

Submission
No 92

INQUIRY INTO PREVALENCE, CAUSES AND IMPACTS OF LONELINESS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: NSW Council of Social Service (NCOSS)

Date Received: 1 November 2024

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Hon Dr Sarah Kaine, MLC
Chair
Standing Committee on Social Issues
NSW Legislative Council
6 Macquarie Street
Sydney, NSW, 2000

Dear Dr Kaine,

Re: Submission from the NSW Council of Social Service to the Inquiry on the prevalence, causes and impacts of loneliness in NSW

The NSW Council of Social Service (NCOSS) is the peak body for the social services sector in NSW. With over 400 members and a wider network of stakeholders who share our values, we advocate to alleviate poverty and disadvantage in NSW.

NCOSS writes to support the submission of the Local Community Services Association (LCSA).

Neighbourhood and Community Centres (NCC) play a critical role in their local communities, including addressing loneliness. In many communities, they are the only trusted space for people who would otherwise be socially isolated. NCCs provide social connection and psychological support, distribute food and financial aid, translate complex messaging, and ensure that available relief reaches those whose need is greatest. They are often the provider of last resort when people are unable to access support from other service systems (such as aged care, mental health, homelessness and disability support).

Despite the critically important role NCCs play in supporting local communities, there is no dedicated funding from the Government to keep the doors open. Instead, these centres must rely on program-based funding, one-off grants, fundraising and donations to scabble together sufficient funds to cover their cost. This is unsustainable and undermines their ability to support people who experience, or are at risk of, loneliness.

NCOSS recommends that the NSW Government provide long-term core funding for Neighbourhood and Community Centres, so that they can continue and expand their work to prevent and address the impacts of loneliness in NSW.

Should you have any questions in relation to this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me at

Yours sincerely,

Ben McAlpine
Acting Chief Executive Officer