

14 July 2020



## Families, children at risk of poverty and deepening disadvantage

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As we mark the National Day of Action, UnitingCare Australia stands together with hundreds of organisations calling on the Morrison Government to permanently raise the rate of JobSeeker to support families, individuals and children at risk of deepening disadvantage.

“We commend the decisive actions the Government has taken to mitigate the effects of the pandemic, including the introduction of the Coronavirus Supplement for recipients of JobSeeker and related payments” said National Director, Ms Claerwen Little.

“But as more people face financial hardship, a permanent increase in social security payments is critical to prevent thousands of individuals and families from being swept into deep poverty, debt and hardship.”

“We are deeply concerned that removing the Coronavirus Supplement, without any increase in the base rate of JobSeeker, will have wide-ranging and damaging impacts to those who can least afford it.”

“Our frontline services continue to provide critical emergency relief, including for many who have never reached for help before. Our fear is that when the current payment levels are cut in September, that demand will only soar” Ms Little said.

UnitingCare Australia’s network of community services is one of the largest providers of emergency relief across the country.

“The experience of our services who work with those on low incomes is that low payment rates act as a barrier to securing employment by eroding wellbeing and making it difficult to meet the additional costs of looking for work.”

“So today we call on the Morrison Government to permanently lift the base rate of JobSeeker and related payments to prevent people living in poverty and to support the vital economic and social recovery that our community so desperately needs.”

*UnitingCare Australia is the national body for the Uniting Church’s community services network in Australia. The UnitingCare network is one of the largest networks of social services providers in Australia, supporting 1.4 million people every year across urban, rural and remote communities and powered by over 50,000 staff and 30,000 volunteers.*

### Media Contact

Anna Minson | 0437 276 834 | [annam@nat.unitingcare.org.au](mailto:annam@nat.unitingcare.org.au)