



Media Release

Report identifies barriers for vulnerable people accessing vital support

The 100 Families WA project has released its third 'Navigating Supports Bulletin' detailing a range of issues being faced by people in Western Australia in their efforts to access essential services.

Families involved in the survey reported accessing a wide range of formal support services – including crisis and immediate relief services, generalised and specialist services, and longer-term one-to-one case-management supports.

The findings detail gaps in access to mental health, and housing and homelessness services with one in seven people unable to access mental health and one in six people unable to access homelessness services every time they needed them.

"Families reported accessing a range of services including food emergency relief (72%), mental health and counselling support (46%) and financial services (45%), but they were unable to access these services each time they needed it." Said Dr Shae Garwood, Manager Research, Advocacy and Prevention AnglicareWA.

"For people who are working, studying or have caring responsibilities, it could be difficult to access services that were only open during business hours and were closed on the weekend, or over public holidays like Christmas." She said.

Families also commented on the issue of exhausting their access to supports after multiple uses, intensifying the frustration they felt at lack of adequate affordable transport, balancing family commitments and overcoming personal anxieties about making the trip to the service.

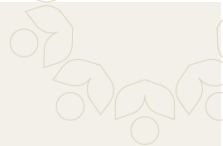
"At times I was virtually gambling my money, taking two buses to get into the service, only to be turned away because I was told I had maxed out the amount of support I had access to, meanwhile the bus fare could have been used for food or essential items" said Russell Major, Co-author of the Bulletin and 100 Families WA Research participant.

"I'm glad this project is shining a light on the issues that people face every day. Services need more funding from Government to keep the doors open longer and start eliminating some of the barriers that stop us from accessing essential services.

Debra Zanella, Chief Executive Officer Ruah Community Services said that the findings reflect issues that are acknowledged by the sector.

"As a sector we are actively collaborating with one another to be able to extend the reach and breadth of support services available," said Debra.

"Despite our efforts and collaboration to date more certainly needs to be done and we will continue to work with funding bodies, industry partners and our clients to eliminate the barriers that make accessing services difficult for our clients."



To find out more, or to access the Navigating Supports Bulletin visit <https://100familieswa.org.au/resources/>

[ENDS]

Media Contact:

Louisa Mitchell, Communications Manager, Ruah Community Services, 0434 308 208

Ethan Gallagher, Communications Officer, Ruah Community Services, 0400 509 197

About 100 Families WA

The baseline report surveyed 400 families based in Perth, examining the domains of social, health and economic wellbeing, including demographics, family and household composition, income, material deprivation, employment, health, mental health, substance use, wellbeing and quality of life, and adverse life experiences.

100 Families WA is a collaborative research project, and the baseline report will form part of a wider report to understand entrenched disadvantage and social exclusion in Perth and will continue through until 2022, with a baseline study involving 400 families, and in-depth interview with 100 families.

WACOSS, Anglicare WA, Ruah Community Services, Wanslea, Jacaranda, Centrecare, UnitingCare West, Mercycare, the UWA Social Policy Practice and Research Consortium and the Centre for Social Impact UWA are collaborative partners on the project.