



**MEDIA RELEASE 12/06/15**

## **2015 Winter Appeal: \$100,000 the target to help reduce homelessness for people living with disability or mental illness.**

**With the homeless population of Perth approaching 10,000 - UnitingCare West's 2015 Winter Appeal aims to raise vital funds for those most in need in the WA community.**

Up to 85% of people experiencing homelessness also have a mental illness (*MHCA, 2007 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing*); in Perth this equals around 8,500 people. Mental illness can impact on a person's ability to maintain housing. In many cases other factors lead to homelessness including relationship breakdown, financial crisis or loss of employment. The experience of a night on the street causes significant emotional and psychological stress.

The official launch of the UnitingCare West Winter Appeal is being held at the Warehouse Café on Monday June 15, 2015 and will be attended by the Hon. Helen Morton MLC, Minister for Mental Health and Disability Services and the Hon. Stephen Dawson MLC, Shadow Minister for Disability Services and Mental Health.

The evening will feature a speech from Josh, a client of UnitingCare West's homelessness services who will be sharing his experience of being homeless and facing mental health challenges. The event will also premier a short video highlighting UCW's homelessness services.

UnitingCare West CEO, Sue Ash AO, says the organisation relies on the generous support of the WA community to help run its homelessness services and every dollar makes a difference.

"Your support makes an impact in a number of different ways and enables us to work with this vulnerable group in society to empower them and change their lives for the better. We are seeing people with more complex needs than ever seeking our support and we urge all West Australians to give generously this Winter to help those most in need in our community," Ms Ash said.



The UnitingCare West Winter Appeal runs throughout June, July and August 2015 to raise much needed funds to support those sleeping rough on the streets of Perth during the coldest months of the year. Just \$25 pays for a person's breakfast for five days at Tranby Day Centre. We also collect items such as sleeping bags, sturdy blankets, jackets and jeans.

Anyone wishing to donate to UnitingCare West's 2015 Winter Appeal can call 1300 663 298 or visit [www.unitingcarewest.org.au](http://www.unitingcarewest.org.au).

### **Event Details**

**Date:** Monday 15 June 2015

**Time:** 5:30pm to 8:00pm, program starts at 6:00pm

**Venue:** Warehouse Cafe, 221 Onslow Rd, Shenton Park WA 6008

### **Contact Details**

#### **For quotes and comments please contact:**

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### **About UnitingCare West**

UnitingCare West touches the lives of over 30,000 individuals and families each year. With 300 staff members and over 300 volunteers, UnitingCare West is a community service agency that has a mission to support, serve and empower those most in need. UCW operates over 35 community service programs from 17 sites across Perth, reaching as far North as Merriwa and as far South as Lower Great Southern, in the areas of community housing, accommodation, homelessness, family support, mental health and disability services. UnitingCare West's clients include those in the community experiencing financial hardship, domestic violence, child abuse trauma, mental health issues and disability to name a few.