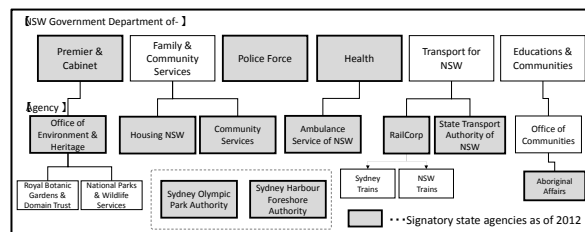


The Protocol for Homeless People in Public Places in Sydney, Australia

The Protocol for Homeless People in Public Places (the Protocol) is a state-wide protocol of the New South Wales State Government of Australia endorsed by a wide range of government agencies. Originally developed for the purpose of ensuring that street homeless people were not mistreated by government officials during the 2000 Sydney Olympics. It is said that no big-scale exclusion occurred in Sydney Olympics.

The Protocol was introduced to help ensure that homeless people are treated respectfully and appropriately and are not discriminated against on the basis of their homeless status. It also aims to assist homeless people to receive services if they need or request them. Its underlying principle is that homeless people have the same entitlement as any member of the public to be in public places. Also, the Protocol has made clear that a homeless person should not be approached unless they request assistance or appear to be in need of assistance, unless an official seeks to engage with the person for the purpose of providing a service, or unless the homeless person's behaviour threatens their own safety or the safety of people around them.

More than 10 years after the Olympics, the Protocol is still in effect, regularly reviewed, and implemented in the field. In 2013, we conducted interviews with organisations implementing the Protocol and working with homeless people. The underlying principles of the Protocol are recognised and actually implemented in the field by authorities managing public places. For homeless service providers, the Protocol is a useful tool to explain their stance and share their thoughts with other people who are not familiar with homeless issues.



Signatory state agencies

If we think about the entire homeless support systems in Sydney, it is pointed out that the systems are increasingly providing personalised services. For chronically homeless people in particular, support systems are providing comprehensive person-centred services using approaches like Housing First. By making sure that housing and services are available for street homeless people and at the same time that their right to be in public places is secured, Sydney's homeless support succeeds to provide an inclusive system as a whole.

-Without determination not to exclude homeless people, inclusion of them will never be achieved!!