



Media Release

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Tasmanians going without

A report released today demonstrates that many Tasmanians living on low incomes are going without food and essential medications in order to make ends meet.

The TasCOSS report *Just Scraping By? Conversations with Tasmanians living on low incomes*, is based on conversations with 150 Tasmanians from Launceston, Rocherlea, Ravenswood, Campbelltown, Devonport, Westbury, Turners Beach, Ulverstone, Burnie, Wynyard, Smithton, Scottsdale, St Helens, Bicheno, Triabunna, Nubeena, Ouse, New Norfolk, Bridgewater, Gagebrook, Clarendon Vale, Glenorchy, Hobart, Howrah, Rokeby, Moonah, Rosebery and Zeehan.

“Many of those Tasmanians who are scraping by on low incomes are doing so at a cost to their physical and mental health, their links with their community and their chances of further education, training and employment. They are foregoing food, medications and appropriate housing in an effort to get by” said Tom Muller, CEO of TasCOSS.

“This report tells us that the level of government pensions and allowances is just not sufficient to provide a reasonable quality of life for the 31% Tasmanian households for whom government support is their primary source of income”.

“It can take just one incident – a medical emergency, the need for car repairs, an unexpectedly large bill– to tip people over the edge and to make a manageable situation unmanageable”.

“For many Tasmanians living on a low income is not just a temporary state, but one that has a compounding effect on itself. Going without food and appropriate medications has obvious health outcomes”.

“There are clearly identifiable locations, both rural and urban, in Tasmania that experience multiple and persistent disadvantage. Lack of access to childcare, education, training and employment opportunities in these areas severely limit people’s life chances”.

“TasCOSS believes that an integrated, long-term social investment package for Tasmania is required to overcome income-based exclusion and to improve the quality of life of people living on low incomes,” Mr Muller said.

Tom Muller is available for interview on 6231 0755 or 0448 310 043