

Help poor in 'affluent' city

By Karen Hodge

MORE funding is needed to meet the welfare, support and assistance needs of struggling families in Manningham, Doncare chief executive Doreen Stoves says.

The Doncaster Community Care and Counselling Service chief said all three levels of government could be injecting increased funding into public welfare.

Manningham often suffered because it was seen as an affluent area, she said.

"I think sometimes public welfare gets lost in the bigger picture - Manningham seems to be seen as an affluent area and it does not get as much funding and attention."

Mrs Stoves said there was a community of vulnerable people in Manningham who needed help



Doreen Stoves, CEO of Doncare.

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with practical things such as food, utilities and paying bills.

"The entire cost of living is creating a burden."

While Doncare receives a \$40,000 annual grant for emergency relief from the Federal Government, last year \$56,000

had to be spent to meet demand. Mrs Stoves said that cost was only increasing and the service was forced to fund the shortfall or fundraise themselves.

While the State Government provided in-home support and counselling, such as funding for a

new in-home family support program, there was a greater need in the community, she said.

Mrs Stoves said other issues in the community included families struggling to meet the costs of Christmas or when children returned to school.

Psychological and relationship problems, unemployment, child abuse and domestic violence were other major issues.

Mrs Stoves said the loss of a \$50,000 funding grant for Manningham Youth and Family Services' youth development program was a "huge loss" that would have an impact on the community.

Meanwhile, Salvation Army Doncaster Corps captain Peter Walker said the general cost of living and the GST appeared to be having the greatest impact on sectors of the community.