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Title: Snapshot of a Multi-sector Partnership Addressing Homelessness in Australia

Australia has its own social crisis with over 16,000 people experiencing chronic homelessness. The seriousness of the homelessness issue is firmly on the Federal Government’s agenda with the release of substantial funding in February 2009 and a white paper identifying the need for multi-sector partnerships. This research investigated an initiative taking place in Victoria whereby the nonprofit, private and government sectors have formed an innovative partnership to end homelessness for many vulnerable people. Using a successful model arising from the United States where results have shown a decrease in the amount of government funding required to service the needs of the chronically homeless, this partnership demonstrates the strength of international collaboration and shared best practice.

With this Victorian initiative due for completion in 2010, preliminary results have focused on the drivers of the collaborative process, sectoral differences and the micro outcomes achieved by each sector. Shared vision, resources and expertise are essential components; however, a main factor driving this initiative is the overwhelming leadership support and involvement from each sector. Resonating across all the organisations involved is a genuine desire to create social value and together they are gaining valuable learning outcomes from the process. Replication of this initiative is almost certain in other Australian states with organisations from a range of sectors expressing interest as they learn of the social and organisational benefits that surround this partnership.