During my internship at Homeless Healthcare, I have learned a great deal about the unique and pressing needs of the homeless community the organisation serves. Although primarily technical, my role as a desktop support engineer has allowed me to observe and contribute to how the organisation strives to meet these needs through comprehensive healthcare services. Insights gained through seminars and discussions within my peer network have further deepened my understanding of the harsh realities homeless individuals face and the relevance of social justice in our work.

Homeless Healthcare provides critical services to a population that faces significant barriers to accessing healthcare systems. Homeless individuals often struggle with a lack of permanent address, which not only affects their ability to vote but also restricts their access to health insurance and secure housing. These systemic barriers are compounded by a higher susceptibility to health risks such as sexual assault and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), which are prevalent within this community due to their increased vulnerability and exposure (peer network discussion).

The organisation works diligently to address these challenges through a variety of targeted programs. For instance, the Sexual Health Outreach program, launched in response to a syphilis outbreak in 2020, focuses on populations at higher risk, including homeless individuals, by providing accessible screenings and treatments right in the communities where these individuals are located (Syphilis and Blood-Borne Virus Outreach, <https://www.homelesshealthcare.org.au/syphilis-outreacg> ). This initiative is crucial in preventing the spread of diseases and ensuring that those who are often marginalized receive necessary care.

The work of the institution aligns with the principles of social justice, which advocate for the redistribution of resources, and opportunities to ensure equity for all, particularly the marginalized and disadvantaged (What is social justice? <https://insights.taylorandfrancis.com/social-justice/what-is-social-justice/> ). By providing healthcare services that are tailored to meet the specific needs of homeless individuals, the organization actively works to reduce inequalities in health access and outcomes. This commitment is directly connected to several SDGs, most notably SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), which aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages, and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), which focuses on reducing inequality within and among countries (Sustainable Development Goals, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/> ). In delivering services that cater specifically to the needs of the homeless, such as the Mental Health street outreach in Fremantle (<https://www.homelesshealthcare.org.au/mental-health-street-outreach> ) and the comprehensive support offered through After-Hours Support Service (<https://www.homelesshealthcare.org.au/after-hours-support-service> ), the organisation is taking concrete steps toward achieving these global goals. By integrating health services with social support and providing a continuum of care that addresses both immediate and long-term needs, the organisation help to uphold the dignity and rights of every individual, reflecting the core values of social justice.

A significant part of my internship involved rolling out YubiKeys for multifactor authentication to enhance data security across the organisation. This project was challenged by the need to coordinate with staff who worked in various locations and had limited availability, with the IT team onsite only two days a week. Despite these constraints, we managed to set up 55 out of 70 employees within the ambitious two-week deadline.

This process not only involved technical setup but also comprehensive staff training. Each staff member received a personal walkthrough on how to use the YubiKey, during which we explained its benefits over the previous system and how it contributes to protecting against security threats. This experience taught me the importance of project management and flexibility in IT roles, especially in environments where conditions and resources may change rapidly. The success of the YubiKey implementation demonstrated the effectiveness of adaptive strategies and enhanced communication in overcoming logistical and scheduling challenges. It also highlighted the critical role of user education in the adoption of new technologies.

Reflecting on my internship, I have learned that while my primary role is in IT support, the impact of my work extends far beyond just maintaining systems. By ensuring that our digital infrastructure runs smoothly and securely, I contribute to the broader mission of providing equitable healthcare services to those who need them most. This experience has not only enhanced my technical skills but has also deepened my commitment to social justice and given me a profound appreciation for the role of healthcare in achieving societal equity. I am inspired to continue working in fields that combine technology with social impact, striving towards a future where technology serves as a bridge to access and opportunity for all.