

Boorloo Bidee Mia homelessness service opens in Perth CBD

Thursday, 5 August 2021

New Boorloo Bidee Mia service officially opens, with the first intake of rough sleepers to commence on Monday

All vulnerable rough sleepers are eligible, with rooms suitable for singles and couples

Aboriginal-led and culturally informed service model aiming to improve outcomes for rough sleepers in central Perth

Community Services Minister Simone McGurk has officially launched the new Boorloo Bidee Mia homelessness service for people sleeping rough in the Perth metropolitan area.

The transitional accommodation facility at 300 Wellington Street, secured by the Department of Communities with a three-year lease, will provide support for up to 100 adult rough sleepers, including tailored care plans for each resident aimed at addressing their specific needs.

The service will operate under the name Boorloo Bidee Mia, which represents 'Perth pathway to housing' in the Whadjuk dialect of the Noongar language. It was developed in consultation with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) Wungening Aboriginal Corporation and Noongar Mia Mia.

Wungening Aboriginal Corporation and Noongar Mia Mia have been awarded a \$6.7 million grant to implement and deliver the culturally informed responses, tenancy management and lodging support to residents of Boorloo Bidee Mia over three years.

Vulnerable rough sleepers of any gender are eligible for the service, with rooms suitable for singles and couples available.

While Aboriginal people are expected to be the primary users of the service due to their overrepresentation among chronic rough sleepers, non-Aboriginal people will also be eligible to reside at Boorloo Bidee Mia.

The first residents will move into Boorloo Bidee Mia on Monday, August 9, with more clients to be referred by community service partners as the service builds capacity.

The number of residents accommodated at Boorloo Bidee Mia at any given time will be dependent on the support needs of residents, with the delivery of a safe, culturally appropriate and effective service being a priority at all times.

Comments attributed to Community Services Minister Simone McGurk:

"The opening of Boorloo Bidee Mia delivers on the McGowan Government's commitment to provide an immediate increase in the number of beds available for rough sleepers in our city, while the 112-unit Perth Common Ground and other long-term projects in the pipeline to address homelessness are developed.

"This facility is more than just a shelter for people sleeping rough - it will support residents to address the underlying issues that contributed to them becoming homeless in the first place and transition to more permanent accommodation.

"Boorloo Bidee Mia's staff will work closely with other specialist homelessness service providers to ensure residents get the support they need to get their lives back on track.

"This Aboriginal-led and culturally informed service aims to break the cycle of homelessness in the Perth CBD area, where Aboriginal people are sadly overrepresented among chronic rough sleepers."

Comments attributed to Wungening Aboriginal Corporation CEO Daniel Morrison:

"Healing starts with a safe place to sleep. We know once people have a place to stay, they are much more likely to engage with service supports.

"An estimated 42 per cent of people sleeping rough in Perth are Aboriginal. Boorloo Bidee Mia will provide a culturally informed and safe way of caring for 'our people', in 'our way'.

"Wungening and Noongar Mia Mia have been delivering services in Perth for over 50 years combined. Both organisations were formed by the community, for the community.

"This is a strong and ambitious partnership between organisations working hand in hand to achieve better outcomes for Aboriginal people."

Comments attributed to Perth MLA John Carey:

"This facility will provide a critical interim response while the McGowan Government develops the Common Ground facility in the nearby Royal Perth Hospital precinct.

"I welcome the addition of a transitional accommodation facility of this size in the Perth CBD, making it accessible to rough sleepers in the city."

Minister's office - 6552 6600