

MEDIA RELEASE

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“Unacceptable” Poverty in Illawarra, Shoalhaven and Southern NSW

Community Industry Group has today responded to the information contained in the report released by the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM) at the University of Canberra. The research was commissioned by NSW Council of Social Services (NCOSS). The report is accompanied by an interactive [map](#) highlighting degree of disadvantage across the state.

“The report shows that many people across our region are living in poverty” said Community Industry Group CEO, Nicky Sloan “ In a wealthy country like Australia, it is simply unacceptable that almost 1 in 4 people in places like Port Kembla and Warrawong are struggling to survive below the poverty line.”

Drivers of poverty are also changing, resulting in new pockets of poverty. “The data confirms what we have heard anecdotally from our members” Ms Sloan said “Community service organisations and charities are seeing demand come from people who have never sought a hand up previously. We are seeing a larger number of people under mortgage stress, and this is driving up poverty rates, particularly in areas like West Dapto and Ulladulla where poverty rates are around 16%.”

In addition to mortgage stress, the rapid rise in rental rates is driving poverty among people in the private rental market.

“People living on income support payments are by far the most likely to be living below the poverty line, and this group make up a large part of the shocking percentages we are seeing in the report” said Nicky Sloan “ In an area where wait lists for social housing is up to or over 10 years, many of the people on the very lowest incomes are also struggling to enter or remain in the private rental market.”

The report by NATSEM clearly demonstrates the levels of disadvantage across the Illawarra, Shoalhaven and Southern NSW.

“It’s important to remember that behind every statistic are human beings” Ms Sloan added “ While the numbers are alarming, they represent thousands of people who are struggling every day to live, eat and raise a family.”

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[Key Rates Across the Region Follow](#)

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Ker Rates Across the Region

Corrimal, Tarrawarra, Bellambi 15%

Wollongong West 19%

Warilla 19%

Port Kembla 23%

Nowra 17%

Ulladulla 16%

Bateman's Bay 17.06%

Narooma – Bermagui 15.47%

Eden 18.11%

About the Community Industry Group

Community Industry (formerly known as Illawarra Forum) is the peak body working for community services and organisations in the South East of NSW. It supports community organisations, promotes expertise and innovation in community development, fosters industry development and provides advocacy for social justice.

Community Industry Group represents the non-government community services industry in the South East of NSW, and works closely with numerous organisations which provide support to vulnerable people across the region.

www.communityindustrygroup.org.au

