

# **Research, Evaluation & Advocacy Roadmap**

**2026-2027**



## Our vision

**We generate and facilitate rigorous research and evaluation that contributes to our understanding of how we support individuals and communities to flourish.**

**Working in partnership, we hear and elevate the voices of lived experience, valuing their wisdom and expertise. We advocate for and with others for a more just society.**

## Our impact areas

Our Research, Evaluation and Advocacy Roadmap is focused on achieving impact in these key areas:

### Speaking up

We advocate with, and for, those we work with to achieve positive systemic change.

We actively seek better outcomes for individuals, families, and communities, with the diverse voices and experiences of those most affected at the centre of our endeavours.

### Producing evidence for positive change

We generate and facilitate rigorous research and evaluation that draw from, and contribute to, a robust evidence base and the growth of knowledge that supports the wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities.

### Reflecting, evaluating, improving

We regularly question our assumptions, reflect on our actions, aim to capture our social impact, and ask what we can do better.

### Sharing knowledge

We purposefully translate and share the knowledge generated through our research and evaluation to enhance the quality of care provided to the individuals and families we work with, the effectiveness of our services, and the strength and capacity of the community sector.

## Our rationale and guiding principles

Anglicare's research, evaluation and advocacy is founded on a belief that the core purpose of our work is to strengthen the communities we live in.

Drawing from our Anglican roots, we aim to *respond to human need by loving service and transform unjust structures of society*.

We draw from an emerging understanding of 'research for advocacy' or, as it is increasingly described, 'research as activism': that is, we *seek to make sense of the social world, with the purpose of generating positive change*.<sup>1</sup>

We 'make sense' of the world in which we live through our research and evaluation, carried out in partnership with others and based on rigorous, ethical and strengths-based inquiry. This activity is intentionally oriented toward helping to shape a better future for individuals, families and communities.


This fusion of academic rigour with purposeful, systemic advocacy and action is underpinned by certain assumptions, and the following guiding principles for the way we work.



**We work collaboratively toward multiple and hopeful futures**

- **We prioritise research and evaluation that enables us to reimagine our work, community and society in different and better ways.**
- **We value meaningful and diverse partnerships that inform and generate robust, high quality and future-focused research.**
- **We work with others to create and/or respond strategically to windows of opportunity that unlock possibilities for positive change.**

- **We believe story-telling is intrinsic to being human. We make sense of our past, influence our present, and shape our individual and collective future through narrative. Stories tell us how effective our actions and interventions are: the most numbers-driven research still tells a story of its impact on people, their lives and their futures.**
- **We seek to tell a more complete range of stories, shaped and told by voices less heard, and those deeply affected by the issues we highlight. We recognise that some have more power than others to control the narrative and the outcomes; and the privilege to be able to ignore inconvenient stories.**
- **We seek to use methodologies that enable, engage, empower, and help to shift unjust power dynamics.**



**Our research privileges the lived experience, wisdom and expertise of the individuals, families and communities with whom we work.**

## Our areas of focus

As a society, we face myriad and constantly shifting challenges and opportunities. Technology is shaping our lives, for good and for ill; climate change is impacting individuals, organisations and communities; demographic shifts are impacting on health and other systems; and there is reduced trust in civic institutions.

Anglicare uses a simplified version of the Three Horizons futures framework<sup>3</sup> to help focus our attention on the social and sectoral issues and trends that are currently impacting, and will impact in the future, on individuals, families and communities.

### Horizon 1: Current

What issues and trends are evident now and/or are shaping the current environment?

### Horizon 2: Emerging

What (potentially small or isolated) responses are emerging to the issues identified above, and the opportunities and challenges below?

### Horizon 3: Long term — opportunities and challenges

What are the 'weak signals' that we can barely see now, but might be the ones that present the most significant opportunities or challenges in the future?

The areas in which we focus our work reflect the priorities of Anglicare's current *Strategic Plan*; our core service delivery areas; and broader social justice interests that impact the individuals, families and communities with whom we work, our staff, and the human services sector as a whole.

