



UnitingCare Australia and Anglicare Australia say cuts to JobSeeker are a ticking time bomb

Anglicare Australia and UnitingCare Australia are urging the Government to raise the rate of JobSeeker payments for good.

Releasing research from two of the largest charitable networks in Australia, Anglicare Australia and UnitingCare Australia say cutting payments back to their old rates will plunge people back into poverty.

“Out of work Australians are dreading the next round of cuts to their payments,” said Executive Director Kasy Chambers.

“The old rate of JobSeeker was frozen for almost three decades. It became a poverty trap, locking people out of work. Week after week, people were coming to us for food parcels and vouchers just to get by.

“Our research shows that people were forced to skip meals because their payments were so low. Many were left with as little as \$7 a day after paying their rent. Others were forced to couch-surf.

“When the Government lifted JobSeeker it righted that wrong. People out of work were finally given a path out of poverty. These cuts will take that hope away – and push people back into poverty and hardship.”

UnitingCare Australia National Director, Claerwen Little, said all people deserve the right to live with dignity, no matter their circumstances.

“As one of the largest networks of community service providers nationally, we have seen first-hand the positive impact of the Coronavirus Supplement.

“One of our services spoke about a young father who is the sole carer of his three small children. He said the impact of the JobSeeker supplement meant that instead of living life on the edge, he has been enabled to be a better father. He was able to do things for his children that he never had the ability to do before, such as buying Christmas presents for his kids.

“This is a compelling example of the positive impact that an increase to the base rate of JobSeeker would have,” Ms Little said.

“There is widespread support for a permanent increase. From the Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia and the Business Council of Australia, to politicians from all major parties, it is now readily accepted that the old rate was, and remains, inadequate. It is time to raise the rate for good.”

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