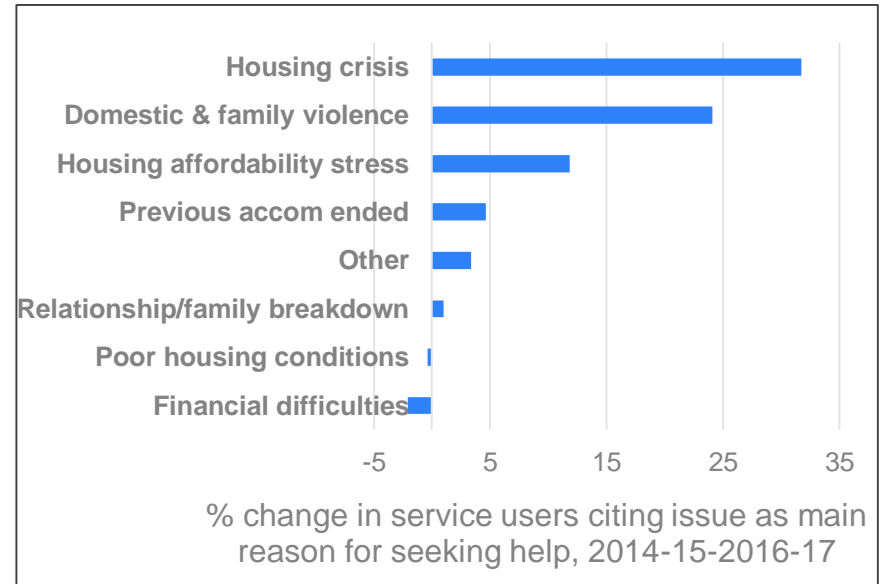


Source: AIHW SHS statistics

Homelessness causes (3 of 3)

Recent change in homelessness resulting from different causes

- Fastest rate of growth ‘housing crisis’ – maybe significant but perhaps typology in need of review
- DFV change perhaps mainly due to changing recording practice
- ‘Homelessness causes’ classification maybe in need of review



Source: AIHW SHS statistics

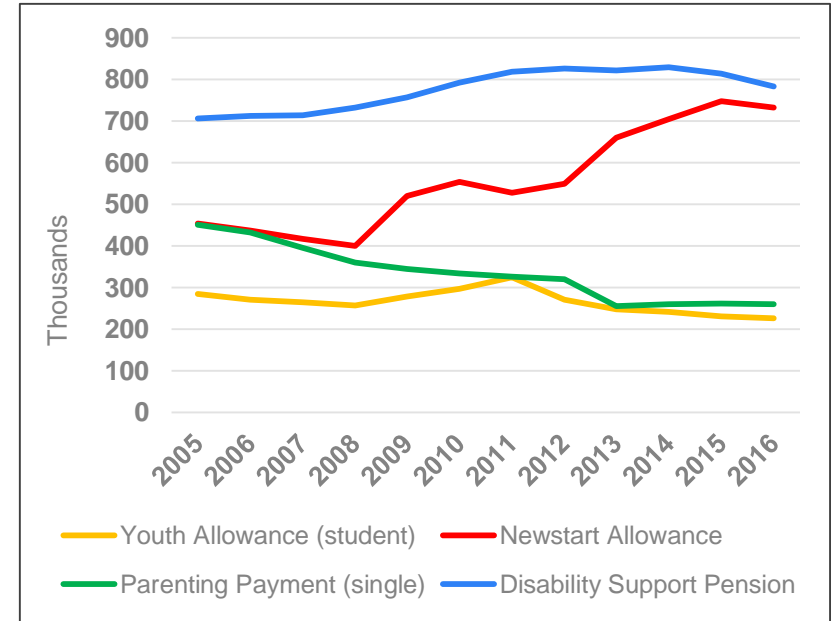
3. Possible explanatory factors

- Australia's economy has continued to grow
- No general economic downturn
- No general rise in unemployment or poverty
- No general program of 'austerity' benefit cuts
- Why is homelessness on the rise?

