1, 2, miss a few, 99, 100: deplorable inequality in Australia

“Inequality in Australia is a wake-up call for us all,” Anglicare Australia Executive Director, Kasy Chambers said today.

“This important report highlights the disturbing wealth divide between our country’s most affluent minority and too many vulnerable and disadvantaged Australians. It also shows the overall trend is that income inequality in Australia is increasing,” Ms Chambers said.

“We are pleased to partner with the Australian Council of Social Service in the development of Inequality in Australia. It will start to fill in the gaps between our comparative international prosperity and the economic and social adjustment that are reflected in the everyday work of Anglicare organisations in communities throughout Australia.

“It is clear the people with the lowest incomes and the least connections to our society are more and more excluded because of their circumstances.

“The report’s findings reflect our own research and experience in inequality and poverty. The report draws out the complex interactions of poverty, housing unaffordability and financial uncertainty.

“The experience across the Anglicare network, working with almost 602,000 Australians, is that people, including children, do miss meals and go hungry. They lose contact with friends and relations. They become unwell. They become ashamed and embarrassed, and lose confidence and capacity. They live with stress and anxiety. And these have deleterious impacts on education, health and employment outcomes and people’s capacity to live full and engaged lives.

“Inequality in modern Australia is a profoundly isolating experience. It traps people out of work and limits their connection to others. It robs people of their stake in the wider world and the rest of us of their contribution.

“The impact of growing inequity in the paid workforce is showing up at the Anglicare services that deliver financial counselling, emergency relief and family support. We need to pay more attention to the shape of poverty in Australia, and its enduring nature so we can respond with an equitable approach. And we need it to be of a magnitude that will begin to reverse the impacts identified in Inequality in Australia.”

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