

Working to Make Ends Meet Conference

Tuesday, November 24, 2020 – Virtual Event

9:00am Welcome to Country

9:10am Conference Opening - **David Panter (Chair, SACOSS) & Ross Womersley (CEO, SACOSS)**

9:20am Opening Address TBC

9:30am Keynote Address: Drivers of Waged Poverty

Saunoamaali'i Dr Karanina Sumeo (Commissioner at New Zealand Human Rights Commission)

- Overview of research on 'in-work poverty' conducted by the NZ Work Research Institute
- Why is in-work poverty / waged poverty a human rights issue?
- What are the types of policy solutions that can help address the issue of in-work/waged poverty?
- What do you see as the key challenges for waged poor households in a post-COVID economy?

Session sponsored by SA Power Networks

10:30am Morning Tea

10:50 am Findings from SACOSS Waged Poor Research

Speakers:

- Rebecca Law (Senior Policy Officer, SACOSS): Energy report findings
- Dr Greg Ogle (Senior Policy and Research Analyst, SACOSS): Telco report finding

Responding :

- Teresa Corbin (CEO, ACCAN): Response to Telecommunications report findings

Facilitator: Ross Womersley

11:35am The Rise of Waged Poverty in a post-COVID Economy

- Structural factors that entrench people in poverty
- What is the impact of this narrative and framing?
- Unpacking myths around who is in poverty and why
- How do we change the conversation about the deserving and undeserving poor?

Speakers:

- Alison Pennington (Senior Economist, Centre for Future Work)
- Emma Dawson (Executive Director, Per Capita)
- Angas Story (Unions SA)

Facilitator: Dr Cassandra Goldie (ACOSS)

12.20pm Utilities Stress Pilot Launch

This session presents a pilot analysis of households having trouble paying utility bills by building on the well-known indicator of housing stress (bottom two income quintiles paying more than 30% of their income for housing). The pilot sought to test equivalent affordability stress indicators and benchmarks for energy, telecommunications and water expenditure as a 'proof of concept' exercise.

- Dr Greg Ogle

Facilitator: Ross Womersley

[Session sponsored by the Essential Services Commission of South Australia](#)

12:50 Lunch

1:20pm Slipping through the gaps: Who's missing out on support and why?

Waged poor households are reluctant to seek help from community services organisations for a range of reasons – being “too proud”, “too ashamed” or not knowing where to go for help. This panel attempts to unpack these issues and explore how their organisations are trying to reach those slipping through the gaps.

Speakers :

- Ian Steel (CEO, KickStart for Kids)
- Ciara Sterling (CEO, Thriving Communities)
- Jess Perrin (Head of Social Innovation and Digital Inclusion, InfoXchange)

Facilitated by Ross Womersley

[Session sponsored by SA Water](#)

2.05pm Afternoon Tea

2:30pm Are Concessions the Answer?

Concessions are used by governments to assist people struggling to meet living costs. But are concessions “the answer” when it comes to lifting people out of waged poverty? This session will explore whether the structure and current levels of concessions are adequate, and other ways we can address cost of living concerns for waged poor households.

Speakers:

- Teresa Corbin (CEO, ACCAN)
- Con Hristodoulidis (Senior Manager Regulatory Strategy, AGL)
- Kellie Caught (Senior Advisor, ACOSS)

Facilitated by Rebecca Law

3:15pm 10 min break

3.25pm Designing Customer Supports for Waged Poor Households

Significant variation and unreliability of work hours can mean some waged poor households struggle to budget week-to-week. This session will present a scenario of a waged poor household struggling to pay their utility bill, and ask an industry panel how they would respond.

Speakers:

- Robert Morsillo (Digital Inclusion Senior Specialist, Telstra)
- Melissa Homes-Allen (Customer Advocacy Program and Credit Support Lead, Origin)
- David Coombe (Senior Manager, Customer Experience, SA Water)

Facilitated by Dr Andrew Nance

4:10pm: Closing Remarks

David Panter (Chair, SACOSS)

Finish 4:30pm