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1. Stroud, R., Poulin, M., Sohn, J. and Kennelly, J. 2024. Transforming the Canadian Policy Agenda for School-Based Prevention of Youth Homelessness: Research as Activism. *Journal of Culture and Values in Education*, 7(3), 76-95.
  2. Fogarty, W., Lovell, M., Langenberg, J. and Heron, M-J. 2018. *Deficit Discourse and Strengths-based Approaches: Changing the Narrative of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Wellbeing*. Melbourne: The Lowitja Institute.
  3. Feng, Xiaoqi and Astell-Burt, Thomas. 2024. *Response to the NSW Government Inquiry into Loneliness*. Parliament of New South Wales Inquiry Into Prevalence, Causes and Impacts of Loneliness In New South Wales. Sydney: Population Wellbeing and Environment Research Lab (PowerLab), 1 November.

Supporting young people to thrive	Walking with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples	Ageing well	Strengthening our workforce	Alleviating the impacts of the housing crisis	Increasing social connection	Reducing violence
<p>In recent years, a particularly negative narrative about young people has emerged in media, community and political spheres, which creates fear, isolates our children, impacts families, and influences policy in ways that create harm to young people.</p> <p>A healthy society requires a safe and inclusive environment in which the human rights of children and young people to be heard, valued and protected are recognised.</p> <p>We contribute to such a society by addressing the social and structural barriers that face particular groups of children and young people — those who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•in out-of-home care</li> <li>•at risk of or experiencing homelessness</li> <li>•at risk of or have experience of the youth justice system</li> <li>•at risk within the education system.</li> </ul>	<p>There is evidence that deficit-based narratives common in research, statistics and popular commentary negatively impact on the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. They highlight only one aspect of a multi-faceted story and fail to sufficiently acknowledge the role of broader social and economic structures in creating or contributing to issues.</p> <p>A commitment to strengths-based approaches can contribute to the development of solutions or opportunities that support growth and thriving, and recognise the rights, culture, diversity, strengths, wisdom and lived expertise of Australia's First Peoples.<sup>2</sup></p>	<p>The aged care sector is at a crossroads, facing significant social, demographic, fiscal, legislative, workforce, and other challenges that impact both the way we support older Queenslanders now, and in the future.</p> <p>Crossroads also offer opportunities. The aged care reforms introduced 1 November 2025 place older people and their wellbeing at the centre of their aged care experience.</p> <p>Our research focuses on how we support continuous improvement in the quality of that person-centred experience; and explores the innovations and models of care that could most benefit older Australians, in home and in aged care, into the future.</p>	<p>Workforce development in the human services sector is taking place in an increasingly complex environment, as both workers and employers grapple with the implications of social, cultural, technological and environmental change as well as legislative and funding requirements. The impact of digitalisation and new ways of working, such as gig, portfolio and hybrid models, is still unfolding.</p> <p>Our research plays a crucial role in understanding this environment, providing evidence-based solutions to emerging issues, and helping us to think outside the box to identify creative, empowering ways to support our workforce as they strive to better meet client needs.</p>	<p>Housing insecurity and the need for homes will continue to be a major societal concern for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>While our focus needs to be on long term solutions, there are also people sleeping rough and on couches tonight who need immediate assistance.</p> <p>We acknowledge the intersectionality of housing with multiple other identities including race, gender, income, disability, age, and immigration status.</p> <p>Our research recognises that housing insecurity and the need for homes are whole-of-community issues and need multi-level and multi-sectoral responses.</p>	<p>Loneliness and a lack of social connection are emerging as major public health issues.</p> <p>While often positioned as an individual's problem, perpetuating stigma and shame, research is increasingly showing that it is the structural barriers to participation and connection — the 'lonelygenic' characteristics of the environments we create — that contribute to feelings of loneliness.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>Reducing loneliness requires us to recognise and address social and environmental systems that undermine people's health and social needs.</p>	<p>Violence creates harm at multiple, interconnected levels, each influencing the other and underpinned by power dynamics, discrimination, and inequalities.</p> <p>This interplay between social, structural, systemic, and individual violence creates a need for holistic and multifaceted approaches to addressing violence, targeting cultural norms and institutional practices, as well as individual behaviours.</p> <p>Our research particularly focuses on the prevention of harm that results from family and domestic violence.</p>