

What is the Advance to Zero (AtoZ) Methodology

Fact Sheet | CQ Zero



What Is It?

Advance to Zero (AtoZ) is a nationally recognised approach to ending homelessness, led in Australia by the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness.

It is based on a simple but powerful idea: **Homelessness is solvable when communities work together, use real-time data, and focus on outcomes, not outputs.**

Rather than managing homelessness, AtoZ helps communities **end it, person by person, name by name.**

Core Principles

Know Every Person, by Name

Communities maintain a By-Name List: a real-time, person-specific list of people experiencing homelessness.

- Moves from estimates to known individuals
- Enables targeted, coordinated responses
- Ensures no one is invisible in the system

Data-Driven Decision Making

Data is updated regularly and used to guide action.

- Tracks inflow (people entering homelessness) and outflow (people housed)
- Identifies system gaps and bottlenecks
- Supports continuous improvement

Coordinated, Multi-Agency Response

Services work together—not in silos.

- Housing, health, community services aligned
- Shared prioritisation of people with highest need
- Collective responsibility for outcomes

Real-Time, Action-Oriented Practice

Regular case conferencing drives progress.

- Weekly or fortnightly meetings
- Named individuals discussed and progressed
- Barriers addressed collaboratively

Focus on the Most Vulnerable First

Prioritisation tools (like the Australian Homelessness Vulnerability Triage Tool – AHVTT) help identify those at greatest risk.

- Ensures equity in access to housing
- Targets chronic and complex homelessness
- Aligns resources where they have the greatest impact

What Does Success Look Like?

AtoZ aims to achieve Functional Zero:

A state where homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring, and systems respond quickly when it occurs.

This means:

- More people housed than entering homelessness
- Shorter periods of homelessness
- No one “stuck” in the system

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Key Tools & Components

- **By-Name List (BNL):** Real-time list of individuals experiencing homelessness
- **AHVT:** Standardised triage and prioritisation tool
- **Case Conferencing:** Coordinated service response meetings
- **Data Dashboard:** Tracks progress toward Functional Zero
- **Community Governance:** Local leadership and accountability structures

Why It Matters

Traditional approaches often:

- Count people annually (not in real time)
- Focus on service outputs (not outcomes)
- Operate in fragmented systems

AtoZ shifts the system to:

- **Person-centred responses**
- **Shared accountability**
- **Measurable progress toward ending homelessness**

What It Looks Like in Practice

In communities like Central Queensland:

- Services contribute to a shared By-Name List
- Individuals are prioritised using vulnerability data
- Agencies meet regularly to coordinate housing pathways
- Data is used to advocate for system change and investment
- Outcomes are tracked and shared across the community

Learn More



Australian Alliance to End Homelessness – aaeh.org.au



CQ Zero – cqzero.org.au

*Ending homelessness is not about doing more of the same.
It's about doing things differently, together.*