Possible explanatory factors (1 of 4)

Welfare benefit recipient numbers

- Rising numbers on NSA – lowest, most conditional form of benefit
- Govt/Centrelink policy and practice changes implicated:
 - Push from SPP to Newstart
 - \$60 per week loss
 - Displacement from DSP to Newstart
 - \$170 per week loss
 - Welfare conditionality
 - Steep increase in benefit sanctioning – unknown impacts

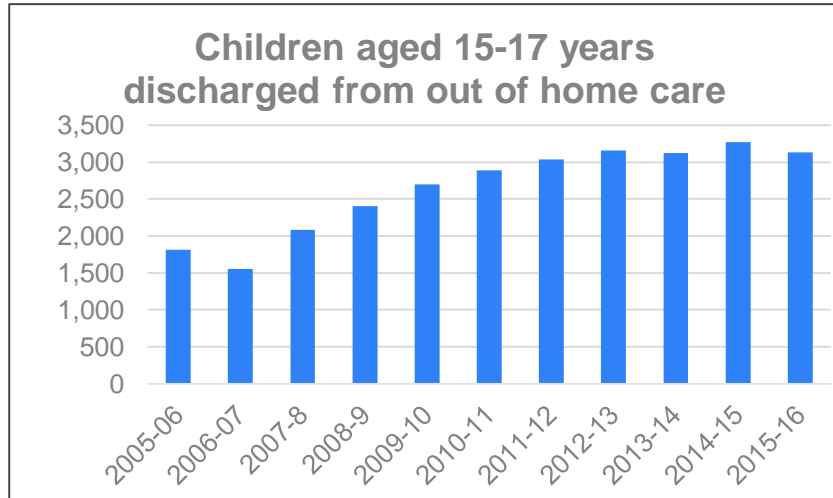


Source: DSS

Possible explanatory factors (2 of 4)

Institutional discharge rates

- *Young people discharged from OOHC rose rapidly to 2011-12*
- *Rising prisoner numbers implies growing prisoner releases*



Source: AIHW

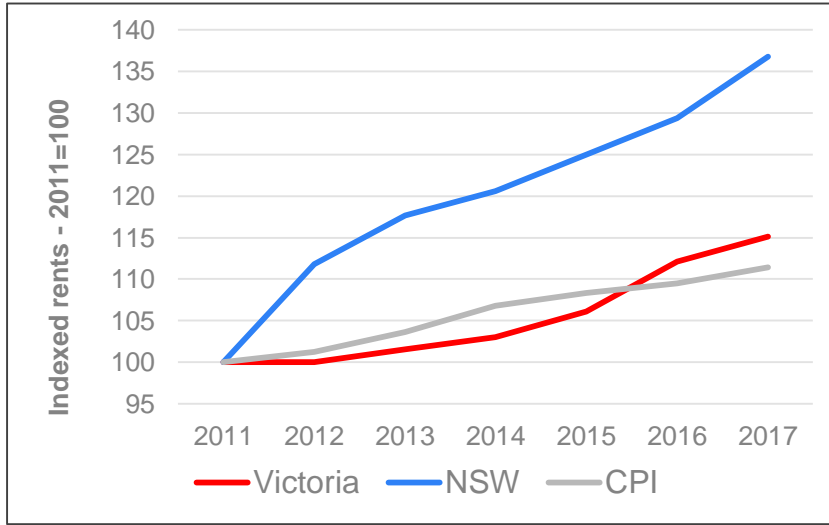


Source: ABS

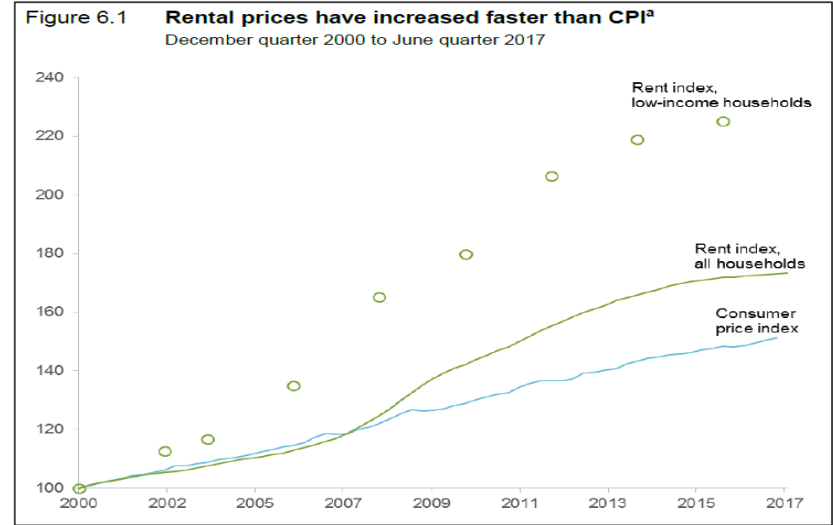
Possible explanatory factors (3 of 4)

