



**ST VINCENT'S
PRIVATE HOSPITAL**
BRISBANE

A FACILITY OF ST VINCENT'S HEALTH AUSTRALIA

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World Homeless Day 10.10.2015

This international World Homeless Day Saturday 10 October aims to draw attention to homeless people's needs locally and educate communities about initiatives in their area.

'Pathways' Project

'Pathways' is a joint pilot project between St Vincent's Private Hospital Brisbane and Micah Projects (funded by Queensland Health) that supports people who are experiencing homelessness as they are admitted to or discharged from hospital. It involves registered nurses working closely with Micah Projects Brisbane Homelessness Service Collaborative team to provide housing and social support.

This project builds on St Vincent's Private Hospital Brisbane's existing partnership with Micah Projects and Mater Health that provides medical and nursing care on-site at Brisbane Common Ground, a supported housing initiative in West End.

'Won't give up' on Brisbane's homeless – from 'Pathways' nurse

Anna Strikis, a St Vincent's Private Hospital Brisbane Registered Nurse in the Pathways team, believes the service is helping people who would have previously slipped through the cracks.

"The people we support have typically had very challenging lives. They can struggle to build relationships with health providers, with support services and with their families as a result, and unfortunately, all too often in their lives they have been put in the 'too hard basket'," she said.

"But we don't do that. We understand we need to build that relationship. We need to earn people's trust. We're committed to being the people who don't give up on them."

The support provided by the 'Pathways' team includes direct care, advocacy to find housing, support to connect with a GP and other community services, and assistance with follow-up hospital care – with the ultimate goal to prevent unnecessary hospital admissions and improve the ability of individuals to manage their own health.

"When people are supported to manage their health more effectively that means less hospital admissions, less ambulance call outs and less emergency room visits. That's better for the individual, and it's better for the health system as a whole. Everybody wins," Anna said.

St Vincent's Private Hospital Brisbane Mission Executive Matthew Kearney says the 'Pathways' team in partnership with Micah Projects Brisbane Homelessness Service Collaborative is doing an amazing job supporting Brisbane's vulnerable.

"I've been very impressed with the adaptability of our nurses who provide great care to people who have quite complex needs," he said.

"The data coming through shows that the hard work of the nurses is paying off, the people in the program are being supported in the community and have been able to reduce the number of times that they need care in hospital."

"While it is very difficult to find housing for people who are homeless, our nurses have been tenacious in finding safe places for people to go."

Ends

Anna Strikis and Matthew Kearney are available for interview and photograph opportunities.

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