

Monique Wiseman The Wayside Chapel

National Homelessness Conference 2018

6 -7 August | Melbourne Cricket Ground



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Introduction



- Aboriginal Program Manager at The Wayside Chapel since 2011
- The Aboriginal Program provides culturally sensitive assistance for both Aboriginal men and women who are experiencing homelessness
- The essence of the program is to initiate change in an individual's life through community and re-engagement with culture.



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Police approach to homelessness

- Turbulent relationship between Police and those who are homeless within the city of Sydney.
- Excessive reports of unnecessary force, intimidation techniques and harassment.
- Limited understanding about the complexities of homelessness and mental health.

How Martin Place effects City of Sydney Services.

An overview:

‘The Bill authorizes police officers to give directions to persons occupying the public reserve that are reasonable in the circumstances to remove or remedy the interference or unlawful occupation, and authorizes police officers to seize and remove tents, goods and other things for that purpose. The Bill applies to the Martin Place Reserve between Macquarie Street and George Street and to any other public reserve in the City of Sydney’

Does this approach work?

- Negative attitude towards homelessness.
- No visible long term solutions provided by state or federal government (only short term solutions from FACS).
- Further extension of what has happen in the past creating more mistrust and divide.
- Poor public understanding about the complexity of homelessness, mental health and identity.

How can we support everyone involved?

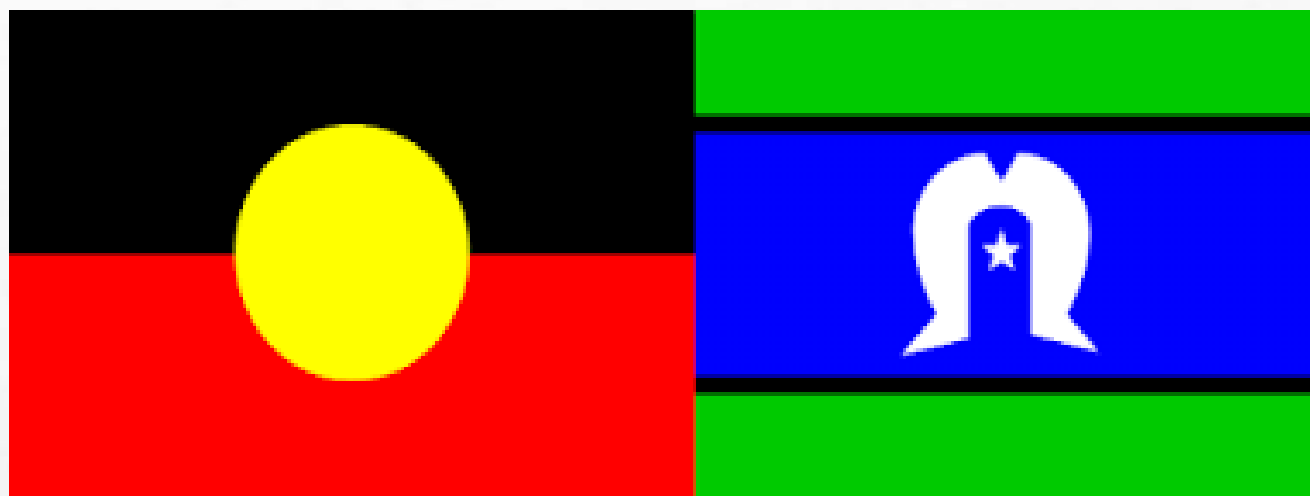
Police:

- Education/training on identifying the complexities of homelessness.
- Understanding authority within Aboriginal communities.
- When services are supported, emergency services demand will decrease

Services:

- Post housing support.
- Funding for rehabilitation and detox centers.
- Better understanding of mental health.
- More women's services.
- More safe houses

Law enforcement and
Homeless Specialists Services
need to work together with the
Individual



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