Private rent trends

- NSW private rents rising well ahead of inflation post-2011



- Nationally, private rents for low income tenants up 120% post 2000; CPI up only 50%



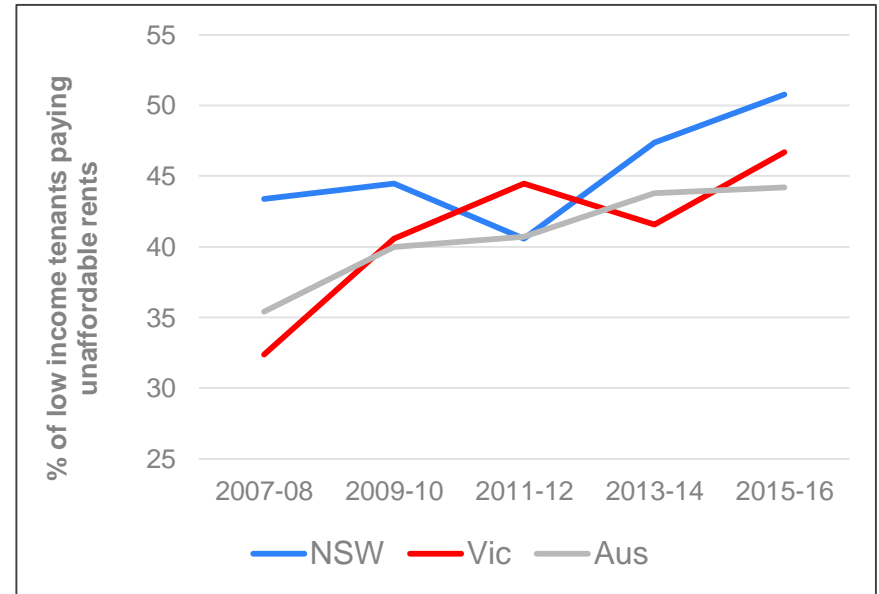
Source: Rental Bond Boards (rents); ABS (CPI)

Source: Productivity Commission

Possible explanatory factors (4 of 4)

Low income tenants in rental stress

- Growing % of low income tenants in rental stress
- Markedly rising trend over 8 year period in NSW, Vic
- Rental market re-structuring gradually removing low rent segment – LQ rent value moving closer to median



Source: ABS

4. Conclusions

The national story: boiled down version

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>% change</i>
Homelessness – overall: snapshot total (000s)	102	116	14
Homelessness service users – no. recorded during year (000s)	236	288	22
Rough sleepers – sub-set of homelessness overall (000s)	6.8	8.2	20
Overall population (millions)	22.7	24.6	8
Social housing provision (dwellings – 000s)	420	433	3
% of low income tenants paying unaffordable rents	40.7	44.2	9
Govt expenditure: homelessness services (\$M – 2016-17 values)	634	817	29
Govt expenditure: social housing investment (\$M – 2016-17 values)	1420	1319	-7

Overarching narrative (1 of 2)

- Consistent with UK evidence, AHM demonstrates homelessness more likely to rise in boom times than in recession (as housing market tightens)
- Spatial pattern of change strongly implicates housing market factors
- Growing homelessness partly reflects policy complacency and inaction
- Unwillingness to recognise and own the problem (beyond funding emergency services)

Overarching narrative (2 of 2)

- As in England, growing scale of homelessness also results from conscious policy choices:
 - Reduced govt spending thru' suppressing/cutting benefit entitlements (rather than – e.g. winding back tax concessions benefiting the wealthy)
 - Criminal justice policies pushing up prison populations – and therefore discharge rates
 - Gratefully absorbing higher property tax takes when housing markets boom, but doing little or nothing to expand social housing commensurate with need
- More optimistically, as apparently achieved in the US (homelessness down 14% over 10 years), positive policy change could disrupt rising trajectory

Australian Homelessness Monitor 2018



Launch HOUSING

Authors: Hal Pawson, Cameron Parsell, Peter Saunders, Trish Will and Edgar Liu




The homelessness monitor: England 2018

Suzanne Fitzpatrick, Hal Pawson, Glen Bramley, Steve Wilcox, Beth Watts & Jenny Wood, Institute for Social Policy, Environment and Real Estate (I-SPHERE), Heriot-Watt University; City Futures Research Centre, University of New South Wales.

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The homelessness monitor: Wales 2017

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